

Shorts

Fundraiser for St. Francis of Assisi Church

7 MILE PLAZA - A fundraiser for St. Francis of Assisi Church and Holy Name of Mary Parish will be held from 7 to 11 p.m. on Friday, June 7, at the Rio Grande Council Knight of Columbus Hall, 595 Pine St., Del Norte.

DJ Rock N Rob will be playing music. Food and soft drinks will be available for purchase. Donation of \$10 per person, \$15 per couple and \$5 per child.

Cash prizes for top floats at Stampede parades

MONTE VISTA - The top floats in the 2024 Ski-Hi Stampede parades will receive cash prizes. The Ski-Hi Stampede parades will be on July 12 and 13 in downtown Monte Vista. The theme for this year's parade is "Heroes Among Us."

Absolute Shine donated \$1,500 that will go to the first-place float; SLV Auto Repair donated \$1,000 that will go to the second-place float; and Pepper Equipment donated \$500 that will go to the third-place float.

Registration forms can be picked up at Finer Blessings, 730 1st Ave., Monte Vista. The Ski-Hi Stampede Committee is organizing the parades.

The 102nd annual Ski-Hi Stampede kicks off with a concert on July 11, featuring Wynonna, followed by three days of PRCA action on July 12, 13 and 14. For more information, visit online www.skihistampede.com.

Gator Farm celebrates its new reptile barn

Officially named the David Lindsey Reptile Center

By MARIE MCCOLM

MOSCA — Colorado Gator Farm owner Jay Young was smiling but also flooded with mixed emotions during a ribbon-cutting ceremony. *Please see GATORS on Page 2A*

Colorado Gator Farm staff, family members and community well-wishers celebrated the grand opening of the new reptile barn with a ribbon cutting Friday morning. Owner Jay Young is shown in the middle holding a sign.

Photo courtesy of the Alamosa County Chamber of Commerce



Center graduates reminded to 'live in the moment'

By MARIE MCCOLM

CENTER — Center Consolidated School District hosted its 2024 Graduation Ceremony on Saturday, May 24, for Center High School. Twenty-nine graduates received diplomas at the Center High School Gymnasium.

Class Officer Nicole Neufeld gave the introduction and announced the Class Salutatorian Cheyenne Martinez.

"This year has really been an eye-opener not only for me, but for my classmates as well," Martinez said. "Growing up together and creating such a strong bond with people we have known our whole lives is one thing we are all so blessed with. Continuing to this next chapter in our lives, nothing is going to be how it was. Waking up at 6:30 to be at school by 7:30, seeing all your friends and fellow classmates, eating lunch together, playing sports together, laughing and talking, then going home and going to sleep to repeat it all over again, is now just a memory."

Martinez said that with their new lives there would be many... *Please see CENTER on Page 2A*



Photo by Marie Mccolm

At the 2024 graduation for Center High School graduates are shown giving love and support to the people who came to support them at their graduation ceremony. *Please see CENTER on Page 2A*



Photo by Marie Mccolm

Antique cars were parked in Otto Mears Park during the Saguache County Museum's 65th anniversary celebration on May 26.

Saguache County Museum celebrates 65 years

By MARIE MCCOLM

SAGUACHE — The Saguache County Museum opened its doors, with a free admission day on May 26 in celebration of its 65 years of being open.

A parade was hosted in downtown... *Please see MUSEUM on Page 4A*

Crestone Charter grads embody dedication and kindness



Crestone Charter School graduate Haley Van Walleghan (center) receives her high school diploma on May 17. From left to right are Coach Mike Roberts, Jane Elliot, Robin Chestnut, Sam Goering, and Thomas Cleary.



Crestone Charter School graduate Ziah Knight Pesqueira receives his high school diploma on May 17.

Photos by John Waters

By JOHN WATERS

CRESTIONE — Before an audience of about 70 friends and family on May 17, Crestone Charter School graduates Kaley Van Walleghan, and Ziah Knight Pesqueira received their high school diplomas.

The ceremony began with remarks by school director Thomas Cleary, who spoke about "Haters Gonna Hate."

"The term has staying power and that is why I'm using it and as a graduate, you will need to continue to have staying power as you travel on your journey in life...when confronted, you need to not be flippant, you will need to show caring when confronted by challenges in life. My speech is not about not caring, it is about deeply

caring, about doing your best and not worrying about what other people are thinking to the degree that it paralyzes you," Cleary said.

The ceremony continued with Eden Elderberry with the school Governing Council who offered, "Ziah, you are a light of familiarity and have been a fixture in our town and embody the spirit of Crestone through your dedication and genuine kindness."

Elderberry continued, "Haley brings a wealth of experience from her adventures beyond our sleepy town enriching our community with bravery and resilience."

The graduates then strolled through the audience handing out flowers to... *Please see GRADS on Page 2A*

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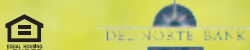
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Essay and Artwork Contest winners



Colorado Association for Family and Community Education (CAFCE) joined members across the nation in sponsoring an Essay and Artwork Contest for fourth grade students. District 5 and Friday Morning Club FCE members helped facilitate this effort with monetary awards for the students. The contest is held annually and the theme this year was CITIZENSHIP, one of the Six Pillars of Character! The students write an essay and create hand-drawn artwork. The purpose of the 2024 contest was to encourage students to understand and practice citizenship. It encourages students to strive for excellence and creativity in reading, writing, and drawing skills. The winners for Rio Grande County were from Sargent Elementary. First place was Taci Paskett, second place was Mason Price, and third place was Elijah Brown. Paskett also received third place at the state level. She will be invited to the CAFCE State Conference in June to receive her state award.

Courtesy photo

MEMORIAL SERVICE

Joe Slone

A Memorial Service for Joe Slone will be held at 10 a.m. on June 8, 2024, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, 25457 CO-69, Gardner, CO, 81040. Interment will be at the Chama Cemetery in Redwing, Colo. Funeral Reception will be held at the Community Center, 28 CO Road 632, Gardner, CO, 81040, from 12:30 to 4 p.m.



Drop off leftover paint for recycling at Creede PaintCare event

CONTRIBUTED

MINERAL COUNTY — A PaintCare event is being held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Thursday, June 20, at the Mineral County Landfill.

It is a free and convenient one-day paint drop-off event. Households and businesses can safely and easily drop off unused paint for recycling. Households may bring any amount of paint, stain, and or varnish. Limits may apply to businesses.

PaintCare will accept unwanted house paint and primers (latex or oil-based); stains; deck and concrete sealers; and clear finishes (varnish and shellac). Paint must be in sealed, original containers with the original manufacturer's label.

PaintCare cannot accept leaking, unlabeled, or empty containers; aerosol coatings; drums or containers larger than five gallons; hazardous waste or other chemicals, such as paint thinner, solvents, motor oil, spackle, glue, adhesive, roofing tar, pesticides, or cleaning chemicals.

Paint in good condition will also be made immediately available to the public for free at this event.

This is open to all Colorado households and businesses. PaintCare is a nonprofit

stewardship organization responsible for paint recycling programs in Colorado, nine other states, and the District of Columbia.

Space is limited for this event. Eventbrite registration is required to attend this event. The event will be held rain or shine. Register at <https://paint-carede.eventbrite.com>.

To use PaintCare drop-off sites and events for oil-based paint, a business must qualify as an exempt generator under federal and any similar state hazardous waste generator rules. Visit www.paintcare.org/business-limits, for more information on exempt generator rules. If your business does not qualify as an exempt generator, it will not be able to use drop-off sites and events for oil-based paint, but it can still use the program for latex products.

PaintCare is committed to making it easy and convenient for households, businesses, and institutions to recycle postconsumer (leftover) paint in states with paint stewardship laws. More than 6 million gallons of paint, stain, and varnish have been managed by PaintCare's Colorado program since its launch in 2015. For additional information, visit www.paintcare.org.

GRADS

Continued from Page 1A

“people who have been close to them, and helped nurture their growth over the years,” The two graduates then gave out roses to those of their choice.

Music including, “Fade Into You,” was performed by Phoebe Tieder and Kristen Gushurst, and “Flower of the Universe,” was performed by Aurora Knight-Pesqueira and Jacob Pesqueira.

Math teacher Robin Chestnut praised Haley's stunning homework as “the most beautiful I've ever seen. This may seem like hyperbole, but as someone who taught college math for seven years, I mean it. Your homework assignments are works of art.”

“Ziah, you describe yourself as shy, but in all the ways that matter, you always jump in and help. I see

you transmit this attitude to other students,” said Chestnut.

Sam Goering, who teaches language arts and social studies presented the diplomas and Cleary honored the graduates with the moving of the tassel.

After the formal ceremonies, all were treated to a late-afternoon luncheon.

The school was founded in 1996 and in 2012 moved into its current facility and is part of the Moffat Consolidated School District No. 2. The school has 92 students.

Charter schools are tuition-free, public schools that have the flexibility to be innovative, entrepreneurial, and self-governing, and yet are held accountable for student and operational performance.

CENTER

Continued from Page 1A

obstacles that they would have to face.

“Before we know it, we will be working in our dream careers, buying a home and creating a family of our own,” she said.

Martinez thanked her family, teachers, and classmates for helping her along the way and getting her where she is today. Martinez also thanked her sister, for pushing her past her limits and helping her go above and beyond.

Martinez said, “Everything we have been through and done has led up to this moment right here, so congratulations Class of 2024 and good luck.”

Martinez then announced the Valedictorian Arazeliz Garcia.

“Thank you for joining us for one of our life's biggest accomplishments.”

Garcia thanked her family, friends, and her teachers for being there for her throughout her high school journey.

“To my fellow classmates, can

you believe we actually did it. We are sitting here about to receive our diplomas and become high school graduates. It's so crazy to think of how far we have come, and how much we have accomplished,” she said.

Garcia said that looking back at high school she had so many memories that stuck out.

“I think of basketball games and laughing with my friends until my stomach hurts, and senior trips,” she said. “These are the moments that really made high school special. Sometimes we become so fixated on the future, we fail to appreciate the present. The future is not guaranteed, the only moments that are truly controllable are these right now.”

Garcia said that while it's important to learn from past mistakes, it is still important to live in the moment.

“Your future is a blank slate that is full of endless possibilities, if you want something, you need to go out

and do it, because like a wise man once said, ‘The world meets nobody halfway,’” she said.

Garcia then shared a poem called “Oh How Quick It Went,” that spoke about how quickly the time flew between entering school, to now being ready to graduate.

She then thanked everyone and announced the commencement speaker Anna Bishop. Bishop gave a heartfelt account of the children when they first entered school, to how they probably felt now that they were graduating. She ended her speech by stating, “Congratulations Class of 2024, I cannot wait to see what you choose for your future.”

Bishop then stepped down and the presentation of diplomas began. One by one each student was called up and received their diplomas.

There was a presentation of hugs and flowers shortly after, for friends and family members who attended, on behalf of the graduates.

GATORS

Continued from Page 1A

cutting ceremony for the new reptile barn on Friday, May 24.

He was joined by approximately 20 family and friends, including Alamosa County Commissioner Lori Laske and former Senator Lewis Entz, during the ceremony. The new barn was officially named the David Lindsey Reptile Center.

“The new building will house mostly rescued reptiles, snakes, lizards, tortoises, and some parrots,” Young said. “This has been a lot of hard work and a long road, but life is going to throw things at you, it's up to you how you handle it. All you can do is the best you can, with what you have got, and now we have a new barn.”

The new barn replaces the structure that burned down in a devastating fire on April 18, 2023. More than 100 turtles, tortoises, lizards, and snakes died in the fire.

Young stated that it was heartbreaking to lose the building

and all the animals that were in it, but so many people had also stepped up to help them. The Gator Farm regrouped and was open not long after the fire and began working on the new barn.

“It was a devastating loss. Some of the animals we had, we had for over 25 years,” Young said. “It's hard to just pick up and go on. The outpouring of support from the public was so immense.”

Young stated it was not just the financial support that he appreciated; it was more about the love that was given to everyone at the farm during the loss.

“We must have been doing something right to get that much love and support. It was hard to pick up the pieces and go on, but here we are, and we are still doing it. The support from the community has been huge and we couldn't do it without them,” he said.

The new facility was dedicated

to Dave Lindsey, a man who had worked diligently to help with the construction of the new barn, and became a close friend, “like family,” to Young.

According to Young, Lindsey was unfortunately diagnosed with cancer. He fought the cancer for almost two years but passed away the morning of the ribbon-cutting ceremony, according to Young.

“This is in honor of David. He just passed away this morning. I had hoped he would be here today to see this. He fought the good fight against cancer, but it was time for him to be at peace and not suffer anymore.”

Young smiled with tears running down his cheeks and said, “He was hoping to be here for the grand opening, too. He's here with us in spirit. It's been a long time coming. Excited about the ribbon cutting, but also wish he could have made it today.”

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OPINION & EDITORIAL

What Aspen can teach us

Back in the '90s, when writer Hunter S. Thompson held court at the Woody Creek Tavern just outside of Aspen, he'd often rail against the "greedheads."

I grew up in Aspen, and sometimes my dad took me there to look at all the dollar bills on the wall. He made sure a picture of me and my first bull elk joined pictures in the bar of ski bumps in head-to-toe denim.

Nowadays the bills are \$100s and the pictures on the walls look like fashion



by Jacob Richards

shoots. What would Hunter Thompson think? Likely that the greedheads had won. Most of the West's resort towns have undergone something of an Aspenification, and that includes Aspen's bedroom communities of Basalt, Carbondale and Rifle that send workers to the ski lifts and restaurants.

When I was young, my family bounced around Aspen-area trailer parks, and even lived in the office of a horse-stable at the base of Aspen Highlands

Ski Resort. The cabin had no running water, and the only heat was a wood stove. We'd sled down the hill hanging on to our groceries and water jugs.

When I was 8, my mom was able to buy a deed-restricted condo in Aspen. Even then we needed to add a roommate to afford our 740 square foot, two-bedroom apartment, one of us sleeping on the day-bed in the living room.

Dad called it "condo-bondage," and a love of horses, hunting and open spaces pushed him farther down-valley before he settled in Silt, over an hour from Aspen.

Please see ASPEN on Page 7A



Photo courtesy Jacob Richards

Jacob Richards with his dad and first bull elk.

Whirlwind of activity

Miss Trixie and Ol' Dutch have finally arrived in Colorful Colorado, and we are darned glad to be here, let me tell you what.

We had a heck of a time getting out of Texas as we were trying to get the siding on the new house before we left and hit all kinds of snags. Each of which could probably consume inches of column space, but I will spare you the details.

Suffice to say that the challenges were many

and not easily addressed but we did finally get it on and weather tight, which meant we were able to leave - albeit, a week later than we had hoped for. Ol' Dutch breathed a sigh of relief as he pulled out of the driveway and said a prayer over the property and cows, entrusting them to God and His Providence.

We always bring two vehicles along with us as Ol' Dutch learned early that he does not want to be stuck at home while Miss Trixie galivants around the Valley going to garage sales, community events, or friends' houses.

We had planned early on to stop and see Gidget and Moon Doggy at Wichita Falls, Texas, play some cards and have some laughs. So, it was only a hop, skip and a jump from the farm to their abode and Ol' Dutch was really looking forward to it.

Just about the time we got within striking distance Miss Trixie informed me that there was a dangerous storm directly in our path. And even if you think the Internet is Satan's spawn, it sure is nice to be able to get instant weather and radar wherever you might be.

Now Ol' Dutch was raised on the Weather Channel and my Dad, Fast Freddy of Dodge City, Kansas, and Boot Hill fame, taught me early on to pay attention to the weather wherever you may be.

So, we had the very best radar and first-person weather reports and were able to stop in Nocona, Texas under an awning to wait out the hail, rain, and tornado. A quick prayer later and the storm took a track off to the north and we were able

to proceed on our way.

The radar did indicate another smaller storm directly south of us but the future track feature showed an easterly track and not towards us. We did find it a bit odd to pass 17 Storm Tracker vehicles headed east but thought they had just been in the storm we were in.

We arrived at our friends' house and after a great steak dinner, we began a card game and the hilarities began anew but as I said, I am my father's child when it comes to weather, and I kept close tabs on the radar during the ensuing hours that followed.

And true to Texas fashion, that storm that originated south of us grew into a monster with massive tornados that tracked across areas close to friends and family while all we could do was watch and pray.

The fearful thing hit a gas station with 150 people sheltered there plus an RV park not to mention all the people at the local lakes for a Memorial Day weekend of camping.

Sadly, many people lost their lives in a moment in time and my heart goes out to each family who lost a loved one or their homes. Words can never describe the pain they must be suffering today.

The tornado tracked on across the landscape and just missed our new house and farm, so we are blessed this morning and are ready to hit Colorado running.

As you know Miss Trixie is a social butterfly and we have an agenda packed full of things to do, people to see and places to be, starting tonight already with our Cajun friends and a great Louisiana style home cooked meal.

So, hang onto your hat as we once again try and do more in one summer than is humanly possible because Miss Trixie is gonna try.

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



Trout Republic by Kevin Kirkpatrick

LETTERS

McCracken has been a hard-working commissioner for Saguache County

Editor,

In April, the Saguache County Board of Commissioners adopted regulations that allow our county to participate in an intergovernmental agreement with the five other counties in the San Luis Valley to allow a Joint Planning Board to review water export applications from any jurisdiction in the Rio Grande Basin. This is a huge victory for the people of our county in safeguarding the water of the San Luis Valley and was spearheaded by the efforts of our current Saguache County Commissioner Tom McCracken. Tom has been an incredibly hard-working commissioner for our community and our county and is up for re-election, running again for the Democratic party nomination in the June 25 primary.

Commissioner McCracken has worked hard to support all the communities in our county. In Center, he worked to get roads paved in the town; secured funding for a new jetter truck for sewer maintenance; and helped provide funding for the Center High football field announcer

tower and sports programs and equipment and for the Center Parks tree planting program, as well as providing consultation for a student tree planting program.

In the town of Saguache, he advocated for construction of the Hwy 285 Corridor Redevelopment project with the Transportation Planning Region; secured funding for redevelopment of the Saguache Hotel; helped fund Saguache Works as well as the Senior Programs they sponsor; and helped provide funding for the new Senior Center.

And in the Crestone/Baca community Tom worked with the Eastern San Luis Valley Trails Coalition to develop the Safe Routes to Schools, "Kiosk Connection" and Baca Nature and Heritage Trails; brought senior meals and the Chaffee Shuttle Service to the community; lobbied for County support of the Food Bank; and ensured long-needed road paving and maintenance was completed on county roads in the Baca Grande subdivision.

These are but a few of the projects

Commissioner McCracken has been able to accomplish for our communities during his first term as commissioner. Please see his website at <http://mccrackenforcommissioner.com/> for a more complete accounting. We are particularly impressed with his work to support sustainable affordable housing throughout the county, which addresses both current needs and has the vision to provide solutions for the future.

The county commissioner's job is complex and is not learned overnight. Beyond listening to constituents' concerns, the commissioner must also foster relationships throughout the valley and the state to help leverage resources for our communities. Commissioner McCracken has shown repeatedly that he is able to do this. Let's not lose the experience and the vision he has gained from his first term. Please join us in voting for Tom McCracken for Saguache County Commissioner in the Democratic Primary June 25.

Jan Foster Miller and Bill Miiller Crestone

Encouraging votes for Saguache Commissioner McCracken

Editor,

I am writing to encourage my fellow community members to cast their Democratic Primary ballot by June 25 for the re-election of our exceptional Commissioner Tom McCracken.

Tom has served tirelessly and creatively for our local community, for our county, and for our entire Valley during his term in office.

Most often, county commissioners are passive, supporting the status quo, gladhanding constituents, and pulling their nice paycheck. Tom is different. Tom cares deeply about the environment, economic opportunities in our

community, and our water, among many other things. Tom has made a difference during his tenure, and has a plan moving forward. He now serves as the Chair of the SLV Council of Governments. He facilitated a six-county intergovernmental agreement to protect Valley water from export. He is a strong advocate for multiple affordable environmentally positive housing projects throughout the county, and he has the experience to tackle upcoming challenges faced by the county including the need to regulate short term rentals, clean up the White Eagle Village and continue initiatives related to the environment and our water,

including expansion of the Sangre de Cristo Wilderness.

Our county is complex, and it takes time to learn the job of Commissioner. We are fortunate to have a great group of active, engaged commissioners. Tom McCracken gets a lot of credit for instilling an attitude of possibility and vision in county leadership. Let him keep up the good work! Tom is moving us forward.

Experience matters. Hard work matters. Leadership matters. Cast your ballot for Tom McCracken.

Vivia Lawson Crestone

CENTER POST-DISPATCH

THE CENTER POST-DISPATCH (USPS 775-900) Published weekly (every Thursday) by Valley Publishing. (719) 852-3531 at 835 First Ave., Monte Vista, Colorado 81144-1423. Official newspaper of the Town of Center, and a legal newspaper in Saguache County. Box 607, Monte Vista, Colo. 81144
Main office, Want ads and Subscriptions: (719) 852-3531
Periodical postage paid at Monte Vista, Colo., 81144
POSTMASTER: Send change of address to P.O. Box 607, Monte Vista, Colo. 81144
Subscriptions: \$45 one year in the San Luis Valley; \$40 one year seniors (65 and older) in the San Luis Valley; and \$55 one year out of the San Luis Valley. (719) 852-3531
San Luis Valley Publishing, LLC

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- Lyndsie Ferrell..... South Fork/Creede Reporter
- Shasta Quintana
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Mountain bike team to host annual 'Ride with a Rattler Day'



SAN LUIS VALLEY – The San Luis Valley Rattlers Mountain Biking Team is hosting its annual “Ride with a Rattler Day” for middle school and high school students who are interested in trying mountain biking as an activity or sport. The ride will begin across from the Limekiln trailhead, just west of Monte Vista, on Saturday, June 1, at 10 a.m., to see what mountain biking is all about.

Team riders and coaches will orient students to their bikes and lead rides based on skill level. Take a short ride and experience the thrill of climbing, single track riding and navigating small obstacles. Team up with other students that have a love for the outdoors and learn skills that will last a lifetime.

The Rattlers have a limited number of team bikes and helmets available for use. Details at www.slvmbt.com.

The SLV Rattlers Mountain Biking Team is hosting its annual introduction to mountain biking event for student athletes.

Courtesy photo

MUSEUM

Continued from Page 1A

Saguache and featured many floats and vehicles. The Saguache Chamber of Commerce drove an ATV in the parade, with members of the Saguache Art Walk on a trailer in the back, smiling and waving happily.

The Saguache County Ambulance blinked their lights and drove in the parade, followed by a red station wagon which proudly adorned a sign that read “Saguache Senior Citizen’s Center,” across the passenger side.

The Antique Tractor Club was also a hit in the parade with a barrel train hitched to a tractor.

Grammy’s Kitchen had a colorful float in the parade, decked out with balloons and a gentleman wearing a white apron, who smiled and waved at all the people who lined the street for the parade.

There were also a few prancing horses in the parade, and the Garcia brothers of Center also displayed their antique cars in the parade proudly. Two law enforcement trucks blinking their lights were the final entrants of the parade.

In lieu of the museum’s celebration, there were also vendors in the middle of town at Otto Mears Park. There were vendors selling handmade jewelry. The Saguache quilting club was also set up at the park, along with an entire canopy filled with goat milk

products for sale. The Garcia brothers also set up all their antique cars at the park, they were arranged in a big circle at the park.

The Saguache Museum opened shortly after 10 a.m. and people were eager to visit its different hallways filled with historic items.

Lane Ellis, a resident of Mosca, attended the opening at the museum and stated that it was nice to see something so rich in history, so well preserved.

“These days there are tours being held online for museums and virtually, it’s hard to visit something in person that is so well preserved. My favorite part of this museum is the jail. It’s hard to fathom someone being put in that jail, but from what I hear, that is the actual jail, that has been here for 65 years, and it did house criminals,” she said with a chuckle. “I am glad I came today; this is a neat part of history that I get to see and enjoy, and you don’t get that every day.”

The Saguache County Museum began in 1959 as a municipal improvement venture, in celebration of Colorado’s Centennial Anniversary. Saguache County had just finished building a brand-new jail, and the old one was set to be demolished. Members of three different clubs who collaborated on the idea for the



Photo by Marie McColm

The Antique Tractor Club pulls a barrel train in the parade on May 26 celebrating the Saguache County Museum’s 65th anniversary.

museum, begged Saguache County not to demolish the jail, so that the site could be used as a “historical place.” The establishment was saved and became the Saguache County Museum. It was collaboratively

decided that the little museum would be opened as a celebrated display of history, in Saguache Town Hall.

The museum is celebrating 65 years this year. Volunteers make up the board of directors for the museum.

The museum is completely non-profit and is also separate from the Saguache County government.

The museum opens annually on Memorial Day and closes for the season on Labor Day.

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Memorial Day service held at Homelake

By MARIE MCCOLM

MONTE VISTA – The sun was high in the sky, and the mood was somber and peaceful for the Memorial Day service at the Homelake Veterans Cemetery on May 27.

Approximately 200 people celebrated all Veterans who gave their life for the United States.

The service was organized by the Colorado Veterans Living Community Center at Homelake. The emcee was Rio Grande County Service Officer and retired US Air Force member Jack Rudder. He thanked everyone for attending the ceremony.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, an opening prayer was given by Steve Dunkel, retired US Army member and pastor of the Methodist Church.

Rudder then introduced Keynote Speaker Col. Ret. William (Skip) Schoen, who gave a heartfelt speech.

“It is truly an honor to be here today,” Schoen said. “I’m here this morning to be able to share a few words and thoughts on what Memorial Day means, and the history of Memorial Day with some of its significance that hits close to home.”

Schoen, who is also the top administrator for Rio Grande County, spoke of how proud he was in the past year to have met the family of fallen Army Sgt. Faith Hinkley and the family of fallen Marine Sgt. Glen Martinez.

“They are a very big reason why we do things like we are doing here today,” he said, before diving into the history of Memorial Day.

“The Civil War was not the first conflict to bloody, this collection of people known as Americans, and as we know would certainly not be the last conflict. Its impact, however, was profound. The combined number of Union and Confederate soldiers killed in the Civil War was estimated to be between 620,000, and 750,000. With the total American population in 1860 of only 31 and a half million people including four million slaves, the impact to homes was nearly every American household was impacted by the conflict between the union and the confederacy. Some in almost unimaginable ways. Those left at home lived in constant fear over the prospect of sons, husbands, brothers, or fathers who would be

killed. Newspaper reading reached an all-time high as people scanned the newspapers every day, for a scrap of news that might mention their loved ones, or action involving their assigned regimen,” he said.

Schoen said that from April 12, 1861, to May 26, 1865, many people at home received the news of their loved one’s deaths in battle. Schoen spoke of the surviving sisters of the Littleton Brothers, who were all from a farm family near Iowa.

“Ranging in ages from 16 to 33, Thomas, William, George, John, Kendal, and Noah, all enlisted in the Union cause, and served. All six of the brothers were killed in action, or died in a military accident between 1862, and 1864. The same tragedy has played out more than 630,000 times for American families at the end of the Civil War, and in every instance the delivery of this terrible news results in devastation for the loved ones of the fallen service members,” he said.

Schoen said that our story is no different as local servicemen and women from communities are honored for paying the ultimate price to help preserve independence for the nation and liberty for its people.

Schoen explained that what is now called Memorial Day began three years after the Civil War ended.

“In May, 1868, this began and was called Decoration Day, to establish a time for the nation to decorate the graves for fallen Americans. The first large observance was held that year at Arlington National Cemetery on May 30, and then grew from local observances in the north and the south,” he said.

Schoen said that the official birthplace of Memorial Day was in Waterloo, New York and was declared by congress and by President Lyndon B. Johnson, in 1966, honoring local Veterans who had fought in the Civil War.

“Businesses closed, and residents flew flags at half-staff, and by the end of the 19th century Memorial Day ceremonies were being held on May 30 throughout the nation. In 1971, Memorial Day was



Photo by Marie Mccolm

Approximately 200 people attended the Memorial Day service in Monte Vista on May 27.

declared a national holiday, by an act of congress,” he said.

Schoen said that in Rio Grande County there are plaques in the county courthouse honoring Veterans who served in World War I and II. Schoen said while it saddens him that other plaques have not been added since World War II, he is glad that today’s gathering ensures that everyone who has served in all the nation’s conflicts will be honored for their many sacrifices.

“We are fortunate, to have Homelake Veterans Center here as a living example of our local, state, and national commitment to honor and care for our Veterans,” he said.

Schoen said he is proud of the community’s dedication to continually honoring its Veterans.

Schoen in closing said, “I thank you all for being here this morning and for the respect that you have shown for the heroes of this great nation that have paid the price of liberty and freedom, so the rest of us could have the opportunity to enjoy the bounty of their provisions. May the Lord bless all of those in our community. May the banner of freedom forever wave over our nation.”

A wreath presentation was held in honor of the American Legion, the Disabled American Veterans, and the

Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Admissions and Marketing Director of the Homelake Veterans Living Center Pam Self then named the many Veterans who have passed away but that will not be forgotten, including local Pearl Harbor survivor George Blake, who passed away earlier this month, stating, “It was an honor to know and care for you all.”

There was a closing prayer and a rifle salute. The ringing of the bell was then held for fallen Veterans. Retired Command Master Chief Petty Officer Rodney Rosacker and his wife Debra tolled the bell for their son Randal Rosacker of the USMC, who passed away in 2003 in Iraq.

Ron and Carol Martinez tolled the bell in honor of their son Sgt. Glen Martinez, who passed away in 2008 in Iraq.

David Hinkley tolled the bell in memory of his daughter Sgt. Faith Hinkley, who passed away in August of 2010 in Iraq.

At approximately 10:40 a.m. there was a fly over by F-16s.

“The turnout and the weather out here are just beautiful,” Self said. “What a beautiful day to honor those who have given the ultimate sacrifice for our country. It is my honor to remember and honor our Homelake residents that have passed away this past year.”



Photos by Marie Mccolm

A Memorial Day service was held at the Homelake Veterans Cemetery on May 27. The emcee was Rio Grande County Service Officer and retired US Air Force member Jack Rudder.

NOTICE OF ELECTION RIO GRANDE COUNTY

TUESDAY, JUNE 25, 2024

TO THE ELECTORS OF RIO GRANDE COUNTY

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a June Primary Election will be held by Mail Ballot on Tuesday, the 25th of June, 2024 between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. If you are a registered voter, you will receive a ballot at your mailing address beginning June 3rd. Mail Ballots may be dropped off at the Rio Grande County Clerk’s Office, 965 Sixth Street, Del Norte, Colorado, Monday through Thursday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Ballots may also be dropped off at the Voter Service Polling Center (VSPC) in the Rio Grande County Annex Building, at 965 Sixth Street, Del Norte, Colorado, Monday through Friday beginning June 17th through June 24th, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Saturday, June 22nd from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Election Day, June 25th. A 24-Hour Drop Box is available on the west side of the building at 965 Sixth Street, Del Norte. Ballots can also be mailed using the envelope enclosed with the ballot. Ballots must be received at the County Clerk’s Office by 7:00 P.M. on June 25th. The Postmark does not count as being received.

Your ballot will contain only the Races or Issues on which you are eligible to vote.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal of the office of the County Clerk and Recorder this 13th day of May, 2024.



Cindy Hill

Cindy Hill
Rio Grande County Clerk and Recorder

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A new way to save makes Del Norte home

By LYNDISIE FERRELL

DEL NORTE — A new thrift store has opened in Del Norte and for people seeking a good deal on gently loved items, The Merc is the place to go.

When customers first walk into the

main building of the old hospital in Del Norte, they are greeted with a sight many thrift store lovers want to see — a well-organized, clean store with floor-to-ceiling treasures.

When Sandra Aloisi decided to open her thrift store, she did it

because she saw a need and because of all the towns in the San Luis Valley, Del Norte was about the only one that didn't have an affordable option for shopping.

"I saw a need for it in the town. People love thrift stores and going out to find a deal. We have people here who need it, yes. But we also have people who really enjoy shopping without the fear of breaking the bank," said Aloisi.

Aloisi was quick to get in contact with local entrepreneur and the owner of the buildings that used to be the old hospital in Del Norte — Stan Johnson.

"I told him I thought we needed a thrift store. Somewhere people could go for a good deal and not have to always shop at the higher end boutiques. It takes each one to help a community and since we have several in the area, we needed a thrift store to help balance it out," said Aloisi.

It wasn't long before Aloisi opened her doors that she found out just how right she was. Not only does The Merc accept donations, Aloisi will also hand select and even buy items from people looking to sell the things they no longer need or use.

"If someone is moving, I will suggest they try to sell an item on Facebook Marketplace first but if they do not have any luck, then I will offer a fair price. We are a for-profit business, and we work to help the community as much as we can," she said.

Aloisi was also fortunate enough to find a group of women locally to help her daily at the store.

"I have such amazing volunteers. They come in and help with everything and I really could not do this without them," she said.

The Merc is part of a growing strip mall-type building that has everything from the Respawn Arcade and VR Room to antique stores such

as The Golden Fleece and a hair salon.

"We are like a family here. We help each other out when we can, and we always tell our customers to go and check out our neighboring businesses. It is very unique and great for the community," she said.

Aloisi sometimes travels to other thrift stores in the state to seek out unique and wonderful items to add to her growing collection.

"The donations we get are really amazing and I am always willing to consider a donation, but I also love going to find other items that people might enjoy whether its jewelry or clothing," she said.

Aloisi also gives back to the community by providing extra children's clothing to the Del Norte

Head Start or making clothing donations to local women shelters and other places in need.

"That's the beauty of this. We get to decide how we give back and how we support our community, so I am always encouraging people to think about what this town needs and then to put together a plan. Even if you fail, at least you can say you tried and you never know. It might work out for the best," she said.

The old hospital is filling up fast but there are still some wonderful rooms that could be filled with all manner of businesses for those who may be interested.

"Come on in and see us. I am sure you will find something you love. This really is my happy place," she said.



Photo by Lyndsie Ferrell

Sandra Aloisi sits in the sunshine of her back show room of The Merc Gently Loved Thrift Store in Del Norte. Aloisi saw a need for a fun and inviting place for the community to come and not only find treasures, but a deal or two as well.

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Ephesians 2:10 (AMP) says that as Christians, "For we are His workmanship [His own master work, a work of art], created in Christ Jesus...for good works, which God prepared [for us] beforehand [taking paths which He set], so that we would walk in them [living the good life which He prearranged and made ready for us]."

It's so exciting to know we are each created with a purpose and God has a good life that He has prepared in advance for us to live. But it's important to understand that we have an enemy, Satan, who wants to keep us from having the life Jesus died to give us.

Yes, Satan has a plan for us, too, and his plan is destruction and death. John 10:10 (ESV) says the enemy "comes only to steal and kill and destroy."

The good news is we have everything we need through Christ to overcome the enemy. We just have to know who we are in Christ, believe that we have His authority, and know how to release the power God has given us.

To do this, we have to rely on our faith in God. Romans 12:3 (ESV) says each person has a "measure of faith that God has assigned." This means God has given you enough faith to do His will, whatever it may be and no matter what the enemy throws at you to stop you.

There are many challenges and difficult situations we have to face in life. You may have a child with special needs to care for, or maybe you're in a difficult marriage. You could be facing a devastating illness

or have serious financial problems. Whatever your situation is, God has given you everything you need, through Christ, to keep you moving forward in His plan for your life.

We need to always remember that God is greater than our problems—nothing is too hard for Him and nothing catches Him by surprise. When we're going through hard times and the enemy is attacking us, we don't need to ask, "What can I do?" The question is, "What can God do?" The Word says all things are possible with God, and greater is He who lives in me than he who is in the world (Matthew 19:26 and 1 John 4:4).

I want you to really get this in your heart today: In Christ, you have enough faith and the strength you need to do whatever you need to do in life! Get rid of "I can't" thinking and focus on the truth of God's Word, which says, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me!" (Philippians 4:13 NKJV).

Prayer is a simple, powerful way to interrupt Satan's plan because we release our faith through prayer. First Thessalonians 5:17 (ESV) says, "Pray without ceasing." This basically means prayer can be as natural as breathing, and our first response in every situation. It's so amazing that we can talk to God all the time.

Now the enemy doesn't want us to pray, so he will do everything he can to discourage us. He wants us to think prayer is hard, that we need to use eloquent speech and sound poetic, that we need to be careful what we ask God for so we don't overload Him with too many requests, or that we have to be in a certain place with a certain posture (on our knees, head bowed, eyes closed) for God to hear us. But it's actually simple to pray effectively.



James 5:16 (ESV) says, "...The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working." God wants you to come to Him honestly, with a sincere heart, and just talk to Him as a friend. Be yourself and don't approach conversation with God as a religious activity. Humble yourself before Him and open your heart to Him. He loves you and wants you to walk in His will for your life victoriously.

As a believer in Jesus Christ, you are God's child and He is always with you. He is Almighty God, and if God is on your side, who can be against you?

In Christ, you have what you need today to live in victory. Put your faith in God constantly. Pray, take God-inspired action, and fulfill your true purpose in life!

For more on this topic, order Joyce's three-part teaching resource *Unleashing the Power of Faith*. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, *Enjoying Everyday Life*, by calling (800) 727-9673 or visiting www.joycemeyer.org.

Joyce Meyer is a New York Times bestselling author and founder of Joyce Meyer Ministries, Inc. She has authored more than 140 books, including *BATTLEFIELD OF THE MIND* and *OVERCOMING EVERY PROBLEM (FaithWords)*. She hosts the *Enjoying Everyday Life* radio and TV programs, which air on hundreds of stations worldwide. For more information, visit www.joycemeyer.org.

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Homelake Preservation and Restoration auction June 14

CONTRIBUTED

MONTE VISTA — The 19th annual Homelake Historic Preservation and Restoration meeting and silent auction fundraiser will be held at 6 p.m. on June 14, at Dos Rios Restaurant north of Monte Vista.

The June 14 event is the annual meeting for the Foundation that preserves and restores the historic campus of Homelake, the oldest

veterans' center in Colorado and the official repository of all unclaimed military medals in the state. In addition, the Foundation will be holding its annual membership drive and donation requests.

Social hour is at 5:30 p.m. with dinner at 6 p.m. and the meeting will follow. In addition, there will be a silent auction of a few items, including an antique punch bowl that belonged to Sierra Blanca No. 43 Order of

Eastern Star, Alamosa, donated to the Foundation when the chapter closed in 2022. Dinner is \$20 per person.

At the meeting, reports and news with the progress this past year will be given and five 3-year terms and one 2-year term that are up on the 15-member board will be filled. The board quarterly. Anyone interested in attending the meeting and dinner, becoming a member and/or serving on the board and being part

of a worthy vital Foundation may call Foundation secretary Christa Davis at 719-588-2484.

Those who cannot attend may still join HHPRF. Membership dues are \$15 per year for an individual membership, \$25 per year for a couple, \$100 for a sustaining member, \$500 for a corporate membership, and \$1000 for a life membership. Your membership will allow you to vote at the annual meeting as well as continue to support the foundation and its endeavors.

Membership forms are available from Christa Davis, 719-588-2484, or via email, Christa Davis at christaksmile@gmail.com. One may send a check made payable to "HHPRF" at HHPRF c/o Christa Davis, P.O. Box 97, Homelake,

CO 81135. Donations are also welcome; separate checks for these also are made payable to "HHPRF." Or they can be dropped by the Colorado Veterans Community Living Center - Homelake or mailed to the Homelake Foundation at P.O. Box 97, Homelake, CO 81135.

The Foundation was established in 2005 and exists in partnership with the community of Homelake (CVCLC-Homelake) and the broader communities of the San Luis Valley primarily through the stabilization, restoration and preservation of the historic buildings of Homelake and safeguarding and displaying of military mementos and memorabilia that have been entrusted to it through the Homelake Museum.

ASPEN

Continued from Page 4A

I spent my middle-school years there, living with my dad in the early 1990s, and it felt like a different world. Decades later I remember the first Sotheby's "for sale" sign I saw outside of a ranch near Silt.

A feeling of dread swept over me. The same dread I felt as a senior in Aspen High School with a job, basic math skills and a sinking realization that I couldn't afford to live in my hometown. I thought, "My dentist commutes from over 70 miles away, how could I afford to live here?"

Twenty years ago, I moved to Grand Junction, a historically blue-collar town, the biggest in Western Colorado with 65,000 people. Now, even humble Grand Junction is undergoing Aspenification despite being over two hours from the glitz of Telluride or Aspen.

It's a long way from the town's history of milling uranium and then stashing its tailings — still containing high amounts of radioactivity — along the Colorado River, not to mention meth epidemics and an ongoing homelessness crisis.

But these days you can ride a zip-

line across the Colorado River, rent an electric scooter or buy a luxury condo downtown, built by Aspen-based developers.

The downsides of this Aspenification are hard to ignore. A 2019 study found that the Grand Valley surrounding Grand Junction was short some 3,736 units of affordable housing. Since then, housing costs and homelessness have both risen about 45%, according to Grand Junction Housing Manager Ashley Chambers.

"Seniors are getting creamed, service workers are getting creamed, and it's adding to the homelessness crisis," said Scott Beilfuss, Grand Junction City Councilman.

"If we remain a healthcare, service and retail-based economy, wages will never catch up with housing costs," Beilfuss said. "This has consequences for the entire Western Slope."

But here's what I've learned from growing up in Aspen. The perpetrator of this rural transformation has lessons to teach us. The town has run a robust and affordable housing program for years, and a recent study found that two-thirds of occupied housing units

in Aspen were affordable.

Additionally, Aspen has long invested in a world-class public transit system so workers can commute from miles away.

There are glitches. My mother, who still lives in her deed-restricted condo, learned that her basement often fills with leach water collected from Aspen's toxic mining heritage. Repair estimates are \$10 million — a sum she and the 79 other households can't begin to afford.

What Aspen's success teaches us is that the greedheads can't be stopped, but they can be pressured to build or subsidize affordable housing, something that's in the resort town's interest.

Aspen also shows us that communities downstream need to organize to fight for affordable housing. And they need to stay organized, because the greedheads would rather fight you every step of the way.

Jacob Richards is a contributor to Writers on the Range, writersontherange.org, an independent nonprofit dedicated to spurring lively conversation about the West. He is a writer and outdoor guide in Grand Junction.

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
FOR SAGUACHE COUNTY COURT FACILITIES FEASIBILITY STUDY

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
FOR SAGUACHE COUNTY COURT FACILITIES FEASIBILITY STUDY

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II. BACKGROUND
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IV. SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS
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I. OVERVIEW
PROPOSAL DUE DATE/DELIVERY REQUIREMENTS - Responses due by June 10, 2024 at 3PM
Delivery of 4 original copies either by USPS or hand delivered in a sealed envelope to:
Wendi Maez
PO Box 100
505 3rd Street
Saguache, CO. 81149

All official communication with Candidates and questions regarding this RFP will be via email to the Wendi Maez at wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov.

No inquiries will be accepted after the clarification deadline as indicated in the project schedule.

All Candidate inquiries will be responded to at the same time which will be after the "Clarification Deadline". Candidates should not rely on any other statements, either oral or written, that alter any specification or other term or condition of the RFP during the open solicitation period. **Candidates should not contact any team member, or any individual associated with the Owner or Saguache County regarding this RFP or this project except to schedule an optional site visit.**

RFP Schedule

RFP Available	May 1, 2024
Optional Site Visit	By apt with all
RFP Clarification Deadline	May 28, 2024
RFP Clarification Responses	May 31, 2024
RFP Responses Due	June 10, 2024
Interview Invitations Sent	June 12, 2024
Interviews	June 25, 2024
Selections Made and Candidates Notified	July 3, 2024
Contract Negotiations/discussion - Complete	July 9, 2024
Notice to Proceed Given to Successful Firm	July 16, 2024
Study to begin	July 17, 2024
Study completion and submittal date	October 1, 2024
Report submitted and reviewed by BOCC	October 8, 2024
Report accepted and approved	October 15, 2024

II. Background
Saguache County has outgrown the current space the county and judicial staff occupy. There is no additional space to expand and the need for more space continues to grow.

III. Project Description
Saguache County is searching for a vender to conduct a feasibility study which will assist in deciding the option that best suits Saguache County, it's needs and its circumstances. The options are - a) Construct a new "Judicial Building" that would house the judicial portion of the current courthouse, b) Remodel the 3rd floor of the courthouse to better accommodate the Judicial Department, c) Build a new County Government complex.
Cost of project study not to exceed \$70,000.

IV. Submittal Requirements
Saguache County asks for a letter of interest which incorporates your experience and your qualifications. In addition, please include the cost of the study. Refer to the first page of this document for the address and manner of submitting your information.

V. Schedule - See RFP Schedule
It is expected that the selected firm has the current capabilities and capacity to complete the project by the date listed in the project schedule. Provide a detailed schedule, including milestones, from the notice to proceed date to the completion of the study, modifications or alterations, including deviations from the estimated schedule set forth in the RFP Schedule.

No. 1698 published in the Center Post Dispatch, Thursday, May 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30, 2024

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C&TRR season began Memorial Day weekend

CONTRIBUTED

ANTONITO — The Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad's 2024 season opened Memorial Day weekend with departures on Saturday, May 25.

Travel back to the Old West on one of the most authentic rail trips available. Pulled by historic steam locomotive, you will ride in all original Denver and Rio Grande 19th century equipment.

Regular daily passenger service is May 25-Oct. 19, and will run six days a week, Tuesday-Sunday. Daily passenger service includes All Aboard trips that run the full line between Antonito, and Chama, N.M., and Half Limited trips, which travel from either Antonito or Chama to Osier Station and then return to the point of origin.

The Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad is a National Historic Landmark. At 64-miles in length, it is the longest, the highest and most authentic steam railroad in North America, traveling through some of the most spectacular scenery in the Rocky Mountain West.

Owned by the states of Colorado and New Mexico, the train crosses state borders 11 times, zigzagging along canyon walls, burrowing through two tunnels, and steaming over 137-foot Cascade Trestle. All trains steam along through deep forests of aspens and evergreens, across high plains filled with wildflowers, and through a rocky gorge of remarkable geologic formations. Deer, antelope, elk, fox, eagles and even bear are frequently spotted on this family friendly, off-the-grid adventure.

For more information, visit <https://cumbrestoltec.com>.

cumbrestoltec.com.

DEPARTING ANTONITO

The excitement begins the moment the train leaves the station in Antonito. Beyond the vast, open San Luis Valley, the imposing peaks of the Rocky Mountains seem to stretch forever. The train quickly covers the flat ground and reaches a series of hills. It crosses Ferguson's Trestle, named for a man who was hung there, then climbs to a lava mesa, a remnant of the mountains' volcanic past. From here, the route winds around wide curves, going up into the mountains.

Eleven State Border Crossings

White-barked, slender aspen trees, which turn yellow-gold in fall, form a light, whispery forest. We'll pass Sublette, N.M., an abandoned railroad town that still provides water for the steam locomotives. Shortly after, the train makes another crossing between Colorado and New Mexico state lines. Can you count all 11?

Rocky and Dramatic

One of the most spectacular parts of the trip starts as the train inches its way along the rim of Toltec Gorge. We'll head through Mud Tunnel, which is supported by wood beams. Around Phantom Curve, named for a spire of rock that casts a ghostly shadow, then through Rock Tunnel is a narrow ledge where the dizzying view is straight down to the rushing Rio de los Pinos. The train roughly follows this river along much of its route.

Reaching New Heights

We'll stop for lunch at the old townsite of Osier. Past Osier, the



Photo by Brian Williams

Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad Engine 488 rumbles across the Cascade Trestle. At 137 feet high, it is the highest bridge on the 64-mile route between Antonito and Chama, N.M., and crosses Cascade Creek.

train first crosses 137-foot-tall Cascade Creek Trestle, the highest on the line. Trees are sparse here and the open mountain scenery is magnificent. Around Tanglefoot Curve, a loop so tight that the train seems almost folded in half, the locomotive steams toward Cumbres Pass. At 10,015 feet elevation, it is

the highest pass reached by rail in the United States. There are tall conifers and meadows that bloom with wildflowers in spring and summer. At the summit is an old section house, one of many of the railroad's historic buildings.

Descending Into the Chama Valley

As the steep descent begins, sweeping views of the Chama Valley unfold. The lower elevations are dominated by aspen trees and grassy hills. Just past the area that was once the historic Lobato sheep ranch is the Lobato Trestle. This trestle spans Wolf Creek. Chama, N.M., the end of the rail, is just ahead.



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Photo by John Waters

The San Luis Peoples Market (formally the R&R Market in San Luis) is being renovated and having hazardous materials removed. A sculpture by San Luis sculptor Huberto Maestas is in the foreground.

San Luis Peoples Market prepares for a summer reopening

Colorado Department of Agriculture grants \$200K for cleanup

By JOHN WATERS

SAN LUIS The historic market in San Luis formally known as the R&R Market is undergoing a renovation as part of larger plans by the owner, the

Acequia Institute. For starters and emblematic of the direction the store will be taking, the market is now called the San Luis Peoples Market

The market opened in 1857, almost two decades before Colorado became a state, and was operated by generations of the Romero family until they sold it to the institute in 2022. In 2023 after discovering asbestos and lead-based paint the market closed pending cleanup.

The Acequia Institute was founded

in 2006 by Dr. Devon Pena who taught at Colorado College for many years and is now on the faculty at the University of Washington. The organization is a non-profit foundation that supports environmental food and justice. The Move Mountains Youth Project is part of the institute and is a leadership program that incorporates art, entrepreneurship, community action, and respect for the Earth.

Under the leadership of Dr. Devon Pena, the institute is currently working on a new building. **Please see MARKET on Page 6**

OEDIT comes to the Valley

First-ever visit yields good connections, beginning of strong relationships

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER

ALAMOSA — Officials and staff members with Colorado's Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT), along with members of the state's Economic Development Committee (EDC), came to the San Luis Valley on Wednesday for a first-ever, in-person tour of the area prior to holding a regularly scheduled Economic Development meeting.

The visit, facilitated and hosted by the San Luis Valley Development Resource Group (SLVDRG), started off with a presentation by Matt Prince, General Manager of the Colorado Pacific Rio Grande Railroad. The recent purchase of

the railroad by the Soloviev Group has resulted in re-vitalizing railroad operations, including (but far from limited to) the goal of improving targeted railroad crossing and installing some very costly but high priority crossing lights in various parts of Alamosa County.

The day's visit concluded with a festive, standing room only dinner at the Friar's Fork where specific members of the community were invited to sit down and break bread with state officials, most of whom were visiting the San Luis Valley for the first time.

Sarah Stoeber, executive director of SLVDRG, addressed the crowd, not only welcoming OEDIT and EDC to the region but also speaking about the importance of including agriculture in all discussions, not only because of the important role it plays in the history and culture of the area about also in recognition that agriculture is the primary driver of the region's economy. **Please see OEDIT on Page 4**

Fundraiser for St. Francis of Assisi Church

7 MILE PLAZA — A fundraiser for St. Francis of Assisi Church and Holy Name of Mary Parish will be held from 7 to 11 p.m. on Friday, June 7, at the Rio Grande Council Knight of Columbus Hall, 595 Pine

St., Del Norte. DJ Rock N Rob will be playing music. Food and soft drinks will be available for purchase. Donation of \$10 per person, \$15 per couple and \$5 per child.



Photo by Jasmine Hussman, City of Alamosa

Alamosa Police Department's Honor Guard along with Investigator Zach Decker with the Alamosa County Sheriff's Officer at attention outside the Alamosa Safety Complex during the Peace Officers Memorial Day ceremony on May 15. Pictured left to right: ACSO Investigator Zach Decker, APD Officer Mario Linares, APD Officer Steven Bagwell, APD, Officer Mikko Sanchez, APD Officer Justin Salazar, APD Officer Marco Ledezma, APD Officer Jareb Aziz, APD Officer Kolten Hillis and APD Officer Cody Van Ry.

Peace officers honored and remembered

STAFF REPORT

ALAMOSA — In an annual ceremony dedicated to peace officers who devoted their lives to service and others who were injured or lost their lives in the line of duty were respected, honored and

remembered in a ceremony at the Alamosa Safety Complex in Alamosa.

The ceremony date was chosen to coincide with National Peace Officers Memorial Week, proclaimed by the city as the week of May 13, and Peace Officers

Memorial Day, proclaimed as May 15.

The memorial service was preceded by a procession of lights at 5 p.m.

In a sign of support for law enforcement officials, several people spoke at the memorial, including

Alamosa County Sheriff Robert Jackson, Alamosa Police Department Police Chief George Dingfelder, 12th Judicial District Attorney Anne Kelly, Alamosa Mayor Ty Coleman and other members from law enforcement agencies in Alamosa County.

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05 Notices

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

07 Help Wanted

Dairy Queen in Monte Vista is hiring a full-time Assistant Manager to help us continue to grow. Applicants must have previous QSR management experience. Salary based on experience. PTO, Health insurance, and 401K available. Email resumes to MVDairyQueen@gmail.com.

WANTED: Saguache County Road and Bridge and Landfill is looking to hire an Assistant Supervisor Starting at \$67,000/year - DOE SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: Applicants must possess a current Colorado Class "A" Commercial Drivers License CDL with a heavy semi-truck endorsement and a current medical certificate. Applicants should have a high school diploma along with an extensive working knowledge of methods, operating rules, and equipment for road construction and maintenance operations. Prospective employees applying with Saguache County, please note that after a "conditional" offer is made, we may require disclosure of other information personal to the applicant. The prospective employee will also be required to submit and pass a pre-employment drug screening, before being hired. Road & Bridge and Landfill Assistant Supervisor is a full-time salaried position - qualified candidates will be responsible for assisting the head supervisor with the coordination and supervision of labor, maintenance crews, and equipment while reconstruction, resurfacing, and general county road maintenance are performed. This position is expected to work during road emergencies so you should be available to work nights, weekends, and holidays when needed. This position will assist the head supervisor in reviewing and evaluating employee performance, directing procedures to ensure compliance with established budgets, ensures that all purchases conform to departmental needs and goals. This position is also responsible for assisting the head supervisor with the Landfill department, providing information for reporting, monitoring the gas wells, and assuring compliance with all Colorado Department of Health regulations. This is only part of an extensive list of requirements for this position. In addition to the salaried rate, the County Employee benefit package includes vision, dental, and health insurance coverage, paid time off, and a generous 401a retirement plan. Applications and a complete job description are available at the Saguache County Road and Bridge Office, 305 3rd Street, PO Box 476, Saguache, CO 81149 - 719-655-2554 or on the Saguache County website - saguachecounty.colorado.gov under the Road and Bridge Department tab. Please fill out and submit both applications: The Saguache County Application and the Drivers-Application. Completed Assistant Supervisor applications - must be made to the attention of Hiring Committee and can be hand-delivered to the Road and Bridge Office located at 305 3rd Street in Saguache, mailed to Saguache County Road and Bridge Hiring Committee - PO Box 476 Saguache, CO 81149, sent by email to mhashbarger@saguachecounty-co.gov, or faxed to 719-655-2543. APPLICATION DEADLINE: Open until a qualified candidate is hired. Saguache County is an Equal Opportunity Employer. (6-19)

WANTED: Saguache County Road and Bridge and Landfill is looking to hire a Head Supervisor Starting at \$71,000/year - DOE SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: Applicants are preferred to possess or may be required to possess a current Colorado Class "A" Commercial Drivers License with a heavy semi-truck endorsement and a current medical certificate. Applicants should have a high school diploma along with extensive knowledge of methods, operating rules, and equipment for road construction and maintenance operations. Prospective employees applying with Saguache County, please note that after a "conditional" offer is made, we may require disclosure of other information personal to the applicant. The prospective employee will also be required to submit and pass a pre-employment drug screening, before being hired. The Road & Bridge and Landfill Head Supervisor is a full-time

salaried position - qualified candidates will be responsible for the coordination and supervision of labor, maintenance crews, and equipment while reconstruction, resurfacing, and general county road maintenance are performed. This position is expected to work during road emergencies so you should be available to work nights, weekends, and holidays when needed. The Head Supervisor reviews and evaluates employee performance, prepares the annual budget, and monitors all expenditures and revenues. This position is also responsible for the Landfill department, reporting to the State of Colorado Department of Health and the Board of County Commissioners, and assuring compliance with the Colorado Department of Health regulations. This is only part of an extensive list of requirements for this position. In addition to the salaried rate, the County Employee benefit package includes vision, dental, and health insurance coverage, paid time off, and a generous 401a retirement plan. Applications and a complete job description are available at the Saguache County Road and Bridge Office, 305 3rd Street, PO Box 476, Saguache, CO 81149 - 719-655-2554 or on the Saguache County website - saguachecounty.colorado.gov under the Road and Bridge Department tab. Please fill out and submit both applications: The Saguache County Application and the Drivers-Application. Completed Assistant Supervisor applications - must be made to the attention of Hiring Committee and can be hand-delivered to the Road and Bridge Office located at 305 3rd Street in Saguache, mailed to Saguache County Road and Bridge Hiring Committee - PO Box 476 Saguache, CO 81149, sent by email to mhashbarger@saguachecounty-co.gov, or faxed to 719-655-2543. APPLICATION DEADLINE: Open until a qualified candidate is hired. Saguache County is an Equal Opportunity Employer. (6-19)

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or faxed to 719-655-2635. APPLICATION DEADLINE: Open until a qualified candidate is hired. Saguache County is an Equal Opportunity Employer. (6-19)

The SLV Landfill is accepting applications for a temporary Landfill Laborer/Backup Equipment Operator. Maintain landfill property, pick up trash, and be a backup equipment operator. Position open until filled. \$16.00 to \$17.00 per hour, 32 to 40 hours week. Applications can be emailed to Kim at officemanager@slvlandfill.com or returned at the office. Download the application at slvlandfill.com

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Open Tues.-Fri. 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. & Sat. & Sun. 1:30 - 5 p.m.
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We would like to express our deepest gratitude and appreciation to all those who have contributed to the success of the Upper Rio Grande Animal Society by contributions, donations, volunteering and general support at Conour Animal Shelter.

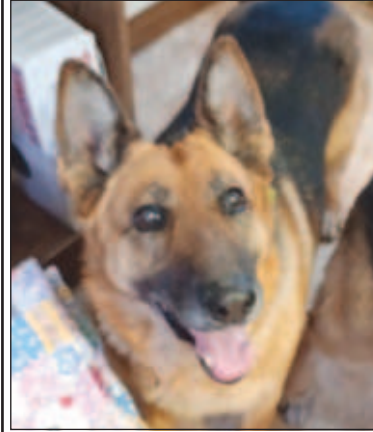
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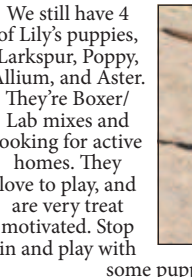
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Jimothy the 2 year old Hound mix is ready for his furever home! He's practically the perfect dog, loves everyone and every dog he's met so far, puppies and adults alike. Jimothy is super playful, loving, and ready to share his big ol' heart! Stop in and meet him today!



Rocko 10 and Precious 8 are our senior Shepherd mates, looking for a furever home together. Their adoption fees are 1/2 off until June 21st! They are sweet, loving, playful, and you'd never tell they were seniors. Come meet these balls of love today!



We still have 4 of Lily's puppies, Larkspur, Poppy, Allium, and Aster. They're Boxer/Lab mixes and looking for active homes. They love to play, and are very treat motivated. Stop in and play with some puppies, one may just wiggle their way into your heart!

Please note adoptions go in order of contact made.

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

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Del Norte High School is seeking a qualified Secondary Business Teacher. We are seeking an experienced, hardworking and enthusiastic teaching professional to join our dynamic, and vibrant team. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree or higher and possess or be able to obtain a Colorado Teaching License with a Secondary Social Studies endorsement. Please submit your application, resume and cover letter to: Annie Hardy at ahardy@urtigers.co or call Mrs. Hardy at (719) 657-4020. Applications can be accessed online at www.urtigers.co. (6-12)

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Dynamic English/Spanish Secondary Teacher wanted at Creede School District. Opportunity awaits for you to teach at The Creede School District. Visit our Employment Opportunities Website at CreedeK12.net for job description, qualifications, and competitive benefits package, or call 719-658-2220 (5-29)

The City of Monte Vista is accepting applications for a seasonal Parks Maintenance Worker. This position is approximately 16 weeks, 40 hours/wk. Duties include mowing, trimming, watering parks and trash pickup. Wage is \$16.00-\$17.00 per hour. Applications and job description are available at www.cityofmontevista.colorado.gov or pickup/return applications to the City of Monte Vista, Human Resources, 95 West First Ave. Monte Vista, CO. 81144. Open until filled.

12 Houses for Rent
 Newly renovated house in South Fork. Fenced in yard. Detached garage. No smoking. No indoor pets. \$1750 per month. 719-580-1510 (5-29)

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For rent in Del Norte: For use as office or home, a remodeled 1-plus rooms, 3/4 bath unit in a quaint four-plex in Del Norte. Pets and smokers are not permitted. \$700/mo., inclusive of water and sewer. Available June 2. Please call 719-850-0750. (6-19)

28 Household Goods
 For sale 20.5 cubic feet Kenmore Refrigerator/Freezer. \$225. 719-852-2028 (6-5)
 For sale 2 rolling desk chairs. \$20 each. 719-852-2028 (6-5)

36 Miscellaneous
 For Sale: Metal Barrels Black, Green, red, and white. Dozens of uses. Convert to troughs or feeders. Make a Barrel Stove out of them. \$5 a Barrel with Stationary

lid. \$25 For removable lid. Call David 719-480-2145 (6-5)

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37 Wanted
Large Vermont Casting or Jotul stove with glass front. Porcelain or black. alpinhigh@gmail.com. (6-26)

42 Feed & Seed
For Sale: Small Alfalfa bales \$10. Covered—local. Call: 719-480-2089 (5-29)

44 Farm Services
Attention Farmer and Ranches: Seal your leaking livestock tanks, ponds & reservoirs with bentonite. Spring Special 10% OFF. Rio Grande Bentonite. 719-580-6652 (5-29)

48 Pets and Supplies
Registered Toy Aussie puppies for sale, Black Tri, Chocolate Tri, Blue Merle. 8

South Fork Annual Town Wide Clean Up & Garage Sale

June 14 & 15
8:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Garage sales will take place on Saturday the 15th. If you'd like to host a sale, contact the South Fork Visitor Center to share your info and be added to the published map at (719) 873-5512. The Town will have large dumpsters available for public use throughout the weekend, located in the Visitor Center parking lot.

weeks old on 4-24-24. UTD on shots. 719-849-1877 (5-29)

65 Professional Services
WE BUY ANTLER: \$16/lb for Elk Grade A and \$11/lb for Deer Grade A. 5 miles west of Del Norte on Hwy 160. 719-657-0942 (TFN)

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Hampton Flooring/Carpentry- Certified Installation, Decks, Custom woodwork. Quality Guaranteed. Call 970-946-9349

Lucky Shoe Ranch



Are you looking for something fun to do this summer?

Join us and learn how to ride horses!

Summer session starts the last week of May, we supply the horses & tack.

Day Camp - July 26th

Discount Days - \$20 lessons on May 31st, June 21st, July 5th, July 19th

Signup via our website!

Scholarships available

719-849-1955

Additional information and bookings are available through our website: <https://www.luckyshoeridingclub.com/>

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SUDOKU

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

Fun By The Numbers

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

Level: Beginner

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

Solution to last week's puzzle

S	A	G	S		B	O	S	O	N		S	A	F	E	
A	M	A	H		C	R	A	P	E		A	R	I	A	
P	I	L	I		D	A	L	E	Y		G	A	D	S	
S	A	L	A	D		T	O	R			S	A	B	O	T
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E	N	O	W			S	O	D		S	A	T	E	E	N
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S	B	I	C			S	T	E	A	K		A	L	M	S
H	E	M	E			T	O	R	N	E		S	E	B	E

LIVE IN CONCERT
CHRISTIAN COUNTRY
RECORDING ARTIST



LUKE YATES

Tues., June 11, 7 p.m.
Center United Methodist Church,
387 S. Broadway, Center, CO
Admission is free!

www.GospelRoadOnline.com

YOUNG VOICES
 OF COLORADO
 Octaves ... Above The Rest

Sunday, June 9 ~ 9 a.m.
Center United Methodist Church

Two groups will be performing from Denver

Signature (featuring 17 young ladies) and VoiceMale (featuring 10 young men).
Please join us for their concert and welcome them to the Valley!



Photo courtesy of Sarah Stoeber, executive director SLVRDG

Staffers and executives with Colorado's Office of Economic Development and International Trade, Economic Development Council and San Luis Valley Development Resource Group stand in front of a distinctive Colorado Pacific Rio Grande Railroad engine. The railroad was highlighted by SLVRDG as one of the most exciting, new business ventures to be a part of the SLV economic landscape.

OEDIT

Continued from Page 1

ing force of the Valley's economy. In special recognition, she also introduced those in attendance to a small but mighty group of high school students from Monte Vista's Future Farmers of America program, who genuinely impressed the crowd with their confidence in speaking to a large group and delightful sense of humor.

"If you ever need to get a job done well," Stoeber said after the group sat down, "make sure to include

someone who's been involved with FFA. They are some hardworking people."

Eve Lieberman, OEDIT executive director, also took a moment to make a few comments about the purpose of visiting the San Luis Valley, praising the area for its rich cultural diversity and history and stating it was "meaningful to have people on the ground, making connections and building relationships that will last into the future."

Alamosa County Commissioner Lori Laske told the Valley Courier, "I really enjoyed speaking with staff from OEDIT and learning about the incredible programs they have. I know we already have two businesses in the valley - Adams State and SLV Health - that are involved in Enterprise Zone projects. I was just amazed to learn about programs I knew nothing about and look forward to exploring more possibilities in the future."

Find us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/ValleyPublishing>

BUFFET IS BACK! ~ Sundays Open to Close



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"I think this was really good and fun to watch the tv. the wing we're awesome and good pizza."
— Amy B.

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San Luis Valley Area Real Estate

1408 Bear Creek Circle • South Fork

Exceptional Mountain Retreat nestled within the prestigious gated community of Bear Creek, this exquisite home at 1408 Bear Creek Circle offers an unparalleled blend of Elegance, Tranquility, and Natural beauty. With 3,882 square feet of meticulously designed living space, this property is a sanctuary for those seeking rest from the everyday hustle. Interior Features: Entryway with Stained Glass Doors: The grand entrance sets the tone, welcoming you into a large, elegant living room complete with a corner fireplace and an adjacent wet bar—perfect for entertaining guests. Large Custom Kitchen: The heart of this home boasts custom alder wood cabinets, beautiful quartz countertops, and a butler pantry with built-in custom shelving and storage cabinets. The kitchen seamlessly leads to a spacious laundry area flooded with natural light, making laundry a pleasant task. Beautiful Dining Room: Accessible from the kitchen, the dining room opens to a spacious awe-inspiring back deck. Perfect place to enjoy that first cup of morning coffee. Stairway to Loft: Ascend the large staircase to the open loft—an ideal space for a game area and home office. 3 Bedrooms: Master Bedroom (Main Floor): Flooded with ample natural light, the master bedroom provides a cozy ambiance. It features a spacious retreat with a jumbo-sized walk-in closet complete with custom shelving and cabinets. The master bath includes a walk-in shower and spa tub for your in-home spa experience. Additional 1 and a ½ Bath are Well-appointed and elegantly designed, the bathrooms provide comfort and convenience. Lower-Level Stairwell: Leads to an intimate family room and two spacious downstairs guest bedrooms. Immaculate 3-Car Garage and 1-Car Workshop: With custom cabinets and work benches a dream come true, providing plenty of room for all your tools and outdoor adventure toys. Outdoor Delights: Bear Creek runs through this property, nature's music to your ears. Mountain Views: Wake up to awe-inspiring vistas of the surrounding peaks. The ever-changing canvas of sunrises and sunsets will leave you breathless. Wildlife Haven: Immerse yourself in the enchanting wilderness. Mule deer, elk, and even the elusive black bear occasionally grace the property. Year-Round Adventure: Explore hundreds of miles of ATV trails right outside your door. In winter, hit the slopes at Wolf Creek Ski Area, just 30 minutes away. Tranquil Creekside Strolls: Meander along the community walking trails that follow the gentle curves of Bear Creek. Listen to the soothing sounds of water as you unwind. This is more than a home; it's an invitation to embrace the rugged elegance of Colorado's high country. Escape to 1408 Bear Creek Circle and discover a lifestyle where luxury meets wilderness. **MLS# 813472 - \$1,420,000**

NEW LISTING!

Bernadette Gingrass
719-850-1993
bmgingrass@gmail.com
License #100072622

193 Whispering Pines Drive • South Fork

Charming Mountain Retreat with Breathtaking Views Nestled in the picturesque town of South Fork, CO, this finely finished Ranch Style Mountain home offers a delightful blend of rugged elegance, with 2 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms, this home provides ample room for relaxation and rejuvenation. The open living area boasts a large Sunny Bay window, allowing natural light to flood the space and framing panoramic Mountain Views. The heart of this home is the well-appointed kitchen, abundance of cabinets, including convenient lazy Susan storage. You'll find all the essentials: a refrigerator, cookstove, dishwasher. Perfect kitchen for entertaining your friends and family. Gather around the wood-burning stove in the living room, where warmth and comfort await. The home's insulation ensures a snug retreat during chilly mountain evenings. Step onto the inviting front sitting porch, sip your morning coffee, and observe the local wildlife. Mule deer and wild turkeys frequently visit the serene Ponderosa Valley Estates. A large laundry room with abundant storage, a wash sink, and a washer and dryer adds convenience to daily living. Park your vehicles in the 2-car garage and utilize the detached cement floor garage/workshop with water supply and 110/220 power for all your mountain toys or hobbies. This home is ready for you to make it your own—whether it's your dream residence, a home away from home, or a vacation rental. Explore nearby activities such as skiing, four-wheeling, hiking, and gold medal fly fishing. The Rio Grande River is just moments away. Enjoy the convenience of paved roads, city water sewer system, and your very own well and large .83-acre lot. Priced at \$479,500 this property offers an exceptional opportunity to embrace mountain living. Schedule your private showing today and embark on Your Mountain Adventure in this beautiful, tranquil Ponderosa Valley Estates neighborhood! Don't wait, call and schedule today! **MLS#810774 - \$479,500**

SOLD

Bernadette Gingrass
719-850-1993
bmgingrass@gmail.com
License #100072622

0254 Timberline Trail • South Fork

Discover The Essence of Excellence Mountain Living in this custom-built Masterpiece! Situated on 1.84 sloping acres within the prestigious Rio Grande Club, this 4,466 sq ft home offers unparalleled vistas and modern elegance. Key Features: Inspiring Views: Unsurpassed panoramas stretch north, east, and south, capturing the rugged beauty of the San Juan Mountains. Architectural Marvel: A two-level design seamlessly blends contemporary finishes with a mountain aesthetic. Grand Entryway: Step into the vaulted ceiling living room adorned with Swedish Cope logs and a striking rock gas fireplace. Expansive Deck: Access the large stone rock deck from the living area, where you'll soak in views of the golf course, mountains, and valley below. Gourmet Kitchen: Culinary enthusiasts will appreciate custom cabinets, granite countertops, and top-of-the-line Wolf appliances. Master Suite: The upper-level primary suite boasts a spa-like bathroom and an adjacent study. Lower-Level Comfort: Three additional bedrooms with 9-foot ceilings offer Alderwood doorways and magnificent vistas. Entertainment Haven: The lower level features a spacious game room with a pool table, TV, and workout equipment. Year-Round Comfort: Radiant floor heat and an extra-large 1000-gallon propane tank ensure warmth during chilly days. Outdoor Delight: Enjoy ever-changing mountain views from the adjacent deck or cozy up by the stone mantel gas fireplace. Gas-Burning Fireplace: The lower level sitting area with a mini bar and stunning views is perfect for relaxation and entertaining family and friends. This home includes an adjacent parcel allowing direct access to the national forest from the front of the property so enjoying your favorite outdoor activities are just steps away. The 2-car garage has workshop hot & cold sink an extra - large 76-gallon water heater, water softener. Programmable hot water throughout the home, hot & cold water outside faucet and plenty of room for storage and a workbench. There is a security system monitored by Valley Lock and Security. Land lines in most every room. Century-Link phone highspeed internet and Direct TV. Managed lighting and surround sound throughout the home and the Smart Home allows you to control from anywhere. This home is a Hole in One! One of a kind, designed and built providing that sense of hospitality, openness, beauty, and tranquility. Location Highlights: Rio Grande Club: Overlooking the 11th hole, this exclusive community offers golf, recreation, and natural beauty. Outdoor Paradise: Explore nearby trails, fishing spots, the Rio Grande River, the South Fork River and Wolf Creek Ski area. Doesn't get any more epitome than this! Check out the Video. Call and schedule your private showing today! **MLS#811509 - \$2,750,000**

Bernadette Gingrass
719-850-1993
bmgingrass@gmail.com
License #100072622

222 La Lomita Circle • South Fork

Perfect 2.0-acre lot to build Your Dream Home. Luxurious Mountain Retreat Awaits: Build Your Dream Home! Nestled amidst the majestic peaks, this pristine lot awaits your architectural vision. Imagine waking up to panoramic vistas that stretch as far as the eye can see—each sunrise painting the sky in hues of amber and rose gold. Welcome to your own private haven, where nature's splendor meets refined living. Breathtaking Views. This parcel of land boasts captivating views in every direction. Gaze upon rolling hills, snow-capped summits, and the meandering Rio Grande River. Whether you're sipping morning coffee or stargazing at night, the scenery will leave you spellbound. Ready for Your Vision. The canvas is blank, awaiting your brushstrokes. With water and sewer readily available, however you will need to secure your water and sewer taps. Picture a modern retreat with floor-to-ceiling windows, seamlessly blending indoor and outdoor spaces. Paved Road Access No rugged trails here—just a smooth, paved road leading to your paradise. Arrive in style. Over Two Acres of Possibility Spread your wings across two gently sloping sprawling acres. Design your oasis—an infinity pool, terraced gardens, or perhaps a meditation pavilion. Outdoor Enthusiast's Paradise For the angler's heart, the Rio Grande River beckons. Cast your line, and reel in memories. Nearby, the National Forest is a playground for hikers, birdwatchers, and seekers of solitude. Your winter wonderland Awaits Just 20 miles away, the Wolf Creek Ski Resort cradles you in its snowy embrace. Glide down powdery slopes, cozy up by the fire, savoring the warmth of shared stories. Your Legacy Awaits This isn't just land; it's your legacy in the making. Generations will gather here, creating memories under star-studded skies. Build your dream home refuge—a testament to life well-lived. More pictures coming soon. **MLS#812710 - \$79,900**

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San Luis Valley Area Real Estate



SOLD

3 Bedrooms, 1 Bath, Approx. 1008 Sq. Ft. 0.190 Acres
 \$170,000 | MLS #811009
 404 Sedillos Road, Manassa, CO

TATE HUFFAKER
 ASSOC. BROKER | REALTOR®
 M: 719-298-6560



PRICE IMPROVEMENT

3 Bedroom, 2 Bath, approx. 1,904 sq. ft. and 50-Acres
 \$599,000 | MLS #811695
 13725 Rd. 104 S. Alamosa, CO

TATE HUFFAKER
 ASSOC. BROKER
 M: 719-298-6560



Beautiful River Lots/ Approx. 1.170 Acres
 \$239,031/MLS#811448
 149 Lots 2&3 Escondida Dr, South Fork, CO

AUNDREA LILLARD
 ASSOC. BROKER | REALTOR®
 M: 706-622-0799



UNDER CONTRACT

River Island Ranch Approx. 5.270 Acres
 \$131,000 | MLS #802486
 147 Explorer Way South Fork, CO

YVONNE HOFFMAN
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Large Warehouse Approx. 6,579 sq. ft. on 1.57 Acres
 \$150,000 | MLS #811519
 1665 S. County Rd. 4 E. Monte Vista, CO

BRUCE STEFFENS
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SOLD

3 bedroom, 2 bath 2,589 Sq. Ft. on 35.5 acres
 \$975,000 | MLS #808345
 6680 County Rd. 13 Del Norte, CO

BRUCE STEFFENS
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Incredible Views with this Amazing Property
 Approx. 5.720 Acres
 \$164,900 | MLS #808491
 1685 Bear Creek Circle South Fork, CO

YVONNE HOFFMAN
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 M: 719-580-1901



Sun House Farm Approx 1,910 Acres with Home
 \$12,900,000 | MLS #807640
 57075 County Rd C Center, CO

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AUNDREA LILLARD
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SOLD

2 Bedroom, 6 Bath, approx. 3,280 sq. ft. and 36.34 Acres
 \$895,000 | MLS #803698
 4617 County Rd. 13 Del Norte, CO

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Beautiful Golf Course Lot/Approx. 0.290 Acres
 \$55,000 | MLS #810818
 66 Fairway Drive South Fork, CO

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UNDER CONTRACT

Amazing Country Property/Approx. 40 Acres
 \$425,000 | MLS #812961
 18801 County Road 11.5 La Jara, CO

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SOLD

4 Bedroom, 4 Bath, approx. 3,804 sq. ft. and 10.320 Acres
 \$1,150,000
 3372 Bear Creek Circle, South Fork, CO

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BEAUTIFUL RIVER LOT FOR SALE!
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 \$39,750/MLS#812252
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Meepier Ranch /Approx. 640 Acres
 \$2,150,000 | MLS #810366
 00 US HWY 160 South Fork, CO

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VITALITY FARMS/ Approx. 160 Acres
 \$900,000 | MLS #813009
 County Road M & County Road 12 San Luis, CO

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 ASSOC. BROKER | REALTOR®
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SOLD

Land with Panoramic Beauty/ Approx. 48.770 Acres
 \$100,000 | MLS #796606
 Tract 35 Jupiter Road Del Norte, CO

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SOLD

Beautiful Ranch/Home on approx. 3,095 Acres
 \$2,200,000 | MLS #810790
 19198 county Rd. 15 Del Norte, CO

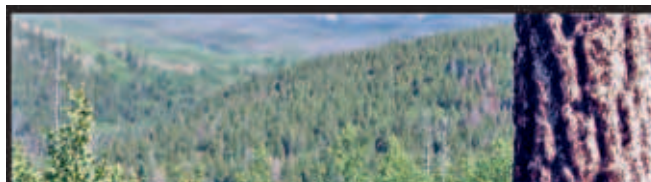
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UNDER CONTRACT

Commercial Lot with Easy Access/ Approx 1.42 Acres
 \$79,900 | MLS #813004
 24 Riviere Road South Fork, CO

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Look At The View!/ Approx. 11.140 Acres
 \$453,320 | MLS #805636
 535 Elk Court, South Fork, CO

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MARKET

Continued from Page 1

Pena, the store is being renovated and recently had a specialized contractor, Adept Solutions of Colorado Springs, work on removing lead-based paint and asbestos. With the help of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund, the Acequia Institute, which is working on behalf of the market, received a grant on May 14 for \$200,416. The grant will cover the cost of asbestos abatement and lead-based paint and mold removal, making it possible for the market to reopen this summer.

"As the only full-service grocery store in San Luis, Colorado, the re-opening of San Luis Market will help ensure Coloradans in the valley have access to healthy food in a safe store, and I am glad the state could provide a grant to help reopen this community landmark," said Governor Jared Polis.

"We're committed to supporting disproportionately impacted and underserved communities in Colorado," said CDPHE's Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division Director, Tracie White. "The Colorado Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund transforms properties, and helps small businesses, like the San Luis Peoples Market, keep their community healthy by providing essential services."

In a recent tour of the market, Pena laid out his vision for the store which will offer as many local products as possible, some will come from the nearby 181-acre farm owned by the institute. As part of that local branding, the market is now called the San Luis Peoples Market. The vision is to turn the market into a community food co-op. Due to the hazardous material renovations underway, this reporter was allowed a brief glimpse of the market-to-be.

Pena is focused on nutrition, "When we bought the market it had hundreds of cans of Campbell's soup, and we still have them and we won't be selling them." We will be stone-grinding tortillas, we have heirloom bolita beans and we just received new drought lentils to grow."

Pena is also starting a local chapter of the mutual aid society, "Sociedad Protección Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos. The society was founded in 1900 to protect Hispano workers from discrimination and provide loans, unemployment aid, and funeral assistance. The Concilio Superior building that serves as the group's headquarters is undergoing restoration.

The grant from the Colorado Department of Agriculture is the second influx of funding to the town recently.

The Town of San Luis has also recently received a federal \$500,000 — Environmental Protection Agency (EPA funded through the bipartisan infrastructure law. The funds are all revitalization-focused, with projects ranging from the removal of asbestos, mercury, and other hazardous materials.

EPA officials were in San Luis last month and in an interview with the Valley Courier, EPA Regional administrator KC Becker said the grant was made possible by working with grant facilitator JSI International, "This is a great thing, they have to handle the burden of all the federal compliance. For these small grants, it is hard to apply, you need a full-time person to do the paperwork. With this, you can reach smaller communities. I love it, we can get dollars all over the place."

The San Luis Peoples Market said it plans to host a grand reopening ceremony during Santa Ana Fiesta days, which falls on the last weekend of July.



Photo from the Denver Public Library Digital Collections
In 1857, Jose Dario Gallegos opened Gallego's Mercantile in San Luis. Generations later, it had a name change to the R&R Market. Today the store is called the San Luis Peoples Market. In this 1876 photo, customers gather in front of the market with a horse-drawn carriage.

Left: Lynette Ramirez, (left to right) and Dr. Devon Pena from the San Luis Peoples Market are joined by Kathy Ben from Adept Solutions as they discuss the progress being made to remove hazardous materials from the market.

Photo by John Waters

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Xcel Energy explains impact of Wildfire Safety Settings

CONTRIBUTED

When the San Luis Valley is in "Red Flag Critical Fire Weather Conditions," Xcel Energy announced it will implement safeguards to reduce wildfire starts as part of its Wildfire Mitigation Program, specifically its Wildfire Safety Settings.

"As wildfire risk increases across the West, we're committed to working hard every day to improve safety and reduce wildfire threats across our service area. As part of this commitment, Xcel Energy's Wildfire Mitigation Program is designed to help protect lives, property, and Colorado's forests from the threat of wildfire by proactively implementing various mitigation strategies to prevent our electric system from becoming the source of an ignition," Xcel officials stated.

One of these mitigation strategies is Wildfire Safety Settings. In Wildfire Risk Zones, Xcel Energy has implemented a Wildfire Safety Settings pilot program in select areas of its electric distribution system.

These settings use upgraded wildfire devices to operate its system more conservatively when wildfire conditions are elevated due to a combination of high temperatures, dry ground fuel and high winds.

"By enabling more sensitive protection settings during times of increased fire risk, we help keep our customers and communities safe. Please keep in mind that wildfire risk may exist year-round in some areas," Xcel officials stated.

How it works

Xcel has upgraded select areas of its electric distribution system with wildfire devices that support more sensitive protection settings during periods of high wildfire risk.

These upgrades allow the system in these areas to instantly interrupt the flow of energy through a power line segment when a fault is detected, such as a tree branch or other object making contact with the power line, to prevent the potential ignition of ground fuel.

When the system is in Wildfire Safety Settings mode, the line remains de-energized until crews can patrol the area to ensure it is safe to restore service.

"Communities in designated risk zones may experience more frequent or longer outages, as we ensure the safety of our customers in these areas," Xcel officials stated.

Preparing for potential outages

Xcel stated it understands how disruptive it is to lose power, and "that's why we're working hard to reduce the impact of outages and help you be prepared. It is not possible to notify customers in advance of outages caused by these enhanced safety settings," Xcel officials stated.

Xcel encourages customers to update their contact information and sign up for outage notifications at myaccount.xcelenergy.com or by calling 800-895-4999. If an outage is triggered by Xcel's Wildfire Safety Settings, this will ensure they can communicate the outage's status and estimated restoration time.

Learn how to prepare for potential outages, report an outage or check an outage status by visiting xcelenergy.com/Outages. For outage information, people can also:

- Text OUT to 98936 to report an outage, or text STAT to check the status of an outage.
- Use Xcel Energy's mobile app available on iOS and Android.
- Call 800-895-1999.

For more information about Xcel's Wildfire Safety Settings pilot program, visit XcelEnergyWildfireMitigation.com/Operational-Awareness, call 833-352-0087 or email info@XcelEnergyWildfireMitigation.com.



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Courtesy photo

April 27 was Veteran Community Service Day for the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Colorado. Dickey Springer Unit 113 Auxiliary and Jr. Auxiliary in Alamosa chose the Alamosa County Sheriff's Office. They delivered goodie bags to the Veterans that are Alamosa County Sheriff's deputies. We gave 12 bags filled with snacks, and lots of goodies they could have while on patrol.

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PROMPT, EASY COMMUNICATION
VIDEO WALKTHROUGHS
RESIDENTIAL PHOTOGRAPHER
LICENSED AND INSURED DRONE PILOT

All Dee's properties are detailed in her blog.

Approx. 0.280 Acres Near Rio Grande Club
\$56,000 | MLS #794077
23 Fairway Drive South Fork, CO

DEE PLUCINSKI
LUXURY HOME BROKER
M: 719-873-5605

99 Aspen Drive - Log Cabin Bordering National Forest
\$399,500 | MLS #812823
3 Bedroom 1.5 bath, South Fork, CO

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