

Moffat High School archers capture state titles



By JACK SCIACCA

Moffat Pk-12 Archery Coach

Moffat Pk-12 Schools recently competed in the Colorado State National Archery in the Schools Program 2024 Virtual Tournament. A total of 474 archers from around the state submitted scores. It was one of the largest state tournaments in recent history. The Moffat Middle

Moffat School's Shelby Morley, ninth grade, executes a perfect shot in the 2024 Colorado National Archery in the Schools Program State Championship Tournament. Shelby captured the title of Colorado State Champion, High School Girls Division.

Photo by Alex Moore-Guenther

School Team placed second.

Moffat's Middle School, 12-person team, was 88 points behind Olathe Middle School with a team score of 2,900 points. East Grand Middle rounded out the podium with a third-place finish and a score of 2,824 points.

Moffat's coed team effort was made possible by the performances of the following archers: Romeo Eisenhauer, Caiden Cross, Kandra Pollard, Tanner Shellabarger, Matthew Baker, Kyren Plumley, Javad Taylor, Sean Gibson, Madison Payne, Colton Baldwin, Xander Schwartz, and Tori Gibson.

Shelby Morley, ninth grade, turned in the highest score across all divisions in the tournament, for the second year in a row, to be named

the 2024 High School Colorado State Champion Girl. She scored 282 out of a possible 300 points. This was her fourth time representing Moffat at the podium and the second time capturing a state championship title.

Eisenhauer, in eighth grade, was named the Middle School Colorado State Champion Boy. This was his first season in the National Archery in the Schools Program. He edged out Garrison Reinier of Olathe Middle School, by one point, to secure the title.

The following Moffat archers placed in the top 10 in their divisions:

- Caiden Cross (3rd Place - Middle School)
- Please see ARCHERS on Page 4A

Shorts

Batterson, Dennis Streets Capital Improvement Project

MONTE VISTA — With summer quickly approaching, the City of Monte Vista is gearing up for its summer construction schedule.

The first project is the completion of the Batterson, Dennis Streets Capital Improvement Project. The city has worked with a contractor for this phase of the project, ACI and has determined that the project will begin on April 1. The construction will begin on Batterson from 4th Avenue to Lariat.

Construction will then proceed to Dennis Street from Lariat to 4th Avenue and the final phase will be construction on 4th Avenue from Batterson to Highway 15 (South Broadway).

Door hangers will be sent out to the properties affected by the street closures as the project gets closer.

During the construction the following streets will be closed to through traffic:

- 4th Avenue from Dennis to State Highway 15 (S. Broadway)
- Batterson Street from 4th to Lariat Road
- Dennis Street from 4th to Lariat Road

Valley blood drive set for March 16

SOUTH FORK — A Valley blood drive is scheduled for Saturday, March 16, at the South Fork Community Building from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. This is open to everybody.

Blood donation can make a monumental impact on the lives of people across the country and especially here locally, organizers stated.

"A lot of you have generously volunteered your time to come donate and make such a difference," organizers stated.

Sign up now at www.bloodhero.com, sponsor code: southfork, or contact Karen Miller at 720-313-4834 or mkmillermink@aol.com.

CCSD students shine at SLV Regional Science Fair

By MARIE MCCOLM

CENTER — The San Luis Valley Regional Science Fair recently took place and according to Center High School Science Teacher and fair coordinator, Stephanie Archuleta, 10 Center Consolidated School District students participated — eight from Haskin Elementary and two from Skoglund Middle School. The science fair is open to grades 4-12.

"The kids did really well. The kids had been working on projects for a

Please see SCIENCE on Page 2A

Center Consolidated School District students participated in the San Luis Valley Regional Science Fair, from left to right, Eva Trujillo, Able Trujillo, Concetta Vigil, Ryann Barbosa, Kyerra Cazares, Eccselynce Berry, Westlea Tipsword, Taisley Ortiz, and Jesus Moreno. Not pictured Alina Gonzalez.

Courtesy photo



Saguache Democratic caucus picks two for county commissioner primary

By JOHN WATERS

SAGUACHE COUNTY — Delegates at the Saguache County caucus on March 5 gave challenger Adam Kinney 30 votes and incumbent

Tom McCracken 20 votes, enough to place them both on the June 25 primary ballot.

McCracken of Crestone told the Valley Courier, "There was an im-

pressive turnout at the caucus for both candidates. I appreciate very much those who took time out of their day to attend. I am looking forward to competing in the primary

election."

Kinney is also from Crestone, "This is how democracy happens, people caring and showing up to

Please see CAUSUS on Page 5A

Baca Grande Library to host an open house with Smokey the Bear

By MARIE MCCOLM

CRESTONE — The Baca Grande Library will be hosting an open house with Smokey the Bear from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, March 23.

The open house will feature a bouncy house and crafts, and people will also have the chance to meet Smokey the Bear and have cake with Smokey.

On Aug. 9, Smokey the Bear is celebrating his 80th birthday. According to the Smokey the Bear website, 9 out of 10 forest fires are caused by people. The Baca Grande Library is celebrating Smokey's birthday with a Smokey the Bear Reading Challenge. Readers can sign up for the challenge during the open house celebration.

Children and adults can help Smokey prevent forest fires by joining the challenge. There are children's books that have been added at the Baca Grande Library in honor of the Smokey the Bear Reading Challenge. People can take the Smokey the Bear Pledge at the

open house. Children can write Smokey a letter and get a free sticker.

The Baca Grande Library has reading challenge paperwork. The challenge is set up for children ages 4-10, but anyone can participate in the challenge. Participants earn Smokey Swag for completing the reading goals, and following Smokey's exclusive pledge.

The Northern Saguache County Library District has two libraries within the district that are open and available to the public, the Baca Grande Library, and the Saguache Public Library. The two libraries cover many areas including Moffat, Crestone, and Saguache. The libraries aid in helping the community

Please see SMOKEY on Page 4A

The Baca Grande Library in Crestone is celebrating Smokey the Bear's birthday with a reading challenge. People can learn more at an open house on Saturday, March 23.

Courtesy photo



OBITUARIES

Calvin Harold Kern 1925-2024

Calvin Harold Kern passed on Feb. 11, 2024, in Arcata, Calif. Cal was born Aug. 5, 1925, in Del Norte, Colo., to Swiss immigrants Frederick Alfred and Mary Albertina Kern and was proud to have turned 98 1/2 years old just days before his passing.

He grew up on Pinos Creek near Del Norte as the youngest of seven children and loved life in the great outdoors. The family raised their own crops and livestock, and Cal began helping at age 7. He loved tending to cattle in the hills, hunting and fishing.

Cal was a proud WWII Army veteran and was grateful to have

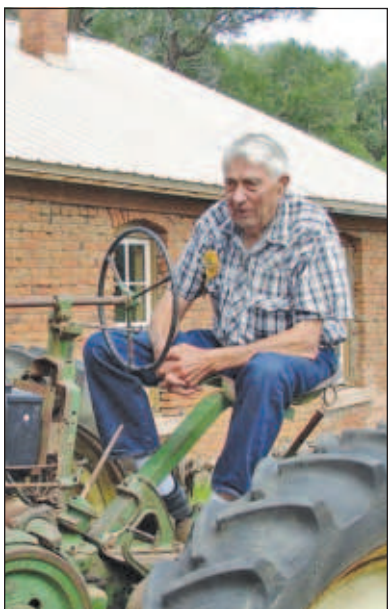
been on one of the Honor Flights to Washington DC.

In December 1950, he married Virginia Dickson, spending over 73 years together in Arcata, Calif.

Cal was a man of integrity. His word was his bond, a handshake was a contract, and honesty guided his affairs. He was capable, hardworking, independent, kind and caring.

He could fix anything and was quick to lend a helping hand to anyone needing it.

Cal is survived by his wife, Virginia, daughters, Karla and Kay and son, Kurt plus numerous grand and great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews.



Beverly Sue Benson (formerly O'Rourke) Bacon Co-founder of Miner, Times passes away

Beverly Sue Benson (formerly O'Rourke) Bacon, a beloved wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother passed away peacefully in her Tucson, Ariz., home on March 4, 2024, at the age of 88. Born in Tulsa, Okla., on Sept. 21, 1935, Beverly lived a life filled with love, passion, and remarkable accomplishments.

Beverly spent her formative years in Kansas City, Mo., and Independence, Kan., where she cultivated a deep appreciation for community involvement and education.

She pursued her passion for journalism, attending both Christian College in Columbia, Mo., and Kansas University. Her commitment to storytelling and writing would later lead to her authorship of three books: "Early History of Mineral and Rio Grande Counties, Colorado 1880 to 1980," "Best Friends Are Like Suspenders: They Hold You Up When You Are Falling Down," and "Unfortunate Women," as well as producing four audiobooks of "Pioneer Women's Diaries." Her words will continue to inspire and educate for years to come.

She leaves behind her legacy through her three children, Jeffrey, Leilani, and Dallas, and their spouses, as well as, numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren, all of whom she cherished dearly. Additionally, she embraced her role as a stepmother/grandmother, extending her love and support to her stepchildren and their families, loving them as her own.

Beverly was not only a devoted woman to her faith and family but also an active member of her communities wherever she resided. She once served as a Girl Scout leader, and her involvement in various business clubs and churches over the years enriched the lives of those



around her.

She always had an entrepreneurial spirit and was a co-founder of the Mineral County Miner and South Fork Times, a Colorado weekly newspaper. Later, she pursued her passion for Native American culture and founded the Tawa Indian Gallery and Boutique in South Fork and Tucson. Beverly's passion for literature and culture led her to become a volunteer member of the Oro Valley Library Board and SAACA (Southern Arizona Arts and Cultural Alliance), as well as an active member of Casas Church.

Throughout her life, Beverly pursued a multitude of hobbies from golf and tennis to swimming and hiking, she embraced an active lifestyle. Notably, she conquered three 14-ers, the first on her 50th birthday, demonstrating her adventurous spirit and determination. Her love for the arts was evident in her passion for reading, writing, and painting, which brought her and those who knew her, immense joy and fulfillment.

At the age of 67, Beverly embarked on a new chapter as a realtor in Tucson, showcasing her dedication to lifelong learning. She retired at the age of 83, leaving behind a legacy of professionalism and integrity in the real estate industry.

In a heartwarming union, Beverly

married John Bacon on Christmas Day in 2018, finding true love and companionship in the final years of her life. While she is no longer with us, her memory will forever be cherished by those who knew and loved her.

Beverly was preceded in death by her parents, Fred and Ruth Benson, younger brother, Fred Benson, late husband, Robert "Bob" VanHorn, stepson Robert Jr. "Bobby" VanHorn, great-grandson, Henry McPheeters, and grandson, Alex Johnson. Although she is gone, her spirit lives on in the hearts of her family, friends, and all who were touched by her kindness, generosity, and unwavering love.

A celebration of Beverly's life will be held at the Barrier Chapel at Casas Church on Friday, March 15, at 12 p.m. in Tucson, Ariz. Flowers may be sent directly to Casas Church Barrier Chapel (address below) and donations can be made to Casas Church for the "Love My City" Outreach Program.

She will be deeply missed, and her witty, creative, and kind spirit will be fondly remembered by all who had the privilege of knowing her.

May she rest in eternal peace with Jesus.

Celebration of Life: March 15, 2024, at 12 p.m. MST, Barrier Chapel at Casas Church, 10801 N La Cholla Blvd, Tucson, AZ 85742. Reception in Palo Verde Building immediately after.

Mailing Address for Flowers: Barrier Chapel at Casas Church, Re. Beverly Bacon, 10801 N La Cholla Blvd, Tucson, AZ 85742

Donations: Checks Made Out To: Casas Church, Memo: "Love My City" Outreach, In Memory of Beverly Bacon. Mail To: Casas Church, 10801 N La Cholla Blvd, Tucson, AZ 85742.

SCIENCE

Continued from Page 1A

while," Archuleta said. "We would meet after school on Wednesdays, and this began back in October of last year. The students then begin thinking about their projects and what they wanted to put together. They did so well with everything, they really did. Two of our kids went home with awards, and I think they were all very happy just to be there."

Archuleta said she is happy with the current science fair program in the district.

"We are totally rebuilding the program a little bit with the change of teachers, and COVID dropping in numbers. We are totally coming back. Center is making a comeback," she said.

The students who participated in the science fair included, Eva Trujillo, Able Trujillo, Concetta Vigil, Ryann Barbosa, Kyerra Cazares, Eccselynce Berry, Westlea Tipword, Taisley Ortiz, Jesus Moreno, and Alina Gonzalez.

The projects of the students included, elementary students, Moreno with Zoomeee Balloonie Zoom, Vigil and Ortiz with Chemistry Behind Ice-Cream, Barbosa, Cazares, and Gonzalez, with Elephant Toothpaste, Berry with S.O.S — Save Our Soil, and Able Trujillo with the Amazing Robotic Hand.

Middle school projects included, Tipword with Effects of Burnt Soil on Seed Germination and Eva Trujillo with Bending Bones.

Archuleta said that many of the

elementary students were fascinated with doing the baking soda vinegar volcanoes, and a cardboard hand out of rubber band and strings. Archuleta let the children choose their own projects and feels they did well with their topic.

Fifth-grader Berry won the Rio Grande Soil and Water Conservation District Award and took third place in Elementary Environmental Science.

Middle School awards went to Tipword who won a Colorado Rio Grande Headwater Restoration Award, a Center Soil and Water Conservation District Award and an Honorable Mention for Middle School Botany.

Archuleta currently oversees elementary and middle school science projects and is working on getting the high school involved again.

"We are trying to build our high school class again, but high schoolers have a lot of different commitments," she said.

Archuleta enjoys working with the diversity in science.

"It's definitely fun," she said. "I just like seeing them interested in their own projects and doing something fun that they want to do. It's neat working with them when they are younger, and then they come to my room as freshman, and they already know me. The kids did great at the fair. I was proud of how they all pulled it together at the end. They worked on some awesome projects. I am definitely proud of all of them."

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OPINION & EDITORIAL



It's a circus out there

If you have had the good fortune to have been on this old Earth for an extended period, you've had the opportunity to experience some real oddities in human nature. And, no, I am not talking about visiting the freak show at the circus. I'm talking about the normal, everyday happenings around us that people have taken to tearing asunder for reasons known only to them.

We have seen some real doozies too, such as concerns for cow farts in their contribution to global warming, all the while we as humans gather in increasing masses in traffic-clogged cities with polluted air as the result. And like most things of that nature, it does not have to make sense to become a rallying point for some environmental whacko group to gather round either. Masses of their leaders will fly hundreds of private jets to destinations far away, polluting more than any thousand cows ever could, just to try and take away your gas stove, fireplace or car.

I can recall an interview I heard where one of the Kennedys told the host that he himself had a big SUV, three mansions and flew private but he "needed" all that pollution spewing lifestyle whereas the common folk do not.

Now Ol' Dutch usually just goes along with such nonsense and lets it slide considering the source of such ideas but of late the whacko's have taken on some new things to ban and it's just driven me over the edge. Miss Trixie says I went over that proverbial and maybe actual edge long before this, but you know how excitable she can be at times. So there is that.

It was bad enough that they have taxed people to death on cigarettes and booze, plus, where legal, marijuana all under the guise of helping them to quit. Now, though, they have started on something near and dear to the American soul. Yes, you guessed it, the merry-go-round. For it seems that the lovely, colorful ride seen at carnivals and State fairs has somehow become a danger to us. A danger on a level far exceeding even world wars as we are being asked to give up the first and not the latter by these well-meaning folks.

So what is the big offense of a brightly-colored merry-go-round you may ask? I am glad you asked that question as you know Ol' Dutch was gonna tell you anyway. It seems that to incorporate carved wooden exotic animals in a ride has somehow become a sort of an insult to those mighty beasts. Apparently having little children ride around in a circle atop a plastic or wooden camel or zebra



Trout Republic
by Kevin Kirkpatrick

has brought pain and suffering to the animal kingdom.

Even Ol' Dutch can stretch his old noggin and see that animals have been abused in many places across the globe, but honestly, it's hard for me to see that riding around in a circle on these contraptions has ever hurt one of them.

Maybe it could become a teachable moment to people about the plight of such beasts, too. I guess like their real life namesakes, we should also demand that the wooden ones be fed and watered on a daily basis, too. (They do know they are fake, don't they?)

And for sure we want to try and hide from concerned eyes the fact that all of those same exotic beasts are being chased and eaten by lions and tigers on a daily basis. Which seems to Ol' Dutch to be a tad worse than being ridden by an old woman or diaper wearing toddler.

But hey, that's just me. Regardless of your treatment of fake animals that you have participated in during your lifetime, we all have to admit that we have reached a level of stupidity in the human experience. And just think. It's only going to get worse as the powers that be come after everything you enjoy including your food and drink until finally we will be reduced to eating the styrofoam packing peanuts that arrive with our purchases.

I am going to quickly go ride a wooden horse before they are relegated to the pile of human insanity for good. And eat a big old steak before those are outlawed as well.

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.



Photo courtesy Chad Niehaus

Calving sediment below Clay Hills, San Juan River.

Glen Canyon Dam has created a world of mud

When the San Juan River flows out of the San Juan Mountains in Southwestern Colorado, it contributes 15% of Lake Powell's water.

But there's a problem: The river carries a hefty 55% of the sediment entering the reservoir, and that mud is piling up, and that mud is piling up.

The sediment-heavy river flows south into New Mexico before jogging into Utah, then it joins the Colorado River close to the Arizona border. The confluence is submerged under Lake Powell.

After decades of drought, the reservoir created by Glen Canyon Dam has dwindled to just a third full. Now, as the San Juan River flows toward Lake Powell, it rambles over a huge pancake of mud that's 49 miles long, a mile wide in some places, and as much as 120 feet deep in the final reaches of the San Juan River.

Unique hydrology has contributed to this plug. A relatively wide canyon and multiple waterfalls slow down the river, allowing sediment to drop out. Though the San Juan is the muddiest tributary, all the Colorado's tributaries drop a good deal of mud 100 miles or more upstream of Glen Canyon Dam.

It's a Western phenomenon caused by damming swift rivers, said Jeff Gesslin, a geologist at Fort Lewis College in Durango. The result is that reservoirs in the West have become "temporary sediment storage facilities."

If that mud could move through the Grand Canyon, like it did before the dam, biologists say that would help restore the canyon's ecosystem, which depends on sediment-laden flushes in spring to scour riverbanks. Then, as the river slows, beaches form and vegetation returns.

Gary Gianniny, professor of Geosciences at Fort Lewis College in Durango has been studying the San Juan River, along with river researchers who call their team, "The Returning Rapids Project."

The group's big worry is that without drastic action — draining Lake Powell to

let the Colorado River run free — time may be running out for the languorous San Juan River.

Mike DeHoff, principal investigator of the Returning Rapids Project said the sediment layer on the San Juan has created new channels and new waterfalls. DeHoff added that no one knows whether the river's sediment plug would dissipate even if Glen Canyon Dam were breached.

Researchers boating the San Juan River where it approaches Lake Powell say they're forced to navigate an ever-moving pile of sediment that also involves portaging around rock waterfalls. When they finally arrive at Lake Powell, there's dangerous liquefied clay and sand to navigate.

"I've seen people sink to their chests in the mud, saved only by their flotation devices and nearby boaters," said DeHoff of Moab, Utah.

"We'll need a drone to study that area," added Gianniny.

Researchers with the Returning Rapids Project talk a lot about what to call these giant slabs of calving sediment. DeHoff suggests "mud bergs."

Semi-solid mud walls along the river have already been dubbed "the Dominy Formation," named after the avid federal dam-builder Floyd Dominy.

"Technically, Gianniny said, the giant mud plug is a "mass of uncompacted mud and sand that causes alluvial faning." And falling slabs of sediment, those "mud bergs," act as semi-permanent river features.

BLM River Ranger Chad Niehaus uses a packraft to regularly visit what researchers are calling the Lowest San

Juan. He floats over 30-plus miles of the muddy river, finishing with a four-mile backpack out to a four-wheel drive vehicle 48 miles from Page, Arizona as the crow flies.

Niehaus marvels at the deserted region. "Sediment is moving around, and you must be vigilant in a different way than you do on a 'normal' river."

Drought, climate change, "whatever you call it, the Lowest San Juan has re-emerged," Niehaus said about

wildlife in the once-submerged canyon. "I've seen river otters, mountain lions, coyotes — even pelicans — but the most astounding aspect is how quickly nature is coming back." In places, cottonwood trees are 20 feet high, he said.

"When I was a teenager there were places on maps that were considered forever gone," he said, pointing to sections on the map entitled, "Glen Canyon National Recreation Area."

Now, he said, "some forever-gone places are revealed." He mentions Cathedral in the Desert, a wondrous site on the nearby Escalante River. Enough water has receded to make it visible, though some of this sacred place for Indigenous people is buried under 30-plus feet of sediment.

Meanwhile, the muddy end of the San Juan River is wild again: "I rarely see a footprint."

Dave Marston is the publisher of the independent nonprofit, Writers on the Range, writersontherange.org, dedicated to spurring lively conversation about the West. He lives in Durango.



Writers on the Range
by Dave Marston

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People land in Monte Vista for Crane Festival

By MARIE MCCOLM

MONTE VISTA — People from the San Luis Valley and outside of it were in Monte Vista on March 8-10 for the 41st annual Monte Vista Crane Festival.

The Craft and Nature Fair took place all three days at the Outcalt Event and Conference at SLV Ski-Hi Complex.

Dozens of vendors were set up inside with baked goods, homemade items, wood working, specialty art crafts, clothing, and jewelry.

The Monte Vista Emergency Food Bank was at the fair selling all kinds of goodies. The Kindness Club had a booth, Pam Self of the Homelake Veterans Living Center was also at the craft show.

Alfonso Duran was a vendor at the trade show and said, "I am happy to be here. This morning was a sheet of ice coming in. I live in Bailey, Colorado. This is my fourth or fifth time here. I missed the year when there was COVID. This is the first time I have ever come with snow out here, usually it's beautiful when the cranes come in. It's been a little slow this morning, but I bet it will pick up by this afternoon. Same thing yesterday. I enjoyed the Crane Festival. Lots to see."

Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce Manager Heather Hillin was at the vendor event and said, "Things are going well. We have had a lot of people come out. We look forward to a lot more. The snow won't slow it down. I think it's going well despite the snow."

In addition to the Craft and Nature Fair, there were crane tours that took place mornings and evenings on Friday and Saturday, and Sunday morning. The crane tours ranged from the Baca Wetlands, to Homelake, and the Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge. The

tours were expert led and included viewing of multiple different wildlife, including ducks, geese, owls, and Sandhill Cranes. The weather was chilly but each morning the buses left for the tours, and the tours were all sold out. New this year was a Spanish led tour.

An art exhibit took place featuring artist Jocelyn Catterson. The movie "Migration" was also shown at Vali 3 Theatre for free. The animated movie followed a family of ducks on the vacation of a lifetime.

Marigold Watson and her daughter Daisy of Crestone were in town in front of the Sandhill wings mural on the side of the Elks Lodge in downtown Monte Vista, taking pictures.

Watson said, "My daughter was all excited about taking a picture in front of these wings. This is her first time experiencing cranes, she just turned 5, and she giggled when I took her out to the refuge, and she watched the cranes flying around. I would recommend locals and out of towners to come to this every year. I come every year. This is an experience that you will never forget. Whether you go on a crane tour or drive yourself there, I did both, you just can't forget the beauty of the cranes, how they roost, how they fly, and how they play together. It is one of the most breathtaking experiences I have ever had. I also now have memories with my daughter, and I know she won't forget it either. An amazing experience for the San Luis Valley and Monte Vista."

The fifth annual Swoop of the Cranes art project was also on display throughout downtown. Blank steel cranes were painted by local artists and hung on light poles right before the Crane Festival for people to enjoy.

Even though the festival is over,



Photos by Brian Williams

Sandhill cranes seen Sunday morning in a grain field at the Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge.

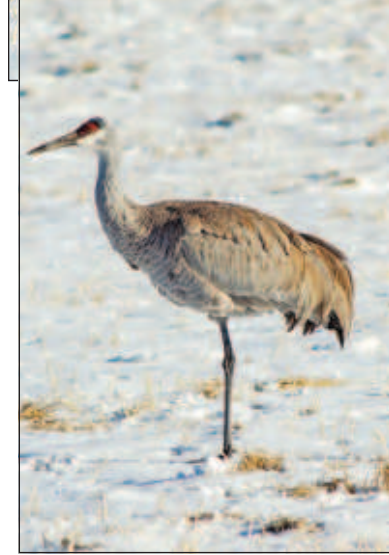


Photo by Marie Mccolm

The Craft and Nature Fair took place all three days of the 41st annual Monte Vista Crane Festival at the Outcalt Event and Conference at SLV Ski-Hi Complex.

SMOKEY

Continued from Page 1A — learn and thrive with many educational resources that are available through the libraries.

The Baca Grande Library offers great books, videos, magazines, and free Wi-Fi along with public computers available for use.

The Baca Grande Library is at 67487 County Road T, in Crestone. For more information on the open house event or the Smokey the Bear Reading Challenge, contact The Baca Grande Library at 719-655-2551 or visit smokeybear.com. The Baca Grande Library currently has a Smokey the Bear Reading Challenge display up in the library with challenge forms.

ARCHERY

Continued from Page 1A — Boys Division)

- Aricenli Alvarez (4th Place - Elementary Girls Division)
- Tanner Shellabarger (4th Place - Middle School Boys Division)
- Chase Shellabarger (4th Place - High School Boys Division)
- Matthew Baker (5th Place - Middle School Boys Division)
- Kandra Pollard (6th Place - Middle School Girls Division)
- Javad Taylor (8th Place - Middle School Boys Division)
- Kyren Plumley (9th Place - Middle School Girls Division)
- Alexandra Alvarez (9th Place - High School Girls Division)

Moffat coaches, Jack Sciacca and Megan Shellabarger plan to take Moffat's top contenders to the 2024 NASP Western National Tournament in Sandy, Utah, in late April. Donations to offset travel expenses are appreciated and can be made by contacting the school.

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San Luis Valley Scoreboard Basketball 2023-2024

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP'S

Boys

Thursday

Class 1A

Denver Jewish 55 Sierra Grande 44

Class 2A

Sanford 52 Crowley County 43

Class 3A

Yuma 35..... Centauri 34

Friday

Class 1A

Sierra Grande 53 Peetz 39

Class 2A

Sanford 58 Merino 39

Saturday

Class 1A

Consolation

Flatirons Academy 65 Sierra Grande 55

Championship

Class 2A

Limon 54..... Sanford 27

Girls

Thursday

Class 3A

Yuma 44..... Centauri 29

CPW's Aquatic nuisance species roadside inspection program to become full-time after two successful pilot years

By COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE

DENVER — Colorado Parks and Wildlife will begin operating two aquatic nuisance species (ANS) watercraft inspection and decontamination stations at the Colorado State Patrol Loma and Trinidad Ports Of Entry on Thursday, March 14. These two check stations are the first to open and operate during the boating season as full-time seasonal roadside inspection stations after two years of a successful pilot program. Starting March 14 through Oct. 31, any vehicle with a motorized or trailered watercraft entering the state on I-70 east from Utah (Loma Port Of Entry) or I-25 north from New Mexico (Trinidad Port Of Entry) will be required to stop for an inspection Thursday-Monday. Watercraft that are clean, drained and dry will be provided a green seal and white inspection receipt showing they passed inspection. Watercraft

found to have mud, water, plants or mussels will be decontaminated. All trailered and motorized watercraft will still be required to go through an ANS inspection at their final destination. Those with a green seal and white receipt from Port of Entry check stations will be expedited.

"Inspecting the highest risk watercraft at ports of entry will serve as a first line of defense and help ensure Colorado's lakes and reservoirs remain free of highly destructive aquatic nuisance species," said Robert Walters, CPW Invasive Species Program Manager. "The last two years and where we take this program into the future could not have been done without our partners at Colorado State Patrol Port of Entry staff and the Colorado Department of Transportation, and we are looking forward to partnering with them again to protect Colorado's bodies of water."

"We are excited to see this program that helps to protect Colorado's

recreational and economic interests through our highly visited lakes, reservoirs and rivers continue," said Yulonda Winterberg, Deputy Director of the Colorado State Patrol Port of Entry. "We appreciate this opportunity to partner with Colorado Parks and Wildlife in such a meaningful way."

After the passage of House Bill 21-1226 which provided authority for the pilot program, CPW launched the pilot program in 2022 with three separate roadside watercraft inspection and decontamination events at the Loma Port Of Entry, west of Grand Junction. CPW staff inspected a total of 95 watercraft at check stations that were open for one day each in May, July, and September. Of those watercraft, 60 were decontaminated and 26 were confirmed to have adult mussels.

After a successful first year, CPW expanded the program in 2023 to operate nine watercraft inspection and decontamination stations at



Photo by R. Gonzales/CPW

CPW invasive species specialist inspects the motor on a patrol boat at Highline Lake on Oct. 12, 23. To help expedite the inspection process and minimize impacts to their travel, CPW encourages boaters to plan ahead and ensure their watercraft are clean, drained, and dry prior to arrival at the check station.

multiple ports of entry and welcome centers across Colorado. ANS staff inspected 21 watercraft, two of which were found to have adult mussels.

"While we did not see the number of watercraft during the 2023 operations, we still prevented two boats with mussels from entering Colorado waters and gained a better understanding of motorized boat travel into the state," said Walters.

Based on the information gathered in 2022 and 2023, CPW determined that the Loma and Trinidad Ports Of Entry would be the highest impact locations for the next phase of the program, as they saw the high-

est number of high-risk out-of-state motorized boats.

To help expedite the inspection process and minimize impacts to their travel, CPW encourages boaters to plan ahead and ensure their watercraft are clean, drained, and dry prior to arrival at the station. Watercraft found to have mud, plants, water or mussels during inspection will be subject to decontamination.

In Colorado, inspections for aquatic nuisance species are mandatory on all motorized boats. Any motorboat and sailboat entering Colorado waters must have an ANS Stamp prior to launching.

CAUCUS

Continued from Page 1A

participate. And now we have two qualified candidates on the primary ballot, which will push us both to work harder for the residents of Saguache County. I am beyond grateful to my community for coming out to support me in this process of civic engagement, and for representing the future leadership of the county," Kinney said. County Commissioner Lynne Thompson was unopposed and will be on the November ballot. Thompson is also the Saguache County Democratic Party Chair.

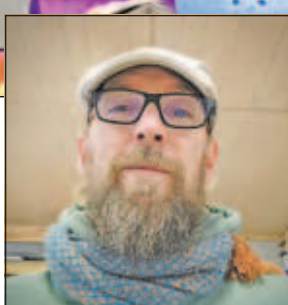
Thompson said there were 51 votes with one unsigned ballot and not valid, leaving 50 votes that resulted in the 30 Kinney, 20 McCracken split.



Photo by John Waters

Saguache County Commissioner Tom McCracken at a recent Town Hall in Crestone.

Right: Adam Kinney of Crestone will be on the June primary ballot for Saguache County Commissioner running against incumbent Tom McCracken.



Bearing Good Fruit When Hard Times Come

The Bible talks about bearing good fruit and how that is God's purpose for our lives. For example, in John 15:5, Jesus says, "I am the Vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in Me and I in him bears much fruit, for [otherwise] apart from Me [that is, cut off from vital union with Me] you can do nothing" (AMP).

And Psalm 1:3 (AMP) says that the person who follows God's ways is "like a tree firmly planted [and fed] by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season; its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers [and comes to maturity]."

When we understand what it means to bear good fruit, then we can fulfill our destiny as ambassadors of Christ in this world (2 Corinthians 5:20). There are two ways this happens: by working with the Holy Spirit to develop the fruit of the Spirit in our lives (Galatians 5:22-23), and by displaying that fruit as we help others.

Many people want the "fruit" of more money, more opportunities in their career, more material possessions, or to be more well known. It's certainly not wrong to have these things. But these things alone won't fulfill us or make us permanently happy and peaceful.

We need to go deeper than that! The good fruit God wants us to have in our lives is peace, joy and mental and emotional stability when the storms of life come. And the Bible teaches that we can grow to the point where we are so deeply planted in the love of Christ that when the storms of life come, we still bear good fruit (Psalm 1:1-3 and Ephesians 3:16-19)!

The real fruit of Christianity is seen in your life when you can bear good fruit when hard times come—and we all have difficulties in life. It may be an unexpected illness, the stress of financial debt, or being betrayed by someone you thought you could trust.

God wants us to be peaceful under pressure and have a good attitude in the midst of pain because when others see us behaving differently, they'll want to know why we can be that way and want to have what we have, too!

Colossians 3:12-15 (AMP) gives us a detailed list of genuine, acceptable Christian behavior, and it should be our goal to live this way every day. Verse 12 says that "as God's chosen people, who are holy [set apart, sanctified for His purpose] and well-beloved [by God Himself]," we should "put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience [which has the power to endure whatever injustice or unpleasantness comes, with good temper."

Now, I want to say here that we can't just live this way in our own strength, without God. I remember when I would decide in the morning: "I'm going to be nice to everyone today!" and I succeeded while I was home alone. But when the people came home, that's when I had trouble with my attitude.

I had to pray for God to help me put on the right attitude and mindset so I could treat others with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience, "which has the power to endure whatever injustice or unpleasantness comes, with good temper." I had to put my faith in God to give me His grace—His strength to do what I could never do in my own effort—believing that He would do it because of who I am in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17, 21).

These verses in Colossians should be our number one goal as believers in Christ. As new creations in Christ, saved by faith, we have a desire to do good things. And as we grow in our relationship with Him, we learn new ways to act and respond to others.



I know from personal experience that this is not always easy. It won't always feel good to obey God and you may have to sacrifice something to do it. But when we choose to trust God and do what He tells us to do no matter how we feel about it, what we think about it, or what others think we should do, then we'll have the amazing life Jesus died for us to have!

We don't have to settle for anything less than God's best for us. Make a decision today to trust God to change you and help you do what's right in every situation. Remember John 15:16 (AMP), which says He has chosen you and "appointed and placed and purposefully planted you, so that you would go and bear fruit and keep on bearing, and that your fruit will remain and be lasting" at all times of your life!

For more on this topic, order Joyce's three-part teaching resource *Busy Going Nowhere*. 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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Courtesy photo

Pictured, left to right, Adams State School of Education Director Curtis Garcia, Ph.D.; Adams State Teacher Education Program Coordinator Advisor Chrissy McKinney; Adams State February Educator Highlight Award recipient, Aaron Williams; and GOAL High Principal Jason Hochevar.

Educator Highlight Award for February goes to Aaron Williams

English teacher at GOAL High School meets students where they are

By ADAMS STATE UNIVERSITY

ALAMOSA — Aaron Williams wants you to believe. Believe in yourself, believe in your abilities, and believe in what you're capable of accomplishing.

As an English teacher at GOAL High School and a track coach at Alamosa High, Williams preaches to students the importance of believing. His work and accomplishments led Adams State School of Education to present Williams with its Educator Highlight Award during a ceremony this week.

"He understands our population," said GOAL High Principal Jason Hochevar. "When a student needs something, needs help, he's always willing to jump in and listen to the kids' stories and find a solution around their barriers and their issues to give them a second, third, fourth chance which is what it takes sometimes."

GOAL High, with a new regional office off Highway 160 in Alamosa, is Colorado's growing online school with more than 5,000 students across the state taking courses with GOAL. Williams is a statewide English teacher, meaning he's working online with students who are in Fort Morgan, Colorado Springs, Cortez and elsewhere across Colorado.

Williams said he'll interact with 20 or so students on a daily basis and around 20 for a school semester through GOAL's online model. "We're trying

to reach them wherever they are in life. Every kid that comes to us is different so we're allowed to be flexible and get them what they need," he said.

When he's done at GOAL for the day, he'll head to Alamosa High where he works as an assistant track coach. Last track season he coached Aani Hardesty to state track titles in the 100- and 300-meter hurdle races. Again, by getting her to believe in the training and what she was capable of accomplishing.

"When I work with kids online, I try to keep that same energy I have if they're right here in front of me," he said.

"It's a unique experience, I'd say," he said of working both for GOAL online and coaching at Alamosa High. "Track is what brought me to school here and what brought me to Alamosa. So it's a way for me to give back to the community."

Williams hails originally from Richmond, CA., and enrolled to run track at Adams State. Like so many others, he met a girl from Alamosa, married her and settled down and settled in for life's haul. He and his wife, Marina, now have two children, Kinwood and Onyx, and he has a growing career in teaching at GOAL and coaching track at Alamosa High.

All because he believed.

This monthly award recognizes Adams State University School of Education alumni, prominent local teachers, and other educators working within or hailing from the San Luis Valley. In so doing, Adams State University hopes to build familiarity with the community as a serious destination for future educators. To nominate an educator email Chrissy McKinney at cmckinney@adams.edu.

March has definitely come in like a lion

By HIGH VALLEY COMMUNITY CENTER

DEL NORTE — The winds have been crazy in the Valley, but there's been some major fun that blew in with them.

This week, the High Valley Community Center will be going to the Gator Farm on Friday! Come learn all about the reptiles that live at the farm and feed a gator or two with us.

Last week, we learned all sorts of new things! The kiddos created raised salt paintings and then took off into outer space to make their own UFOs (aliens included). Our teens started learning about coding and how to make all the 0s and 1s work together to form functional code.



To end the week with a bang, we took everyone on a field trip to the Alamosa Arcade! The kids had a ton of fun playing video games and unwinding after a long week at school.

We are excited for another great week! Feel free to stop by and say, "hi." We love seeing our community members!



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SLV Law Enforcement Victim Response Units

Providing help and support when and where it's most needed

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER

SAGUACHE — In what appears to be another example of law enforcement agencies across the San Luis Valley working together to meet needs that impact all six counties, the SLV Law Enforcement Victim Response Units program is being reinstated after a twenty-year hiatus, providing a comprehensive and unified approach to meeting victims' needs.

This is not the first time that law enforcement agencies have created a coordinated effort in supporting victims. According to Ellen Cox, Saguache County Sheriff's Office Victim Response Coordinator and leader of the SLV Law Enforcement Victim Response Units, an umbrella organization called SLV Victim Services was initially created more than 20 years ago by Alamosa County to "incorporate all the counties in the SLV under one Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grant allowing county coordinators and assistants to focus on the victim services they provided in their area."

Alamosa County was responsible for writing and administering the grant and it "worked very well for quite a few years and grant cycles."

But as things progressed and county victim service programs grew and changed, counties chose to stop functioning under the umbrella as they were awarded and administered their own county VOCA grants.

"As the goals and objectives change in the way victim services focus on diversity, equity and a victim centered approach to our response to survivors of crime in the San Luis Valley," Cox says,

"we realized we needed to come back together as a unified group."

Cox went on to say, "The SLV Law Enforcement Victim Response team realized the need to support each other as well, learning from years of combined experience, and pushing forward in vastly diverse, complex rural communities. So much culture, history and fortitude must be appreciated and respected while providing services to these survivors."

As a result, the newly formed SLV Law Enforcement Victim Response Unit was created as a "First Responder" to victims of crime in the San Luis Valley. Victim advocates in all six counties are coordinating together to provide caring responses, blended resources and much needed support in helping people navigate through traumatic and personal events.

In the course of creating this new organization, it was also realized that there was a need for public education as there is not a general understanding of the differences between what services and support (and the timing of both) can be provided by Law Enforcement Victim Response unit versus a community based program, such as Tu Casa and other service providers.

When asked to explain the difference, Cox says, "Organizations like Tu Casa and the Alliance in Chaffee County are usually serving victims of domestic Violence, sexual assault, elder abuse and human trafficking. They usually have in-house resources such as counseling, some legal assistance and other resources to help with housing, shelter and longer-term aid. In contrast, law enforcement advocates are on-scene in an immediate response to crime victims in the middle of one of the most traumatic events of their life."

As Cox describes it, law enforcement

advocates provide physical and emotional support in whatever capacity victims need. They then continue to provide resources, whether it's accompanying the victim to and through a medical procedure, transportation to shelter for them and their children or support with employers or landlords.

Their help is also invaluable in supporting the victim through what can feel like an overwhelming and very complicated legal process by explaining mandatory restraining orders, bonds and court proceedings.

They also keep victims informed of crucial notifications about court dates and release information and provide any help needed with victim impact statements and victim compensation applications.

"We follow up, just to be there for the victims. But, just to be clear, we cannot counsel or provide legal advice, but we are there, and available for support and help."

Despite working in an occupation where she encounters people who are going through, perhaps, the most

devastating experience of their lives — an occupation that would probably weigh heavily on a number of people — Cox speaks of the potential inherent in SLV Law Enforcement Victim Response Unit program with genuine excitement and optimism about the difference the Response Unit and the people who staff it will make in the lives of others.

"My hope and driving desire is that we can get resources to people before a crime happens, or someone is hurt or a tragedy changes a life forever," she says.

'Electrify and Save' coming to SLVREC members

CONTRIBUTED
MONTE VISTA — In the market for new insulation, windows and doors, water heaters, HVAC systems and other qualifying energy-efficient technology? Take advantage of San Luis Valley Rural Electric Cooperative's (SLVREC) Electrify and Save on-bill repayment program for a simple and transparent financing option.

The new program, "Electrify and Save," launched for its electric members on March 4. Through partnerships with REC's wholesale power supplier Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association and the Colorado Clean Energy Fund (CCFEF), REC is offering the on-bill repayment program to REC members or business owners to install certain energy upgrades to their properties at no upfront cost.

The term "repayment" denotes that a third party, in this case CCEF, provides the upfront funding for the installation. In turn, REC will bill members monthly to recover CCEF's costs over an agreed-upon timeframe. Since there are no loans, these home upgrades will not affect credit scores or add to the homeowners' debt.

"San Luis Valley Rural Electric Cooperative members will be at the forefront of what we believe will be a cutting edge, significant Tri-State program offering unique to our cooperative industry," said Pete Rusin, Tri-State electrification manager. "On-bill repayment gives consumer cooperative members an equitable and common sense means by which they can reduce overall utility spend and improve their quality of life."

As an example, Rusin noted that SLVREC members still using propane could see their overall bills decrease, by addition



Courtesy photo

Heat pumps are a high-efficiency heating and cooling solution. Modern cold climate heat pumps can heat homes efficiently in sub-zero temperatures, even as low as negative 25 degrees Fahrenheit.

dual fuel air source heat pump to an existing propane furnace, or even by financing a full furnace replacement through the on-bill repayment program.

Upgrades include new insulation, windows and doors, water heaters, electric HVAC systems, electric vehicle chargers and more. In many cases, the energy savings achieved through the newly installed measures are greater than the monthly repayment obligation, thereby saving members money on their utility bill every month.

For more information or to apply for a free, data-driven energy assessment of the project, visit www.slvrec.com/electrify-and-save.

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DF-CD-NP-G421

DN Town Board votes to send Anzalone case to Colorado Supreme Court

By **LYNDSIE FERRELL**

DEL NORTE — The Del Norte Town Board voted 4-3 to appeal the decision made by the Colorado Court of Appeals in the case of former Trustee Laura Anzalone vs. The Town of Del Norte to the Colorado State Supreme Court during a special meeting on March 6.

This is the result of a two-year battle between the Town of Del Norte and former Trustee Anzalone, who was censured by the board in 2021. The state court of appeals sided with Anzalone and invalidated the censure, concluding that the town board violated Colorado Open Meetings Law. The Colorado Open Meetings Law ensures that government bodies conduct the public's business in public, with only a few exceptions.

Anzalone filed an open-meetings lawsuit against the Town of Del Norte in 2022 after being censured by the board during a closed executive session in October of 2021. The Del Norte Town Board passed the censure of Anzalone alleging misconduct related to her involvement in the enforcement of town codes.

According to Anzalone, she proposed to begin a request for proposal to seek new staff members and was questioning how the town follows ordinances such as performance evaluation requirements and public speaking during discussion periods.

Anzalone's lawsuit in 2022 was initially dismissed by Rio Grande County District Court Judge Crista Newmyer-Olsen concluding that the board's opinion of her "performance as a trustee," is not subject to the law because a censure does not concern the "formation of public policy."

Anzalone appealed to the Colorado Court of Appeals which ruled in her favor. In late February, the three-judge panel said that Newmyer-Olsen "failed to recognize that the censure was a formal action and therefore ... involved the Town's policy-making powers."

The ruling by the second-highest court in the state reversed the judge's decision, invalidated the censure, and prompted Wednesday's special meeting by the Del Norte Town Board.

The Del Norte Town could accept the ruling or seek to have it go before the state's highest court.

Del Norte Mayor Chris Trujillo opened the special meeting stating that he would allow only a few members of the public to speak on the topic and then open it to

discussion by the board.

The first person to speak was resident Martha Williamson, who talked about an email that she sent to the board that morning.

"Following last week's executive session where you allowed members of the public to speak, there was a discussion about considering the costs associated with this case to date and then any potential financial impacts the town may have moving forward," said Williamson.

Williamson said that from that conversation she understood that the town would use insurance to cover the cost of the lawsuit. Williamson then submitted a CORA request for the financial document that showed the expenses for the case up to date and found that the insurance capped at \$25,000 and an additional \$6,296.05 had been spent beyond the insurance coverage.

Williamson addressed the board and asked them to consider the financial implications this may have on the town.

"My request is the same this week as it was last week. Would the town board please consider and communicate to the public the financial tradeoffs for pursuing this case to the Colorado Supreme Court. What is the financial impacts going to be when you consider things like the town's infrastructure which the town so desperately needs," she said.

Other issues raised by the public included the concern for the financial repercussions and whether pursuing this case to the Colorado Supreme Court was in the best interest of the community.

Local homeowner Karie Lichtenfeld said, "Moving forward with this, the question is at what cost to our town? We need to move forward."

The last person to speak was resident Pat Thompson who said, "I have lived in this town for 35-plus years. My question, and I don't know all of the details, but I look at the infrastructure of the town and my question is, as a taxpayer, do we really want to spend money on something that is not improving our streets or our water or our sewer? How will this benefit us? And if it doesn't? Then why are we doing it?"

After the public comments, Mayor Trujillo said, "We have been working on projects that are in the works. COVID caused a pause in some of the things we are doing but we are getting them done. No one knows the full story. No one knows what was happening here at town hall or that there was harassment



Photos by Lyndsie Ferrell

The Town of del Norte held a special meeting on March 6 at 3 p.m. to decide whether to move the case of former Trustee Laura Anzalone vs. the Town of Del Norte to the Colorado Supreme Court. After a brief discussion it was voted in a 4 to 3 roll call vote to move forward and send the case to the supreme court.

of town staff."

Trujillo then opened the discussion up to the board.

Trustee Marty Asplin said, "Not moving forward doesn't stop the money from already being gone. The money has been spent. That ship sailed in the first lawsuit. The second one allowed the ship to sail even further. It's not like we get money back by stopping here.

Basically, what we are doing if we stop is leaving other municipalities throughout the state as well as us in a position to have to go through this again and again and again."

Asplin said he felt it was the duty of the board to move it forward.

Trujillo called for a roll call vote and the motion to move the case to the Colorado Supreme Court was passed 4-3. Trustees Brenton

Williams, Asplin, Bob Muncy and Mayor Trujillo voted for the motion. Trustees Shelly Burnett, Louie Velasquez and Leigh Anne Lobato voted against.

Lobato, Velasquez, Muncy and Trujillo were also board members when the censure occurred. After the ruling by Newmyer-Olsen, Anzalone decided not to run again once her term had expired.

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Photos by Diane Drekman

The Costilla County Fire Department was honored for their selfless work on March 3 at Grace Chapel in San Luis.

Costilla County Fire Department honored by Grace Chapel

BY DIANE DREKMANN
SAN LUIS — The Costilla County Fire Department was honored on March 3 by Grace Chapel, a Spanish Christian church in San Luis. Grace Chapel Pastor Joel Talamante gave heartfelt “appreciation, thanks, honor and love for all of you. May God protect you all.”

Talamante said although the job is dangerous, he wanted to recognize the fact that a firefighter risks his life for the community. He acknowledged the families, who never know if they will see their loved ones again. He wanted to become a firefighter he became a pastor instead.
Please see HONOR on Page 6



Costilla County Fire Department firefighter Leon Casias holds the appreciation plaque the department received on March 3.

Rio Grande Hospital gives update on Wellness Center, thanks donors

BY LYNSIE FERRELL
DEL NORTE — Rio Grande Hospital announced recently that the new Wellness Center currently being built near the hospital will be finished by early summer and thanked everyone who has donated to the project.



According to Development and Communications Officer Eva Timberlake, the Wellness Center is on track to open by June and the hospital plans to celebrate the grand opening in style.

“We are on track for the finish of the Wellness Center and our hope is to have a community grand opening by early summer. Construction on the project is nearing completion and we can’t wait to share it with the community,” she said.

The Wellness Center project began before 2020 to not only offer patients at the hospital and their families a place to stay but also to offer patients a way to learn about how to be healthier living through several different programs.

At the beginning of the planning phase of the project, Rio Grande Hospital CEO Arlene Harms looked at

what are termed Blue Zones throughout the US and through her research and with the help of several different organizations and people they began to form a plan for what the Wellness Center would look like.

Blue Zones are in about five or six different countries throughout the world and are known for their healthy living lifestyles and longevity of the residents.

One group here in the US is known for the healthy living habits formed by its members which is group of Seventh-day Adventists. The group is in the Loma Linda area in California. The group has made headlines in certain circles for their residents who live almost a decade longer than the average person and they attribute this fact to their lifestyle.

The Wellness Center will have a community center where members of the community can come host meetings, meet for coffee or utilize resources offered by the center. It will be an intersection for employees who can take their breaks there, there will
Please see RGH on Page 7

Future farmers attend leadership event at Adams State University

CONTRIBUTED
SAN LUIS VALLEY — Sargent Future Farmers of America (FFA) took a group of students to participate in the District IV Leadership Development Event contests at Adams State University on Feb. 14.

District IV is made up of Sargent, Sangre De Cristo, Monte Vista, Centauri, Alamosa, Sanford, and La Veta FFA Chapters.

Leadership Development Events (LDE's) consist of a variety of contests that allow students to demonstrate

a variety of skills such as public speaking, critical thinking, and communication.

- Creed Speaking
First Place — Makenzie Consaul
Second Place — Durae Naranjo
- Extemporaneous Speaking
First Place — Westen Burkhart
Prepared Speaking
Second Place- Ellaree Rockey
Third Place- Jessica Buser

All first-place winners have qualified to represent District IV at the State LDE contests in June.



Courtesy photo

Quizbowl winners, left to right, Kandace Pargin, Madeline Mitchell, and Donovan Heineman of Sargent FFA.



Courtesy photo

Haskin Elementary kindergarten teacher Jatón Najera’s class celebrated 100 days of school by dressing up like they were 100 years old and doing activities related to the number 100.

Haskin Elementary kindergarteners celebrate 100 days of school

BY MARIE MCCOLM
CENTER — Haskin Elementary kindergarten classrooms recently celebrated 100 days in school. Kindergarten teacher Jatón Najera’s class was just one of many that celebrated the milestone.

Najera said the children enjoyed the celebration.

“It was a fun day for the kids. The kids were so cute. I have been

a teacher for 11 years now and every year we have the 100-day celebration,” Najera said. “The kids were told they could dress up like they were 100 years old, and there were kids that came dressed up like they were 100 years old. The boys were wearing suspenders with big pants, and some of the boys even wore stick-on moustaches. The girls had curly hair and lots of fancy

jewelry, it was a fun time for all.” Najera said that the classroom often celebrates different things based on happenings at the school and holidays. She said that the kids were informed of the celebration, and they all acted like they were 100 years old.

“A lot of the kids also brought in canes. They were walking around
Please see 100 on Page 6

San Luis Valley Area Real Estate



Pronghorn Ranch is a gated development located 2.5 miles south of the town of Del Norte. Here the panoramic view encompasses the mountains, valley, and visually interesting rock outcroppings. Natural grasses and evergreen trees dot the landscape. The large parcel lots offer space to grow and privacy. There are 29 available lots ranging in size from 35 to 88-acre parcels.

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Approx. 246 +/- acres of Rio Grande River frontage and is zoned for residential use. WATER RIGHTS: L #28 and #203 out of the L RIGHTS: 3 domestic M irrigation well 3095 +/- acres with 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms with lg. kitchen and 1 car garage. The guest house is 1486 sq. ft. with a 2 car garage and there's a 2000 sq. ft. pool shop with concrete floor. The property has approx. 1 mile of Rio Grande River front with lots of trees and native grasses. Call Bruce Steffens today for more information.

\$2,200,00 | MLS# 810790
19198 County Rd. 15 Del Norte, CO

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30635 W. US HWY 160, South Fork, Colorado



Looking for your dream property to build your mountain retreat? This stunning 5.2 acre lot offers sweeping mountain views that will take your breath away! With gated access, you can enjoy privacy and security, ensuring that your mountain getaway will be your own personal haven. The property comes with private access to the Rio Grande River, so you can fish, kayak or simply enjoy the beauty of Colorado's most iconic rivers. Don't miss your chance to own this piece of paradise!

\$131,000 | MLS# 802486
147 Explorer Way South Fork, CO

YVONNE HOFFMAN
BROKER | REALTOR®
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30635 W. US HWY 160, South Fork, Colorado



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Lot 4 - 83+/- acres	Lot 5 - 35+/- acres
Lot 6 - 35+/- acres	Lot 8 - 81+/- acres

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Approx. 36.34 acres of Del Norte. This property has 2 bedrooms, plus a brand new appliances. Two sunrooms with outdoor patios on each side of the house. It has a 3 car detached garage with a 2 bedroom apartment above. Check out the greenhouse and/or chicken house along with a 2-story barn with horse stalls.

Experience the beauty of the Colorado landscape in this amazing mountain retreat. Call Bruce Steffens today for more information.

\$895,000 | MLS# 804698
4617 County Rd. 13 Del Norte, CO

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Nestled in the beauty of Del Norte this is a 30 acre ranch with San Francisco Creek flowing through the property allowing fishing on your own land. The residence itself is secluded, ensuring privacy with its 1/4-mile driveway that shields it from the main road. Call Bruce Steffens today for a showing appointment.

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Call Tate Huffaker today for more information.

\$150,000 | MLS# 810416
103 Antonito St. Romeo, CO
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Elementary Behavior Interventionist / School Assessment Coordinator / Response to Intervention Coordinator needed at Del Norte Elementary School for the 2024-2025 school year. We are seeking a hardworking and enthusiastic teaching professional to join our dynamic, vibrant and fun-loving team. Applicants must have a Colorado Teaching

License. Please submit your application, resume and cover letter to: Amy Duda, Principal at aduda@urtigers.co or contact Amy at 719-657-4050. Applications can be picked up at the District Office or online at: urtigers.co. (3-27)

Instructional Coach needed at Del Norte Elementary School. Candidate should be proficient in all areas of teaching and learning, with an emphasis on professional practice and the teaching and learning cycle. The coach will be responsible for consulting with and supporting the instructional teaching staff in using resources that impact student learning. The coach will provide support and professional learning to instructional staff as needed. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree or higher and possess or be able to obtain a Colorado Teaching

License. Please submit your application, resume, and cover letter to Amy Duda, Principal at aduda@urtigers.co. Applications can be picked up at the District Office or online at: urtigers.co. (3-27)

Del Norte Elementary School Teacher needed at the URGSD. We are seeking a hardworking and enthusiastic teaching professional to join our dynamic, vibrant and fun-loving team for the 2024-2025 school year. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree or higher and possess or be able to obtain a Colorado Teaching License. Please submit your application, resume and cover letter to: Amy Duda, Principal at aduda@urtigers.co or contact Amy at 719-657-4050. Applications can be picked up at the District Office or online at: urtigers.co. (3-27)

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 License #100072622 **bmgingrass@gmail.com**

RGH Continued from Page 1A

be games, books and computers to use, and help families that have members in the hospital.

The center will also house a teaching kitchen so that families can come and learn how to cook healthy meals; a greenhouse and herb garden; an educational room; meditation room;

access to the nearby trails and hiking as well as so much more. For more information, visit the hospital's website at www.riograndehospital.org.

Now, with the project nearing completion, the hospital wanted to begin thanking those who have donated, beginning with local banks

who have generously helped the project. "A huge thanks goes out to Rio

Grande Bank, Del Norte Bank and San Luis Valley Bank and to everyone

who helped make this dream a reality," hospital officials stated.



Courtesy photos

Rio Grande Hospital begins thanking the many donors who have helped bring the Wellness Center from a dream to reality. A huge thanks went out to Del Norte bank, Rio Grande Bank and San Luis Valley Bank for their contributions.

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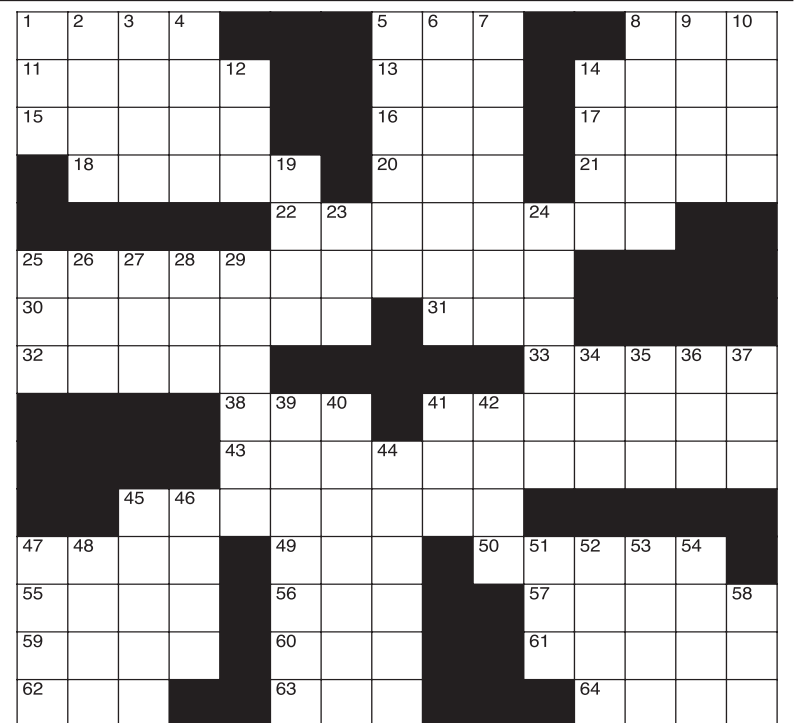
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- CLUES ACROSS**
1. Information
 5. Seaport (abbr.)
 8. Agricultural disease (abbr.)
 11. Riding horses
 13. Boxing's GOAT
 14. Hurt or discomfort
 15. A small sharp knife to trim vegetables
 16. A beaver builds one
 17. Horizontal passage into a mine
 18. Self-immolation by fire rituals
 20. Chain bar with lots of games (abbr.)
 21. Goo Goo Dolls' hit
 22. Agreeable
 25. In an early way
 30. In a way, struck
 31. It's there in the morning
 32. County in the S. Pacific
 33. Central Florida city
 38. Numbers cruncher
 41. Mexican beers
 43. Lawyers say you can indict one
 45. Capital of South Australia
 47. Wings
 49. Drug used to treat HIV/AIDS
 50. Fencing sword
 55. Capital of Qatar
 56. Portable bed
 57. Afflicted
 59. Lying down
 60. Midway between



- northeast and east
27. Very long period of time
 28. Gas usage measurement
 29. North American native people
 34. It says "moo"
 35. Folk singer Di Franco
 36. Resinlike substance of certain insects
 37. Residue
 39. Grand homes
 40. Popinjays
 41. Man who behaves dishonorably
 42. Figures
 44. One who watches over children
 45. Expressed pleasure
 46. No longer living
 47. Hebrew calendar month
 48. Part of the ear
 51. Swiss river
 52. Prejudice
 53. Italian Island
 54. Resist authority (slang)
 58. Criticize
- CLUES DOWN**
1. A way to fish
 2. Greek mythological figure
 3. Scarlett's home
 4. Assist
 5. More doleful
 6. Premeditated
 7. Dish featuring minced food
 8. San Diego ballplayer
 9. Eight
 10. Unwelcome picnic guests
 12. Human gene
 14. Bucket
 19. Make full
 23. Dirt
 24. Person cited as ideal example
 25. A part of (abbr.)
 26. The 17th letter of the Greek alphabet

Solution to last week's puzzle

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

Changes to the Harvest Information Program (HIP) small game hunters must know

By COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE

COLORADO — Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) is changing how hunters register with the Harvest Information Program (HIP) for the upcoming small game hunting season. Beginning March 2024, hunters will be able to complete their HIP survey when they purchase a license at cpwshop.com, or a CPW office.

This change will bring the HIP registration process into CPW's Integrated Parks and Wildlife System, launched in 2017, that created a one-stop shop for all CPW products, including hunting and fishing licenses, campsite reservations, OHV and snowmobile permits, and more.

CPW apologizes for any inconvenience this change will cause for some hunters; however, the change should streamline HIP registrations for most. Hunters can now register for HIP when they buy their licenses in the same system. Also, hunters are no longer required to write down a HIP number on their license to prove registration, as it will be documented on their customer record.

If you buy a small game license at an external license agent, you must

complete the HIP survey through your online account at cpwshop.com before hunting small game. Later this year, an automated phone service will be available for hunters to register with HIP.

Colorado requires all small game hunters to sign up with HIP to help CPW better estimate harvest for species that are difficult to assess through a general small game survey. HIP is a joint U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and CPW program designed to improve small game and migratory bird harvest estimates.

For hunters that are or plan to

hunt light geese in March of 2024, you can still get your 2023 HIP at 1-866-265-6447; however, the website at www.colohip.com will be disabled on March 1.

Remember, if you plan to hunt light geese on or after April 1, you will need a 2024 license and 2024 HIP registration before you hunt on or after April 1, 2024.

Please note: if you are buying a small game license only as a qualifying license for the big game application period and will not hunt small game in Colorado in 2024-2025, do not register with HIP.



Courtesy photo

Small game hunters are urged to learn about the new changes to small game regulations for the coming season. More information about the changes can be found at www.cpw.state.co.us.

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100

Continued from Page 1

with canes and giggling. The kids had a fun time for the celebration," she said.

Najera said that during the celebration the students sang songs together, they counted to 100, and they also read 100 words, and counted out 100 words as they read them.

"The kids knew that it would be their 100th day at school," Najera said.

Najera said that the kids also colored little paper hats with the number 100 on them. The kids also colored paper gumball machines that said they had a ball on the 100th day of school. Najera said that the pictures also had 100 dots on them in honor of the 100 days at school.

Najera said there is a man named Jack Hartman who creates YouTube videos and content for kids.

"He has a video called the one hundredth day of school, and in the video, he counts to 100. The video has him and another lady also dressed up like they are 100 years old counting too. The kids were able to watch the video and count to 100 with him and the lady on the video.

We also listened to some different books about one hundred days at school," she said.

HONOR

Continued from Page 1

CCFD Chaplain Robert Dale said, "It is something inside of us. I always thought we do what we do if we can save one person or one house..."

Dale and his fellow firefighters have been able to help many people.

The firefighters were presented with a plaque which showed the community's appreciation for what they do.

The plaque read, "Greater love hath no man than this. That a man lay down his life for his friend," which is from the Bible, John 15:13.

The firefighters were treated to a delicious meal. There are several fathers and sons working side by side for the department, like Raphael Maestas and his son Russell and Robert Espinoza and his son Juan. Isaiah Montano is the grandson of one of the church members.

This past November the Helping Hands Foundation helped the Costilla County Fire Department obtain badges and new uniforms.

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South Fork plans for spring activities beginning with annual Easter Egg Hunt

By LYNDIE FERRELL

SOUTH FORK — The South Fork Visitor Center in partnership with the Rio Grande Club and Resort are starting the spring season in South Fork with their annual Easter Egg Hunt. This event is an area favorite, offering a wonderful chance to welcome spring with some family fun.

The Rio Grande Club and Resort,

with help from the South Fork Visitor Center, are planning to transform a portion of the golf course with an array of colorful Easter eggs, games and activities for the entire family to enjoy.

On March 30 from 10 to 11:30 a.m., children ages 10 and younger can come to the driving range at the Rio Grande Club and Resort to say hello to the Easter Bunny, hunt for eggs and enjoy several games and prizes.

CAC annual Variety Show auditions April 2 and 4

CREEDE — The Creede Arts Council recently announced that the 29th Annual Variety Show will be taking place on April 13 at 7 p.m. at the Ruth Humphrey's Theatre in Creede.

If you sing, dance, act, perform magic, juggle — all the above — then the CAC is looking for you. Auditions for the show will be taking place on Tuesday, April 2, from 6-7 p.m. at

the Creede Community Church and again on Thursday, April 4, from 4:30-5:30 p.m. at the Creede Community Church.

All types of acts are encouraged to audition. Acts must be performance ready and appropriate for a wide range of audience, including families.

For more information or to schedule an audition, call 719-658-2333.

Storytime at the Conejos Library District

LA JARA — Every Thursday morning from 11:40 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. the Conejos Library Maria De Herrera Branch in La Jara hosts a weekly Storytime and Crafttime.

The stories selected are usually seasonal in nature with a craft activity related to the story. In February, young patrons listened to Valentine stories and got to make Valentines for Veterans.

Sometimes though, the story-subject is what the librarian wants to learn more

about. Take for example last week, the librarian wanted to know more about giraffes and so several books fictional and nonfiction were read, and the librarian learned about giraffes and the smallest patrons learned about giraffes.

This week, young patrons will hear a story called "The Doorbell Rang" by Pat Hutchins, which is a story about sharing and problem solving, as well as a memorable introduction to the concept of division.

Health fair in Center will be on April 12

CONTRIBUTED

CENTER — Center Head Start, in conjunction with Rio Grande Hospital, is planning to have a health fair again. The health fair will be from 7 to 10 a.m. on Friday, April 12, at the Center Head Start building, 301 E. 3rd St.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the health fairs were not held.

People can come and have blood work done at the health fair. There

will be free screenings, including height, weight, blood pressure and blood glucose finger sticks.

For a free the following can be done: Chemistry Panel, including TSH for \$30; PSA for \$30; hemoglobin A1C for \$30; blood type for \$25; CBC for \$20 and Vitamin D for \$45.

For more information on screenings, the health fair, or to have a booth at the fair, call Center Head Start at 719-759-9259.

Are you interested in being a member of the SLVREC Board?

SAN LUIS VALLEY — Petitions for the nomination of director candidates for the San Luis Valley Rural Electric Cooperative (SLVREC) are now available. Members can find information online at slvrec.com (About Us tab, "Annual Meeting").

For a petition packet, call Michelle Trujillo at 852-3538 or email mtrujillo@slvrec.com to have a petition packet

mailed or pick up at SLVREC's office at 3625 US Highway 160 West, Monte Vista.

At the June 11, SLVREC Annual Meeting, two directors will be elected: one from Costilla County, District 2 and one from Alamosa County, District 4.

Completed petitions must include 15 valid SLVREC member signatures and be returned to SLVREC no later than Thursday, April 11, (or Thursday,

April 4 to have a brief bio included in the Annual Report). It is recommended to obtain 20 signatures in the event that any of the signatures are invalid. Call Trujillo at 719-852-3538, with any questions.

If you're interested in having a brief bio included in the Annual Report and online, contact Jennifer Alonzo at jalonzo@slvrec.com by Thursday, April 4.



PUBLIC AUCTION March 23rd, 2024 Saturday 9:30 am

Location: 19190 County Rd 15, Del Norte, CO. At the intersection of Hwy 160 & Hwy 112 head north, go across the bridge take the first left onto CR 15 then take the next left to the sale site. Watch for signs.

Auctioneer's Note: Items on this auction are in good to excellent condition. This property has been sold and the owners are dispersing of many years of Household, Farm and Ranch items. Check our FB page for more pictures.

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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.

Our black dogs are half off this month!

For some reason black dogs (and cats) tend to spend a much longer time in shelters than any other color of dog. These dogs are super sweet, loyal, loving and deserve a chance at a fur-ever home! Come meet them today!



We just want to say a Big Thank You to everyone who has helped us out already this year! We appreciate all of you!

We could really use some laundry detergent and dish soap! It's how we stay on top of health and cleanliness here at the shelter! Thank You!

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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CRT boasts educational and CMAC programs for coming season

By LYNDIE FERRELL

CREEDE — Creede Repertory Theatre (CRT) has a year of discovery planned for the 2024 season and alongside the many unique and colorful productions, the theatre also has several educational programs for adults and youth as well as a schedule of musical programs through the Creede Musical Arts Collective (CMAC).

One of the longest standing educational programs offered through CRT is the Young Audience Outreach Tour. This program has offered musical and theatrical art education to over 40,000 young people in the 40 years the program has been in place. This educational outreach has brought the joy and fun of theatrical education to several rural schools throughout the southwestern US and continues to grow each year.

This season, the Young Audience Outreach Tour will be bringing "Coyote and the Counting Game" to students beginning Aug. 30. Each production comes with a book that is passed out to students and this year the book and lyrics are by Diana Grisanti with music by Emiliano Messiez.

According to the play's description, "Gaby's having a rough year. She's failing third grade math, her genius brother is about to go off to college, and her parents won't buy her the drum set of her dreams. But when a crafty Coyote comes into her life, she discovers that she might be able to trick her way out of her troubles. A modern-day trickster tale, full of fractions, word problems, and good

old-fashioned sibling rivalry."

Another annual educational program brought to the community has been captivating students ages 10 to 18 since 2003 and this year will be no exception. This year's production will be "Maximum Conflict and External Strife." This is a comedy written by Steve Moulds and directed by Tyler Horn.

"There's a new role-playing game that's all the rage — though not everyone's a fan. Some kids find the game's wall-to-wall fighting exhausting. And parents are worried that it's making their kids angrier. But when one family casts a magic spell that sucks them inside the game, they have to navigate the cartoonishly violent world of Maximum Conflict to find their way back home."

Not only is the theatre continuing with their exceptional educational programs, but they will be again offering musical programs through the Creede Musical Arts Collective and the Summer Concert Series.

"On the Stage of Sondheim: A Musical Adventure" is bound to bring a dash of class to Creede this summer. "Sondheim reaches new heights in Creede..."

Creede Rep teams up with the spectacular artists at Creede Musical Arts Collective (CMAC) to bring you a one-of-a-kind concert series. Complementing our season of discovery, each concert will be a fresh experience with a rotating catalog of prolific songs and performers from both organizations who will use the magic of Stephen Sondheim to delight your ears and your heart this summer."

The Creede Musical Arts Collective

has brought music to the streets of Creede since 2021 and is known for popping up in wonderful places throughout town and during events to share their musical talents with visitors and residents alike.

Discover what CRT has in store by visiting www.creederep.org, to see a full schedule or to purchase tickets.



3RD ANNUAL EQUIPMENT & CONSIGNMENT AUCTION

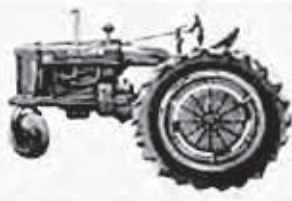


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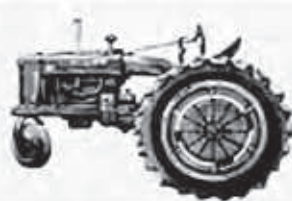


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