

2024 Spring Home Improvement
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2024 Spring Home Improvement



22 SLV hoopsters named All-State by CHSAA

— Inside Today's Valley Courier

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LOCAL NEWS... LOCAL VIEWS

March 22, 2024

\$1

SLV Today

Volunteer at the Rio Grande Farm Park on Saturday

ALAMOSA — Volunteers are needed from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. on March 23 at the Rio Grande Farm Park to help build picnic benches and repair fences. The farm park is at 6935 Colorado Highway 17 in Alamosa.

DN begins legwork for revitalization project

DEL NORTE — The Town of Del Norte's Revitalization Downtown 2016 project is happening, according to town officials.

The Town of Del Norte and Element Engineering will be doing a door-to-door walkthrough of all business and residents along the Highway 160 corridor — Cherry Street to Alder Street — that this project will be impacting on Tuesday and Wednesday, March 26, and March 27, to discuss the timeline of the project and an alternate entrance of the business to not create hardship when this project gets started.

The project consists of replacing all sidewalks, curbs and gutters and the installation of pedestrian lighting along the business corridor.

"We hope to have the support of businesses and residents during this downtown project along with patience and cooperation from everyone impacted, even as we are disrupting your environment. We hope everyone will be pleased with the improvements," officials stated.

For more information, call the Del Norte Town Hall at 719-657-2708 or Del Norte Public Works at 719-850-1968.

SLV WEATHER



Sunny, Breezy 59/30
Sat: Partly Sunny, Gusty Wind 58/31
Sun: Chance of Snow, Breezy 50/23

INSIDE

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Sand Dunes Solar Project public meeting shines light on local concerns

By **JOHN WATERS**
Courier News Editor
SAGUACHE — At a public meeting at the Saguache Community Center on Tuesday, March 19, Georgi Velkov and a phalanx of five other representatives of the proposed Sand Dunes Solar Project met with about forty residents.

The project owners are Horus Energy/Horus Capital, a London-based private equity firm proposing to build a 170MW solar farm on 1,000 acres about five miles southwest of Moffat in Saguache County.

Horus owns about half of the land with the remainder owned by a private party.

At the outset of the meeting, project representative Jeremy Call asked the audience, "How many of you came tonight with healthy skepticism?" Several people raised their hands. During the meeting, many of those in the audience expressed deep skepticism, especially regarding the effects the project may have on wildlife. "One thing that we hope to dismiss right



Courier photo by John Waters
Georgi Velkov (left) and Michael Klein (right) representatives from the proposed Sand Dunes Solar Project, a 1000-acre solar farm in Saguache County at a public meeting the company held in Saguache on March 19.

Fire destroys house in Moffat, continues to burn next day



By **PRISCILLA WAGGONER**
Courier Reporter

MOFFAT — A house fire in Moffat, which began Wednesday night and destroyed a large residence on Lincoln Street near County Road T, continues to burn on Thursday afternoon. According to Saguache County Sheriff Dan Warwick, the fire will likely continue to burn until an excavator can be brought in to "bring down the structure" and the fire can be extinguished.

Firefighters from three agencies were on scene of a fire Wednesday night which destroyed large home in Moffat.

Courtesy photo

Northern Saguache Fire District, Mosca Hooper Fire Department and the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control are on the scene, monitoring the situation.

According to Warwick, at 6:02 p.m. on Wednesday night, a person inside the residence called the sheriff's office to report the house, owned by former Saguache County Clerk Melinda Myers, was on fire. It is not known if Myers was residing in the house at the time, but Warwick confirmed that the resident was able to escape without injury.

According to Bobby Woelz, Saguache County

■ See **FIRE** page 3

Alleged shoplifter shot by bystander

STAFF REPORT
ALAMOSA— A reported incident involving an alleged shoplifter at Walmart led to the suspect being shot in the leg by a bystander near the Fairfield Inn, just west of Walmart around 4 p.m.

Thursday. Alamosa Police Department reports that the suspect pulled out a knife near the hotel, prompting the bystander to shoot. The injury appears to be non-life threatening, although the male party

is being flown out for further evaluation and treatment, an APD press release said.

The shoplifting suspect reportedly fled from Walmart security and APD was dispatched.

All parties involved

have been contacted and identified for further investigation.

The shooter is currently being detained and interviewed by the Alamosa Police Department to determine the circumstances leading up to the

shooting. This investigation is in the very early stages and no further information will be released at this time.

This was an isolated incident and there is no further risk to the community currently.

Pianist Vynogradov performing March 24 at Baca Colorado College



Demitro Vynogradov

CONTRIBUTED
CRESTONE — Welcome Spring to the sound of music — and enjoy the artistry of the Ukrainian piano virtuoso Dymitro Vynogradov. He will perform works by Chopin, Liszt, Scriabin, Rachmaninov, and a fascinating transcription for piano of Johann Strauss' "the Blue Danube, in a concert on the Baca Colorado College "amphitheater," at 2 p.m. on Sunday, March 24.

Since graduating with honors from the National Musical Academy of Ukraine, Vynogradov has won prizes in several international competitions, performed

widely in Europe and the Americas, and mentored many students at universities around the world. In 2009 for example, prior to a professional career, he won Second Prize at the 20th Concours International des Grands amateurs de Piano in Paris, and First Prize at the Rocky Mountain Piano Competition in Denver.

Last June, he was granted leave from war-torn Ukraine to perform as a guest artist at the 2023 Cliburn International Junior Piano Competition & Festival in Dallas, Texas. From there as fate would have it, he came to

Valley, where he recently students as a visiting professor at Adams State University's Music Department.

Vynogradov is performing in the United States partly to raise funds for the victims of war in his country. He formed a non-governmental charity in Ukraine for this purpose that is run by a friend he trusts. A collection box at the Colorado College lobby will accept donations large and small. All are invited to a reception to honor Vynogradov in the lobby following the performance.

■ See **PIANIST** page 3

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Record

OBITUARIES

Marilyn Eagles

Marilyn Eagles, 83, died at Penrose Hospital in Colorado Springs, on March 17 surrounded by family. She was born in Denver, Colo., the daughter of Charles and Maxine Burton. She was raised in Denver, alongside her three siblings, and their tight-knit family.

Marilyn never met a stranger and brightened every room she walked into with her caring and loving spirit. She loved nothing more than to be surrounded by her family and friends, ensuring a kitchen that smelled of fresh baked sweets and homemade meals.

She kept chickens, had several flower gardens, as well as a large vegetable garden and worked hard to freeze the garden bounty. She was a willing farming partner and was often called upon for numerous errands and tasks.

Marilyn was an amazing, loving Grandma, who was always available to care for young grandchildren or attend numerous activities, alongside an enthusiastic Grandpa.

Marilyn graduated from West High School in 1959. In the same year, she started Nursing school at St. Luke's Hospital, where she would come to be class president, and earning the title of "that certain smile". After attaining her RN, in 1962, she got a job working at St. Luke's Hospital, carrying out her lifelong passion to help others. Her most important patient came to be her husband, Dick Eagles, who was recovering from a critical automobile accident and Marilyn was his ICU nurse. Once recovered from his accident, Dick bought Marilyn a bus ticket to the San Luis Valley, with a goal to turn the city girl into a farm girl.

Marilyn married the love of her life and former patient, on Dec. 7, 1963, at Brentwood United Methodist Church in Denver. Marilyn jumped right into the farming lifestyle, building a beautiful life together, on their homestead in Cen-

ter, Colo. Dick and Marilyn were married nearly 60 wonderful years, and proudly raised their two children, Julie and BJ. They were overjoyed to be grandparents and fully loved and supported Nolan, Skylar, Lindsey, and Elle in every way.

Marilyn was a devoted homemaker and continued to carry out her nursing passion, by being a relief nurse for Dr Haskin, in Center. She also volunteered as a camp nurse, at Beaver Creek Camp in South Fork. Marilyn truly was the hardest worker around, keeping up with kids, gardening, helping however she could on the farm and being the #1 boom driver, for potato harvest. She ensured that her family had home-cooked meals every day and a bottomless cookie jar. Marilyn and Dick also raised sheep, which is how Marilyn eventually earned the title of Grandma Lammy.

Marilyn was well respected in her community where she was very involved in the United Methodist Church in Center, serving several times in leadership roles as well as being in the church choir. The church was widely known for the annual Christmas Bazaar, where Marilyn helped to create wreaths, centerpieces and provided homemade cinnamon rolls, cookies and caramels for the event. She was also involved in the Women's Federation for many years. In addition, Marilyn volunteered many years at the Center Schools, assisting with vision and hearing screenings and other events. Marilyn was awarded Master Farm Homemaker on Oct. 10, 1992.

Marilyn was overjoyed to have four amazing grandchildren that she constantly supported, by never missing the opportunity to always cheer them on at all phases of life. Whether it was early age artwork, sports, school, and wherever life has taken them, she was always their #1 fan. Even offering to be references on resumes so she



could tell everyone how special her grandkids are. She was also overjoyed to hear that the first great-grandchild would be arriving in September.

Marilyn was preceded in death by her parents, Charles and Maxine Burton, and her husband Dick Eagles along with many special friends.

She is survived by her daughter Julie and husband Troy Baker, son BJ Eagles and partner Amanda Stagner; four grandchildren, Nolan and wife Shelby Baker, Skylar Eagles, Lindsey and husband Alex Trujillo, and Elle Eagles; siblings Larry (Suzanne) Burton, Linda (Dan) Hutchison, Allen (Nancy) Burton; and numerous nieces and nephews.

A funeral church service will be held on Saturday, March 23, 2024, at 10 a.m. at the Center Methodist Church. A reception will follow to culminate Marilyn's celebration of life after the church service.

Interment will be held on Tuesday, March 26, 2024, at 10 a.m. at the San Luis Valley Cemetery in Monte Vista, Colo.

Arrangements are made through Strohmayer's Funeral Home, in Monte Vista, Colo. Flowers can be received there until Friday, March 22, at 4 p.m.

Memorial contributions can be made to: Center United Methodist Church or Children's Diabetes Foundation, through Strohmayer's Funeral Home.

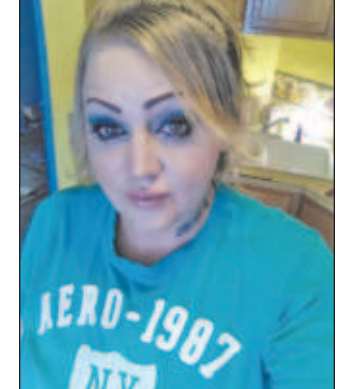
Nicole M. (Kirkendall) Carragher

Nicole M. (Kirkendall) Carragher, passed away on March 16, 2024, in Mosca, Colo. Born on April 8, 1984, in Denver, Colo., Nicole's infectious laughter and love for life touched all who knew her throughout her 39 years.

Nicole's early years were spent in the vibrant city of Denver, where she grew up surrounded by the love and support of her parents, Frank and Debi Kirkendall, and her brother, Dustin. Her family later expanded to include her cherished daughters, Aaliyah and Alyssa Valley of Colorado Springs, who brought immense joy and purpose to her life.

Throughout her career, Nicole was the welcoming face at the front desk of various hotels, where her love for meeting new people shone brightly. Her colleagues and guests alike were often greeted with her warm smile and a friendly conversation, making her a beloved figure in her professional community.

Creative and funny, Nicole had a passion for the arts, often spending time crafting with her



mother, Debi. Her artistic talents were a source of happiness.

Nicole's love for music was another cornerstone of her life, providing a soundtrack to many cherished memories with friends and family.

Nicole's love story with her late husband, Cyril Carragher, was one for the ages. Cyril was her life, and she loved him deeply. His passing a year prior left a void in her heart, but she continued to carry his spirit in everything she did. Together, they shared a bond that transcended time and will continue to live on through their shared memories.

A loving and devoted daughter, Nicole enjoyed helping her parents with home renovations, showcasing her knack for

painting and an exceptional talent for washing windows for them and all the neighbors. Her contributions to the family home were not only practical but also filled with laughter and love.

Nicole leaves behind a legacy of love and laughter. She is survived by her daughters, parents, brother, grandpa James Warner, grandparents Ted and Mary Kirkendall, aunts Carlana (Larry) Ceja and Carla (Dale) Fogery, uncle Ryan Williams, and aunt Nicole Soto, cousins Darren, Kyle, Jasper, Cameron, Jordan, and Jeffery.

She was preceded in death by her husband Cyril, cousin Terry Ceja, grandparents Willa May and Roger Williams, and Dean Kirkendall.

A visitation will be held Friday, March 22, 2024, at Rogers Family Mortuary in Alamosa from noon to 2 p.m. A memorial service is pending and will be announced at a later date.

Rogers Family Mortuary is in care of the arrangements. To leave online condolences, words of comfort and tributes for Nicole's family, please visit www.RogersFunerals.com.



Courier photo by Keith R. Cerny

Alamosa firefighters battle an apparent chimney fire Tuesday night at 327 Edison. A passerby alerted the residents of the fire and they were able to escape unharmed.

Family escapes house fire Tuesday

STAFF REPORT
ALAMOSA — A passerby alerted a local family that their home was on fire about 8 p.m. Tuesday after noticing smoke pouring from the roof.

The occupants of 327 Edison, at the corner of Fourth and Edison, escaped unharmed according to Capt. Zach Cerny

of the Alamosa Fire Department (AFD). The fire is believed to have originated in a wood stove chimney with most of the damage contained to the attic.

The home suffered significant water damage after firefighters fought the blaze from both the outside and in-

side, Cerny said, but he believes the house is repairable.

Thirteen firefighters from the AFD, with assistance by five firefighters from the Monte Vista department and one officer with the Division of Fire Prevention and Control were on scene for about 90 minutes.

Phony investment 'opportunities' can cost you big, say U.S. Postal Inspectors

(NAPSI) — Huge returns and little to no risk? Who wouldn't want an investment opportunity like that? If you receive a pitch by phone, mail or email that makes such incredible financial promises as high returns with a low risk, you might ask yourself, "How is this possible?" Generally, it's not.

The Problem
Postal Inspectors say investment opportunities or "get rich quick" schemes are a favorite of fraudsters. Whether they sell bogus securities or commodities, oil wells, rare coins, or cybercurrency, these fraudulent promoters try to get you to invest your money — and lots of it. Some swindlers even surround themselves with the trappings of legitimacy — rented office space, a receptionist, investment counselors, and professionally designed color brochures describing the investment.

Who Gets Hurt
Older Americans are prime targets because they possess most of the nation's individual wealth. People who live on fixed incomes from Social Security and small pensions are especially vulnerable, as they frequently need supplemental sources of income to make ends meet, or are motivated to help younger family members seek out extra funds.

They may be manipulated into believing phony investment offers at a rate disproportionate to the rest of the population. Scammers know some older adults can be more easily disarmed by their convincing messages. These Americans may have difficulty discerning a fraudulent promotion from a legitimate one. It might be alarming to discover how vulnerable an older friend or loved one can be. It's important for family members and friends to understand why older adults

are at risk and what steps can be taken to minimize the chance they'll be taken advantage of by fraudsters.

Some Scams
Every year, thousands lose between a few dollars and their entire life savings to fraudsters. Even the most experienced investors can be caught up in an investment scam. A perfect example of this is the number of professional money managers who placed their clients' money with Bernie Madoff. And that's just one example.

In a case investigated by Postal Inspectors, a con artist acting as the CEO of an investment firm defrauded investors out of more than \$4 million through a purported financial services firm he controlled. He lied to investors about how much money had been raised, who had invested, how close the firm was to an IPO (initial public offering), and how he would use investors' money. The scammer appropriated most of the money for his own use or to pay off investors in a Ponzi-like fashion. He was sentenced to prison for his crimes.

Another man was sentenced to four years in prison for his role in two high-yield investment fraud schemes. Postal Inspectors said he and his co-conspirators defrauded vulnerable victims out of millions of dollars. The scammers have been handed down sentences ranging up to 12 years in prison.

In another Postal Inspection Service investigation, a real estate investment scammer defrauded numerous investors who invested in more than a thousand real estate investment properties. The real estate scammer convinced investors by misrepresenting returns, promoting fraudulent information and over-inflating appraisals. He was convicted and sentenced to 10 years in prison and ordered to pay \$17 million in

restitution.

Some Solutions

So, what do you do to protect yourself from these scammers who try to separate you from your hard-earned money?

Education and information are your best defenses against investment fraud. Postal Inspectors urge potential investors to independently research registration of investment firms and be extremely cautious about unsolicited offers to invest through social media or the internet. Think about these things before jumping into an investment:

- Anyone can be anyone on the internet. Scammers spoof websites and use fake social media accounts to obscure their identities. You can identify phony accounts by looking closely at content. Pay careful attention to domain names.

- Take your time in deciding to invest — don't rush into accepting these "high-profit, low-risk" offers.

- Get all information in writing before you consider investing.

- Beware of unsolicited offers and fake client reviews. Scammers often reference or publish positive, yet bogus testimonials purportedly drafted by satisfied customers.
- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Be careful of claims that an investment will make "incredible gains," is a "break-out stock pick," or has "huge upside and almost no risk!" "Guaranteed returns" aren't. All investments carry some degree of risk, and the potential profits are typically correlated with the degree of risk.

Learn More

For more info on avoiding scams, visit the Postal Inspection Service website at USPIS.gov.

PENDING OBITUARIES

Barbara Davis

La Jara resident Barbara Davis, 71, passed away on March 16, 2024. Arrangements are pending and will be announced through Romero Funeral Home of Alamosa.

Daniel Martinez

Alamosa resident Daniel Martinez passed away on March 15, 2024. Arrangements are pending and will be announced through Romero Funeral Home of Alamosa.

Richard Chacon

Romeo resident Richard Chacon, 60, passed away on March 21, 2024, at the San Luis Valley Health Regional Medical Center. Services are pending and will be announced soon. Rogers Family Mortuary is in care of arrangements. To leave online condolences, visit www.RogersFunerals.com.

School Menu
Friday
March 22, 2024

Spring
Break!

Breakfast & Lunch Free for all students
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Menu call 589-2553

Valley News

Graduation held for Strengthening Families program

By DIANE DREKMANN

LA JARA - 4-H is not just about taking care of animals. This organization also focuses on taking care of people - families and relationships.

Carol Gurule is the Juntos 4-H Youth Development Area Specialist through Colorado State University San Luis Valley Area Extension office.

She is part of a special class called the Strengthening Families 10-14/Familias Fuertes program. It is a seven week "preventative program," Gurule explained, "to help children and parents unite. To get families to communicate and have patience with each other. To put down the cell phone and pay attention to each other. Parents learn nurturing skills to support the child and how to have effective discipline. Children get tools to provide a healthy appreciation for parents. (The class) teaches skills to deal with peer pressure and stress...by doing skits (children) learn to stand firm on their decisions."

Parents watch videos. Families play games together. These are all strategies to unite and strengthen families. During that time, Gurule meets with the families and gets to know them.

Gurule adds how the

class is structured. "Families are kept in two separate rooms. Parents are in one room. Kids are in another room. Then the families get together. (People know) it is a safe place. All of the staff are mandated reporters in cases of abuse or suicide. There are two youth facilitators and two adult facilitators. There is a youth creed, parent creed, and family creed that people say at the beginning of each class - children talking about...being strong and making good decisions. Parents agree to setting limits and help youth become responsible adults and being strong families who care about each other and have fun together."

The class talks about goals, jobs, career, health, and having fun.

"It is a win-win situation," says Gurule, "It is very positive. As we're teaching, we are learning. You learn something new each time. You give and take information. (We) teach your children and become part of your life."

The class is not run by Gurule alone. Dannette Jacquez Arila is the main facilitator. Cody Groff is another facilitator who is also the new 4-H specialist.

He explains, "Non-traditional families are be-



Photo by Diane Drekmann

Pictured from left to right are some of the Strengthening Families program graduates Noah Prieto, mom Marita Prieto, Olivia Prieto, Cynthia Cordova, Abry Cordova, Jace Cordova holding sign, dad Jamie Cordova, Zabian Vasquez, Esteban, and Gloria Quintana.

ing introduced to Juntos 4-H. The goal is to get eighth-graders through 12th-graders to graduate. 4-H is not just animals. It also has rocketry, computers, even fashion and Legos. It's \$30 for the year, but don't let it deter you. We can help."

Itzel Duran is the SLV Familias Fuertes co-ordinator. Lydia Cordoba also works with the Strengthening Families 10-14/Familias Fuertes program. Jessica Suazo is the childcare provider.

At the end of the seven weeks, families receive a certificate which can be used in court for court cases, department of human services or custody cases. Graduates also receive a gift basket and

ASU celebrating Women's Week

By ADAMS STATE UNIVERSITY ALAMOSA — The Adams State University Women of Higher Education has organized several events to celebrate Women's History Month from March 25 through March 30. This year's theme, "I'm Sorry, Not Sorry," will include poetry, a march, a walk, sundaes, and more.

Chalk the Walk at the Japanese American Memorial Garden. Throughout the week everyone is invited to write a short note stating what you have had to apologize for as a marginalized identity, but are not sorry for.

In collaboration with the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP), the CAMP Bandana Project, will raise awareness about women's workplace sexual violence. The event will be held from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. Monday, March 25, in the Student Union Building (SUB) Atrium. At noon that same day a Kindred Spirits: "Challenges Facing Women at Work," by Stephanie Hilwig, Ph.D., professor of sociology, will be held in the SUB Banquet Room.

Male Advocates for Gender Equality, MAGE, will have an information table, "I'm Sorry, What's Next," from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. Tuesday, March

26, in the SUB Atrium. Roll up your sleeves and help paint the Rock from 2 until 4 p.m. on the campus green north of the SUB.

Enjoy a sundae and learn more about menstruation from a panel of peers and experts from 6 until 8 p.m. Wednesday, March 27, in Richardson Hall Auditorium. Questions can be submitted anonymously.

A Walk a Mile in Her Shoes begins at 1 p.m. Thursday, March 28, at the North Campus Green. Clubs, groups, departments, and offices can register their group, accessing this QR code, for some healthy competition with a trophy prize for the winner. And that evening a Poetry Challenge, "I'm Sorry, Not Sorry," is scheduled from until 8 p.m. in the CoRE Center, located on the north end of the SUB.

Prepare for the annual San Luis Valley Women's March by making signs from 5 until 7 p.m. Friday, March 29, in the SUB Atrium. The march begins at 10 a.m. Saturday, March 30, on the corner of Richardson Avenue and Highway 160, by the Visual Art Building.



Solar

Continued from Page 1

away, is fear from skepticism," said Call.

Early, Call claimed, "We have done extensive studies to locate the project and find property that is not in highly critical [wildlife] habitat."

Call also went on to discuss threatened and endangered species when he was interrupted by a very skeptical audience member questioning the impact the solar farm will have on wildlife. Another in the audience stated, "I don't know if you understand the herd mentality of the elk... it takes very minimal activity to upset this balance...those elk are not going to have their calves there and if they don't have their calves there, they are probably going to die."

One audience member expressed his concerns about the impacts the facility will have on sandhill cranes.

Call was then asked several more questions from the audience all asking about wildlife. Call said that wildlife corridors would be studied.

As the meeting progressed, the representatives from Horus responded to a variety of questions from the audience on numerous subjects.

The electricity produced by the project will be exported out of the San Luis Valley. A Power Purchase Agreement to facilitate this has not been finalized. The website for the project states, "Sand Dune is expected to execute an interconnection agreement with PSCO [Public Service Colorado] in 2026, with construction to begin that year and operations by mid-2028."

Christine Canaly, Director of the San Luis Valley Ecosystem Council who was present for the meeting, told the Valley Courier, "It appears, SDP



Courtesy photo

Horus Energy/Horus Capital, a British private equity firm is proposing to build a 1,000-acre solar farm near this site in Saguache County.

did their homework with the citing of their project, between two transmission lines, collecting baseline on the hydrology and soils, avoiding wildlife corridor activity and placing the spacing of the panels to discourage attracting avian (bird) populations, is all good stewardship. It's encouraging to see companies looking for a win/win and minimizing impact."

Adam Kinney, who is a candidate for the Saguache County Board of Commissioners representing the Crestone Area, said, "I was very happy to see people from each district turn out to learn more and express their concerns and ideas."

"I think there is a viable opportunity here for the county to explore possible solar projects that could benefit the residents, with the understanding that environmental protections are put in place. I hope the commissioners will do their jobs and negotiate the best possible financial outcome for Saguache County, including the adjacent neighbors who are concerned about the two-year construction cycle affecting their livelihoods."

"The developers proposed a \$13 million tax benefit to the county, over 20 years. That is \$650K a year, which won't even pave a mile of road. I'd like to see more money for

the county. Considering the project investment of \$250 million, I imagine the return will be substantial, and this should be part of the ongoing negotiations."

Company documents state, "An economic impact study for Saguache County is in progress. However, equivalent size projects being developed by Horus in Colorado are estimated to bring in \$13 million in taxes in the first 20 years of operation."

In 2024, the Saguache County Budget was \$24.7 million.

During the meeting, the number of people employed at the proposed facility was discussed, and Velkov offered, "As an estimate up to 1,500 roughly for the development of that site." That number includes off-site jobs created by the project. Michael Klein, who will oversee construction, offered that at the peak of employment, "That workforce ramps up to about 250 people." A document handed out to the public includes, "Projects of this size are expected to provide approximately 2,000 direct and indirect jobs during construction and operational phase."

Velkov said an economic analysis of the project will have is underway. The Valley Courier will make the study public when it is available.

City of Alamosa receives lower ISO classification

By CITY OF ALAMOSA

ALAMOSA — The City of Alamosa recently announced that through the dedicated efforts of the Alamosa Fire Department, the City has achieved an improved Insurance Services Office (ISO) protection rating from 4 to 3.

"Achieving this improved rating emphasizes the Department's dedication to continuous improvement. It reflects the focus on thorough training, planning, and investment in equipment and technology," city officials stated.

This accomplishment is not merely a symbolic achievement; it carries tangible benefits for the residents and businesses of Alamosa. With a lower ISO rating, property owners within the city limits may see reductions in insurance premiums.

According to a local insurance carrier contacted by Alamosa Fire Chief Bill Stone, residents may see a reduction in premiums between 5-20 percent as it relates to the fire specific protection within each individual policy.

Lowering the ISO rating is a challenging process, demanding extensive training, planning, and investment. It signifies the City's preparedness to tackle fire risks, ensuring the safety of its residents.

"We would like to thank the dedicated members of the Alamosa Fire Department for their unwavering efforts and commitment to keeping our community safe. Their hard work and sacrifice have played a pivotal role in achieving this significant accomplishment," city officials stated.



Courtesy of Saguache County Emergency Management Facebook page

Saguache County Sheriff Dan Warwick said fire continued to burn inside the walls of a Moffat home and plans called for bringing in an excavator to bring the structure down to continue fire suppression.

Fire

Continued from Page 1

Emergency Manager, the Northern Saguache Fire Protection District was first on the scene, including firefighters from the Saguache Fire Department, Moffat Fire Department and Villa Grove Fire Department. Saguache Fire Department took command and requested additional assistance from Mosca Hooper and Colorado Fire Prevention and Control.

According to Warwick,

the fire originated in an incubator for chickens and "the flames are now inside the walls."

As he explained, "In order to tear out the walls to get at the fire, you have to have a structure that's secure and stable enough so that it's not dangerous. [Firefighters] can't go inside the house to address the fire or even try from the outside to go through a wall because the house is just too unsafe and unstable to try to smack it with an axe. "We're going to have an excavator come in and

knock it down so they can completely extinguish the fire at that time."

Woelz, acting on firsthand information from those on the scene, said, "The house had a basement and the first floor has collapsed. The second floor is in the process of collapsing. It's a total loss." He also anticipated that the fire would continue "to smolder for at least a couple of days."

Lincoln Street is currently closed and emergency personnel on the scene are instructing people to avoid the area.

Pianist

Continued from Page 1

Organized by Performances at Baca, tickets, \$20 for adults and \$10 for youth/students (ages

7-21), are available by reservation and at the door. There is a reduced seating capacity at the College. For reserved seating including the addition of one's e-address to the Performances at

Baca e-list, and for any queries, send an email to bacaperformances@gmail.com. The entrance to the Baca Campus of Colorado College is located off Road T between Moffat and Crestone.

Opinion

Claim to fame

It appears that Spring has sprung at least in Texas where Miss Trixie and Ol' Dutch have taken to spending their winters of late. You always can tell when it's close as the Big Box Stores load up on flowers and vegetables by the pallet load. It must be lucrative as the dickens as those same box doors

often catch a late frost which kills every plant they have in stock. Regardless of the risks, the stores all rush and hurry to be the first with tomato and pepper plants on the shelves.

We have been busy as the proverbial beaver as we are building a house and doing most of the work ourselves. It's quite a task to take on at my advanced age but it appears I may actually pull this one off. So chasing materials gets to be a weekly occurrence as I use it up about as fast as I can buy it. Which gets me out and about driving to and fro at least in the immediate area.

Why, just the other day I found myself driving through Kingston, Texas, a wide spot in the road, and saw a sign declaring it as the birthplace of Audie Murphy.

I think that most of the readers have probably heard of him but if not, he was the most highly decorated soldier ever born. He worked to support his family after his father ran off leaving the mother with 12 children to support and so in the 5th grade found himself picking cotton instead of going to school.

Long story short, he enlisted in the Army after the attack on Pearl Harbor and due to some unbelievable heroic actions, became a famous soldier. Returning home to the USA, he became a movie star and so you may see him on the television even today in some Western movies.

Seeing the sign about his birthplace I am reminded of how towns will grasp at the birth of some famous person as though their very presence at that juncture in life makes the town noteworthy and famous, too. I recall growing up reading about Dwight Eisenhower and that he was from Abilene, Kansas. But later in life I learned he was actually born in Texas but grew up in Abilene and Kansans thought enough about him to build a whale of a museum there.

For you see there is just not enough famousness going around for towns to have someone important born there so towns will just tag-along on celebrity coattails if that person even visited there once. That's why in these parts of Texas there is the birthplace of Audie Murphy, the homeplace of the Murphy family, plus several towns have Memorials declaring Audie Murphy "a son" of their fair township.

And not to be outdone by having actual heroes or people of renown being from or passing through a place, we have also begun to celebrate where made up persons have been. Why just the other day I saw where the bench where Forrest Gump sat for a movie scene is quite the tourist attraction and people come from far and wide to see it and sit in it if possible. Now don't get me wrong, it was a good movie, all things considered, but I have to wonder if people actually think Forrest was a real person to be celebrated as such.

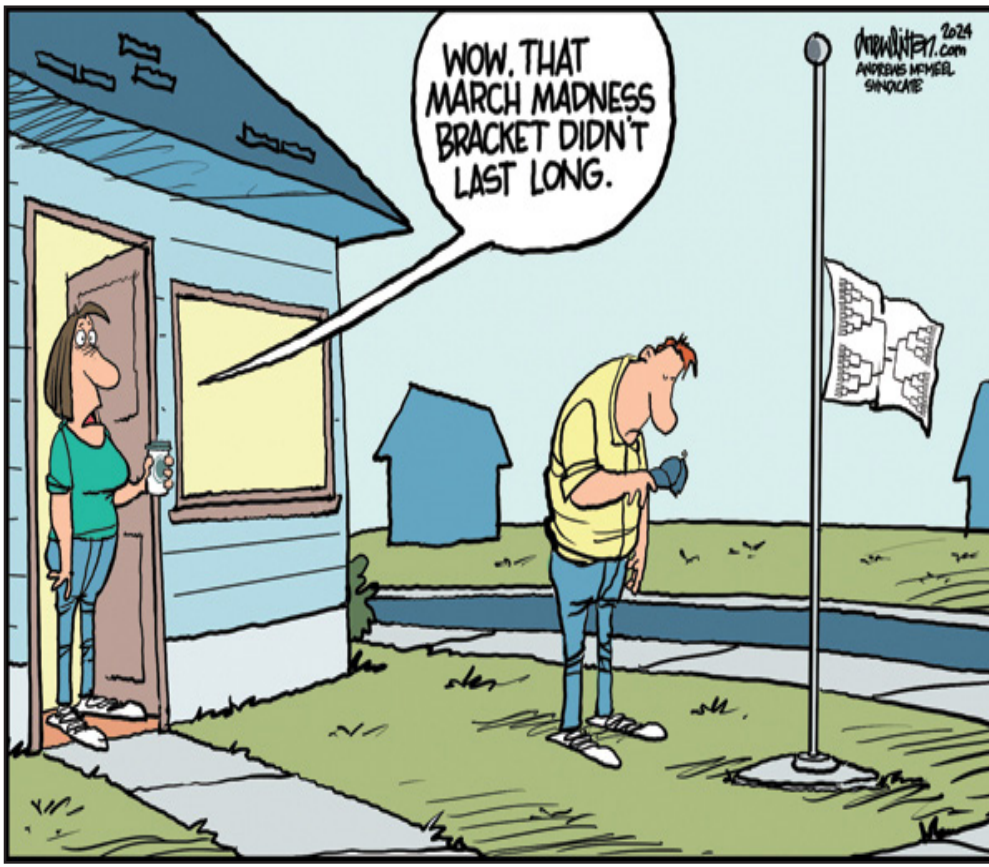
I guess it sells tickets and in this day and age that seems to be what is most important. So today as Ol' Dutch drives into town I am going to take special note of Audie's birthplace sign just a few short miles from here. And maybe, just maybe erect one of my own announcing "Ol' Dutch was here" for future generations to ponder and wonder.

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.

Trout Republic



by Kevin Kirkpatrick



To submit news, email:
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Letters policy

Letters are welcome and encouraged. All letters submitted for publication in the Valley Courier must be typewritten, signed by the author, and must include a phone number and address where the author can be reached. Letters must not be libelous. The Courier will not run letters that are negative to specific businesses. We reserve the right to edit for clarity, civility and accuracy. Please limit letters to 500 words or less.

The Courier's editorial board reserves the right to reject a letter for reasons it believes are appropriate. Letters may be subject to editing to fit available space, or exclusion from the Opinion Page. Please, no poetry. Please send signed letters to P.O. Box 1099, Alamosa, CO 81101 or email them to news@alamosanews.com. Letters to staff, not for publication, should be marked "personal."

Biden's 'lawfare' joke

Why do so many Democrats and their allies in the media desperately want former President Donald Trump to stand trial before Election Day? The answer is simple: Because they think it will help President Joe Biden defeat Trump and win reelection.

So far, the "lawfare" directed at Trump — two federal indictments from a special counsel appointed by the Biden Justice Department, plus two local indictments from elected Democratic prosecutors, plus a financial lawsuit from another elected Democratic prosecutor and a sex-and-defamation lawsuit financed by a Democratic megadonor — has backfired at the polls. It helped boost Trump to a runaway victory in the Republican primaries, and so far, it hasn't hurt him in general election matchup polls against Biden.

Democrats hope a guilty verdict in a criminal trial — any trial will do — will peel away voters who say they support Trump now but would not support him if he were a convicted felon. We'll see.

But the lawfare campaign is already having another effect on Trump. It has put the former president under severe financial stress. In two ways. The first is the tens of millions of dollars in legal fees Trump has already spent defending himself against the onslaught of criminal charges and lawsuits. The other is the crippling financial penalty — \$454 million — in the lawsuit brought by the elected Democratic attorney general of New York, Letitia James.

It was an unprecedented lawsuit in which James created what former federal prosecutor Andrew McCarthy called "a fraud case in which there are no fraud victims." Trump did not have the right to a jury trial, and a hostile judge came up with a devastating financial judgment.

Trump is now scrambling to find an insurer that will post a bond for the money so that Trump can proceed with an appeal of the verdict. If he can't find an insurer to do that, New York law requires that Trump will either have to come up with the cash himself or sell some of his real estate holdings, just to be able to mount an appeal. And all that is on top of an \$83 million award in a separate sex-and-defamation suit, the one financed by the Democratic donor.

No criminal trial has begun, but the swarm of Democratic legal actions has already cost Trump dearly. Of course, that was the idea, or at least part of the idea. And it's something that Biden himself indirectly acknowledged in a recent speech.

It happened in Washington at the Gridiron Dinner, a fancy white-tie gathering of major media figures and the top politicians they cover. Biden delivered a speech that was part comedy routine and part inspirational talk to his media base.

And this is a joke Biden told, according to news accounts: "Our big plan to cancel student debt doesn't apply to everyone. Just yesterday, a defeated-looking man came up to me and said, 'I'm being crushed by debt. I'm completely wiped out.' And I said, 'Sorry, Donald, I can't help you.'"

Ha ha ha. The media audience, of course, laughed. With one joke, Biden acknowledged the work his party's lawfare warriors have done in the Trump matter. And how could Biden not be grateful? He's trailing Trump in the polls, facing an electorate that largely believes he is too old for a second term, and is underwater in approval ratings for his handling of most issues.

No doubt Biden's joke about bankrupting Trump reflects his satisfaction that the lawfare effort is start-

ing to work. But Biden wants more. In February, Politico reported that Biden has "grumbled to aides and advisers that had [Attorney General Merrick] Garland moved sooner in his investigation into former President Donald Trump's election interference, a trial may already be underway or even have concluded."

In April 2022, the New York Times reported that Biden "confided to his inner circle" his belief that Trump "should be prosecuted." The paper added that while Biden "has never communicated his frustrations directly to Mr. Garland, he has said privately that he wanted Mr. Garland to act less like a ponderous judge and more like a prosecutor."

Garland knows the president wants him to get Trump sooner rather than later. Garland's pick for special counsel, Jack Smith, who first wanted to put Trump on trial in January, is now racing to start a trial by summer. Anything to get the job done by Election Day. Maybe Smith will succeed, and maybe he won't. But the lawfare campaign is a heavy burden on Trump every day.

Byron York is chief political correspondent for The Washington Examiner.

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Contact: <https://boebert.house.gov/>

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Michael Bennet (D)
SLV Regional Office: 609 Main Street, Suite 110, Alamosa 81101; Phone: 587-0096; Fax: 587-0098;

Washington office: 458 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510; DC Phone: 202-224-5852;

Contact: bennet.senate.gov

John Hickenlooper (D)
Washington office: B85 Russell Senate Office Building Washington DC 20510 (202) 224-5941
Contact: www.hickenlooper.senate.gov



By Byron York

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS MEETINGS

VALLEY — The San Luis Valley offers many Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous groups.

A.A. and N.A. members primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics/addicts to achieve sobriety.

There are AA and NA 12-Step

Meetings throughout the valley. The 6th Tradition states that we are not affiliated with any outside organizations, but in the spirit of cooperation, we list these meeting schedules for friends and family. For information, call 719-937-5083 or see our website: slvaa.org

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Brian Williams
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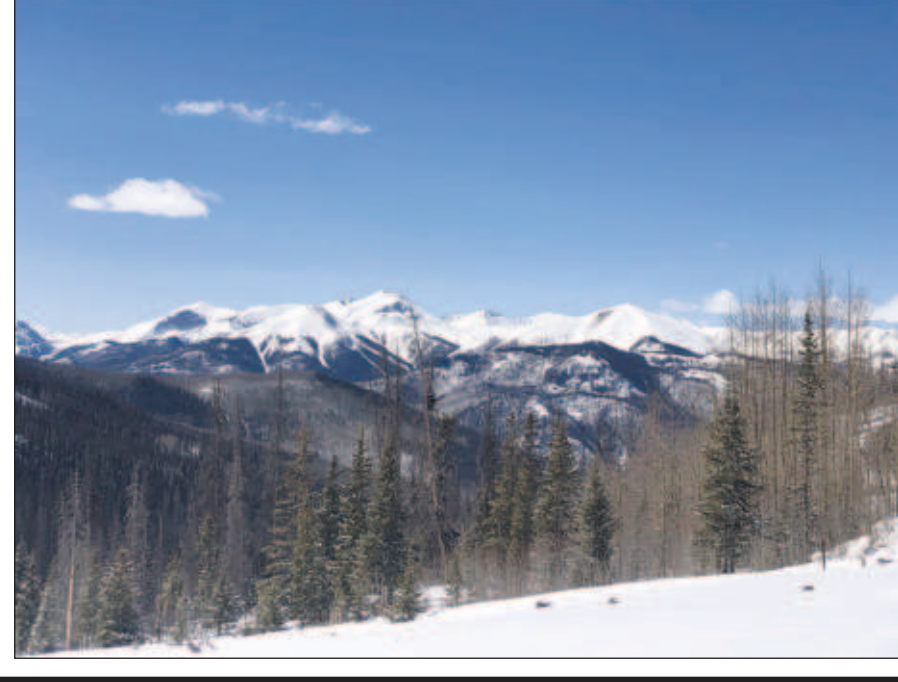
Lifestyles

Snow County Explorers take Lake City trails



Courtesy photos

On a sunny and warm Saturday, March 9, 12 riders on 10 sleds from the Snow County Explorers, the Creede snowmobile club, rode some of the Lake City trails. The ride started at Spring Creek Pass, across Jarosa Mesa, over to Rambouillet Park, down Sawmill Gulch, up to Slumgullion Pass, down through Oleo Ranch, and then back up to Spring Creek Pass. Most of the route was freshly groomed but unriden with about 4 inches of fresh powder making the ride that much more enjoyable. The group stopped for lunch halfway down Sawmill Gulch, where there was a magnificent view of the snow-capped San Juan Mountains against a perfectly blue sky. The Lake City trails are maintained by the Lake City Continental Divide Snowmobile Club and are groomed periodically by Tom Carl and Jeff Guthmiller.



New arrivals at the Alamosa Public Library

From the Librarian's Desk

By MARIA KRAMER

New books are always coming in at the Alamosa Public Library! Here are 10 of our most intriguing arrivals.

Fantasy
• The Book of Love by Kelly Link
Three teenagers reappear in their high school classroom a year after their mysterious disappearance. Each must complete a series of magical tasks in order to return to their lives. Some will win - and some will lose.
• Fifty Beasts to Break Your Heart by GennaRose Nethercott

Two young women working at a sinister roadside attraction called the Eternal Staircase explore its secrets - and their own doomed summer love. A group of witchy teens concoct the perfect plan to induct the hated new girl into their ranks. This book is a collection of dark fairytales exploring all the ways love can save us - or go monstrously wrong.

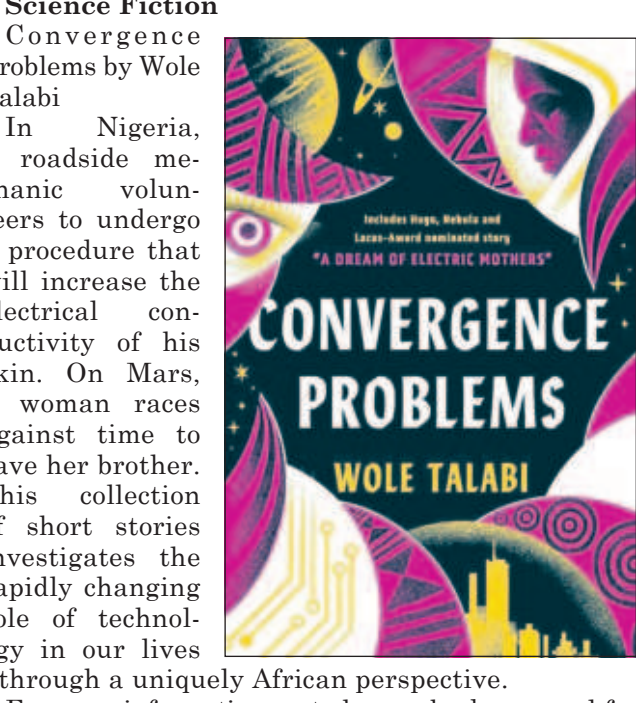
Fiction
• A Present Past by Sergei Lebedev
In this collection of eleven short stories, the cruelty of Russia's Soviet past haunts the present literally and figuratively.
• You Dreamed of Empires by Álvaro Enrigue
It is 1519, and the Aztec and Spanish empires are about to collide. This fictionalized account of the fall of Tenochtitlán puts the magic in magical realism - strange, hallucinatory and metafictional.

Nonfiction
• Break the Cycle by Dr. Mariel Buqué
When a physical wound is left unhealed, it can infect the whole body. When emotions are left unhealed, they cause harm that spreads to other parts of our lives. Weaving together scientific research with practical exercises, Dr. Buqué teaches readers how trauma is transmitted from one generation to the next and how they can break the cycle through tangible therapeutic practices.
• Vegetable Gardening Made Easy by Resh Gala
No matter the size of your garden or your experience level, backyard gardeners like you can use the information found inside this book to grow a more productive and beautiful edible garden.

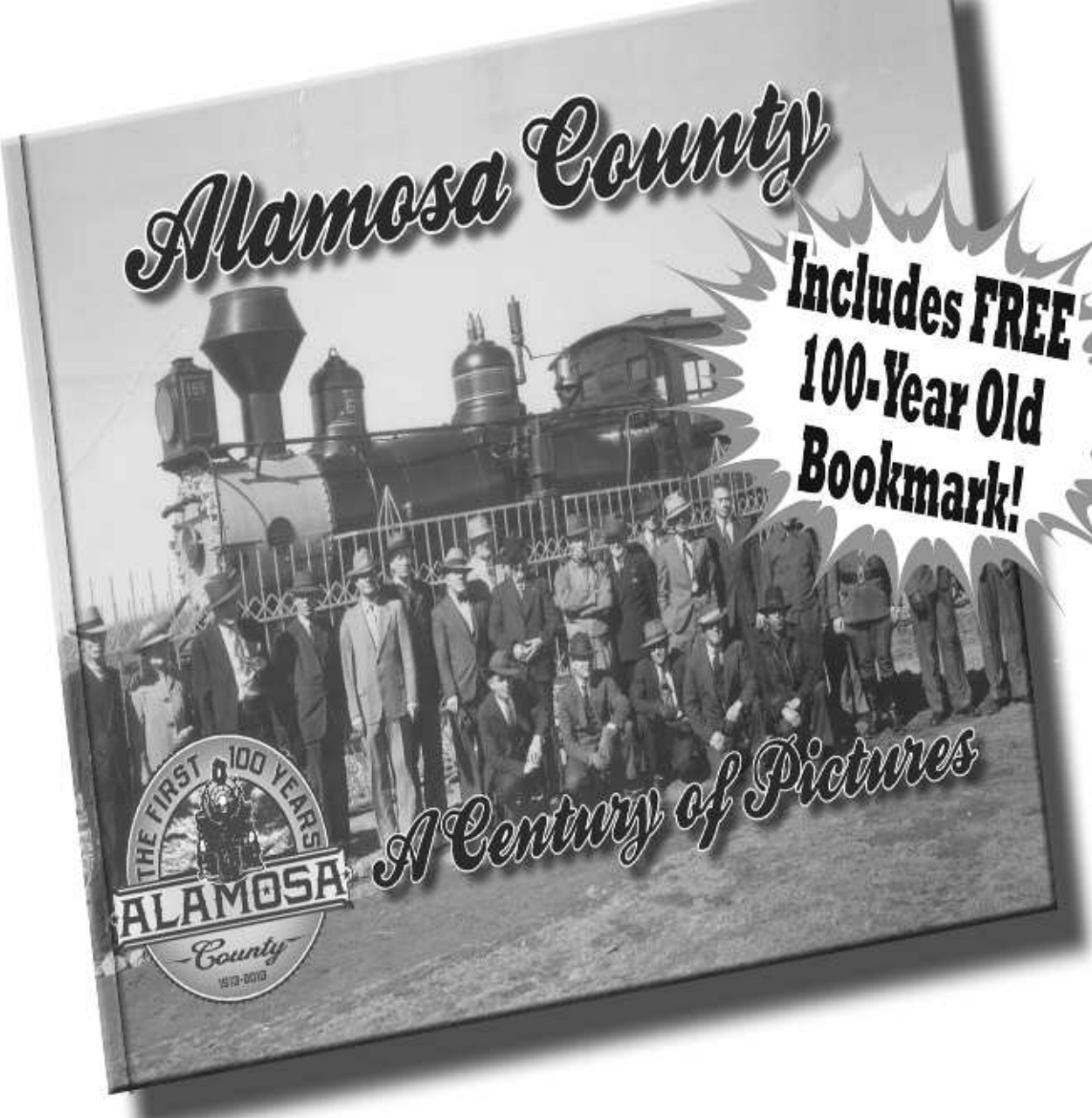
• The Moral Life by James F. Keenan
Jesuit theologian James F. Keenan presents eight stages of preparing for the moral life, describing vulnerability as the foundation for contemporary ethics.
• Literary Theory for Robots by Dennis Yi Tenen
Former Microsoft engineer and professor of comparative literature Dennis Yi Tenen provides crucial context for recent developments in AI, which holds important lessons for the future of humans living with smart technology.

Roleplaying Games
Candlekeep Mysteries by Wizards of the Coast
Candlekeep Mysteries is a collection of seventeen short, stand-alone D&D adventures. Each adventure begins with the discovery of a book, and each book is the key to a door behind which danger and glory await.

Science Fiction
Convergence Problems by Wole Talabi
In Nigeria, a roadside mechanic volunteers to undergo a procedure that will increase the electrical conductivity of his skin. On Mars, a woman races against time to save her brother. This collection of short stories investigates the rapidly changing role of technology in our lives - through a uniquely African perspective.



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Sports

22 SLV hoopsters named All-State by CHSAA

By **KEN HAMRICK**
Courier sports editor
ALAMOSA – The Colorado High School Activities Association released its All-State basketball teams this week. The girls team was posted on Monday and the boys on Tuesday.

A total of 22 players from the San Luis Valley – 11 boys and 11 girls – were recognized.

Boys
Class 2A
Sanford

Leading the way for the SLV was Sanford senior Cash Caldon who was named to the first team in Class 2A.

Caldon led the Mustangs in scoring with 16 points per game. He also averaged 4.8 rebounds, 1.7 assists and 1.5 steals per game.

Two more Sanford players were named All-State as junior Ben Sittler was a second team selection, and sophomore Trason Gartrell was honorable mention.

Sittler averaged 10.6 points, 2.8 rebounds, 3.1 assists and 2.4 steals per game, while Gartrell averaged 10.6 points, 5.1 rebounds, 2.3 assists and 2.6 steals.

The Mustangs had a record of 22 wins and five losses and they won the league, district and regional championships and were the Class 2A state runners-up.

Monte Vista

One other local Class 2A player was an All-State selection in Monte Vista sophomore Azariah Hurtado who was honorable mention.

Hurtado led the Pirates in scoring with 12.7 points per game and in rebounding with nine per game. He also averaged 2.4 assists and 2.4 steals per game.

He led Monte Vista to a record of 15 wins and eight losses.

Class 3A
Centauri

The Falcons had two All-State players in senior Chaz Holman who was placed on the second team, and junior Carson Bagwell who was honorable mention.

Holman averaged 9.3 points per game, 3.9 rebounds, 4.5 assists and 4.1 steals, while Bagwell averaged 12 points, 4.6 rebounds, 1.8 assists and 1.4 steals.

The Falcons won 18 games and lost six and advanced to the Class 3A State Tournament.

Class 4A
Alamosa

Alamosa had one All-



Sanford's Cash Caldon, first team, Class 2A



Centauri's Chaz Holman, second team, Class 3A



Sanford's Ben Sittler, second team, Class 2A



Sierra Grande's Brian Ontiveros, second team, Class 1A



Alamosa's Brant Jackson, honorable mention, Class 4A

State player in senior Brant Jackson who was honorable mention.

Jackson led the Mean Moose in scoring with 13.5 points per game, and in rebounding with 5.4 per game. He also averaged 0.2 assists and 0.6 steals per game.

Alamosa had a record of 13 wins and 10 losses and it advanced to the Class 4A State tournament.

Class 1A
Sierra Grande

The remaining boys All-State players were in Class 1A. Leading the 1A competitors was Sierra Grande senior Brian Ontiveros who was on the second team.

Ontiveros led the Panthers in scoring with 16.7 points per game. He also had averages of 2.2 rebounds, two assists and two steals.

Sierra Grande won 19 games and lost seven. The Panthers advanced to the Class 1A State Tournament where they finished in sixth place.

Antonito

Antonito had one All-State player in senior Jasiah Jiron who was honorable mention.

Jiron led the Trojans in scoring with 14 points per game, rebounding with eight per game, assists with 1.9 per game, and blocked shots with 2.5 per game. He also averaged 1.7 steals.

Antonito had a record of three wins and 14 losses.

Moffat

Moffat's lone All-Stater was senior Ziah Pesqueira who was an honorable mention selection.

He led the Cowboys with 18.6 points, 3.9 assists and 6.2 steals per game. He also had an average of 4.7 rebounds per game.

Moffat won 13 games and lost eight.

Sangre de Cristo

Sangre de Cristo was represented by senior Kaiden Smit who was honorable mention.

Smit averaged a double-double with 15.9 points

and 12.1 rebounds per game. He also averaged 1.4 assists, 2.6 steals, and 1.9 blocked shots.

The Thunderbirds had a final record of 14 wins and eight losses.

Girls
Class 4A
Alamosa

Alamosa had one representative in junior Morgan Ortega who was an honorable mention selection.

Ortega led the Lady Mean Moose in scoring with 9.1 points and in assists with 4.1 per game. She also averaged 3.2 rebounds and 1.5 steals.

Alamosa finished the season with 12 wins and 11 losses and it advanced to the Class 4A State Tournament.

Class 3A
Centauri

The Lady Falcons had two All-State players in juniors Hannah Curtis and Braelyn Tucker, both of whom were honorable mention.

Curtis led the team in scoring with 10.6 points and in steals with 3.5 per game. She also averaged 5.3 rebounds and 1.6 assists.

Tucker averaged 8.6 points, 2.8 rebounds, 2.6 assists and three steals per game.

Centauri won 17 games and lost seven and it advanced to the Class 3A State Tournament.

Class 2A
Center

Center had one All-Stater in senior Alicia Rios who was honorable mention.

Rios led the Lady Vikings in scoring with 12.1 points, assists with 2.3 and steals with 3.6. She also averaged 3.1 rebounds per game.

Center had a final record of 11 wins and 10 losses.

Monte Vista

Earning All-State for Monte Vista was junior Alessah Archuleta who was honorable mention.

Archuleta averaged 9.5 points, three rebounds,

Two locals play in CCGS All-State Games

By **KEN HAMRICK**
Courier sports editor
ALAMOSA – Two girls basketball players represented the San Luis Valley at the 46th Annual Colorado Coaches of Girls Sports All-State Games Sunday at Grandview High School in Aurora.

Center High School's Alicia Rios played in the Class 2A game and she played on the red team. Centauri's Lacey Johnson competed in the Class 3A game and was on the Blue Team.

Scores and statistics were unavailable.

Sports Bulletin

Follow sports editor Ken Hamrick on X. His handle is @KenHamrick1.

SCHEDULE
FRIDAY
Prep baseball
 Centauri vs. Center (Las Animas Tournament), 9 a.m.
 Sargent at Sierra Grande (2), 11 a.m.
 South Park at Sanford (2), 11 a.m.
Prep track and field
 Alamosa at Chandler (Ariz.) Rotary Invitational, 9 a.m.
College baseball
 New Mexico Highlands at Adams State, 3 p.m.

SATURDAY
Prep baseball
 Alamosa vs. Brush (at Runyon Sports Complex, Pueblo), 10 a.m.
 Antonito at Questa (N.M.), (2), noon
 Centauri, Center at Las Animas Invitational, noon
 Alamosa vs. Eaton (at Runyon Sports Complex, Pueblo), 12:30 p.m.
Prep girls soccer
 Del Norte at Ridgeway, noon
Prep track and field
 Alamosa at Chandler (Ariz.) Rotary Invitational, TBA

College men's lacrosse
 Condordia-Irvine at Adams State, 3 p.m.
College outdoor track and field
 Adams State at Spank Blasing Invitational (at Pueblo), TBA

SUNDAY
College baseball
 New Mexico Highlands at Adams State, noon
College women's softball
 New Mexico Highlands at Adams State (2), noon



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CHICK DAYS

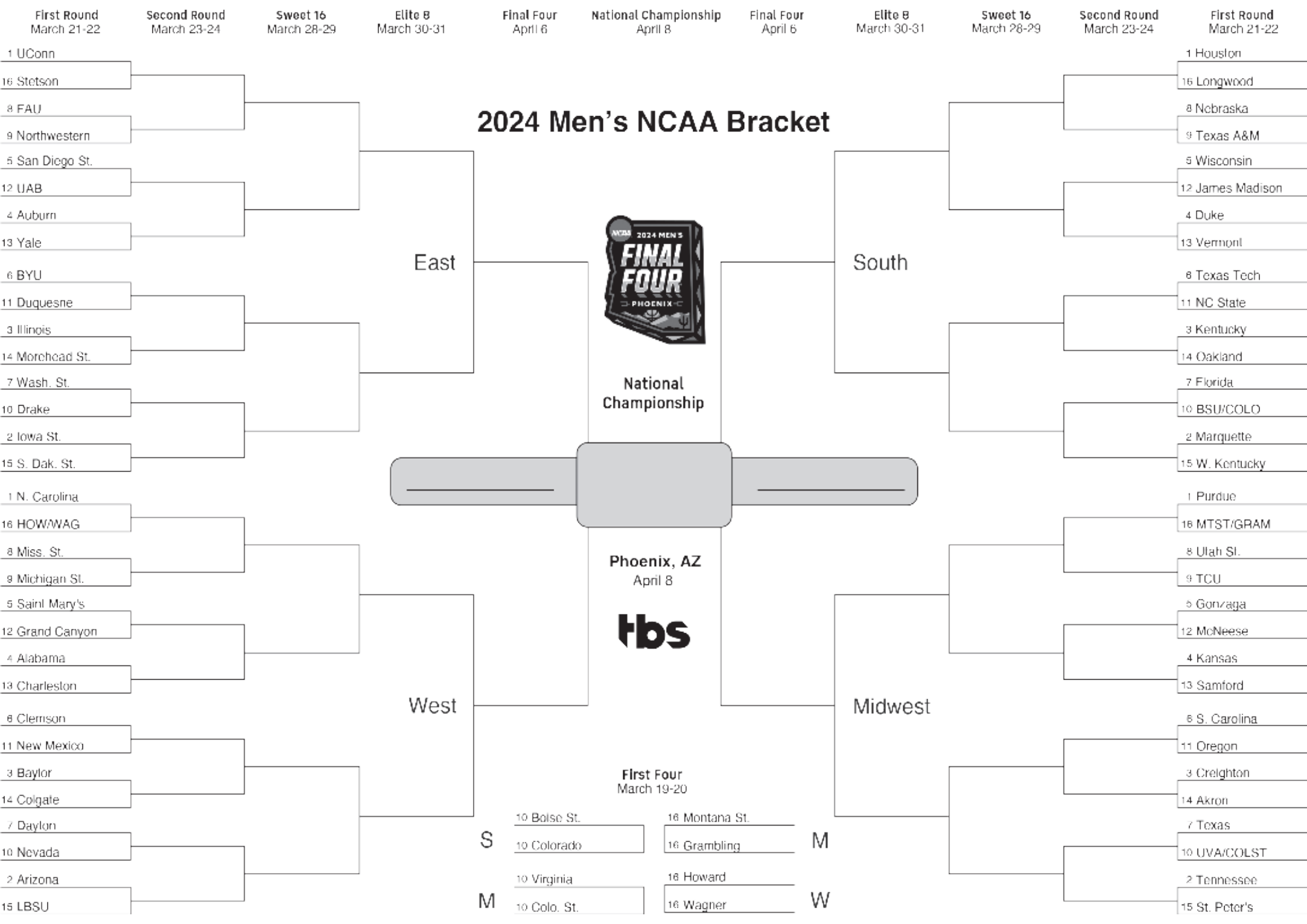
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221 - HELP WANTED

ARE YOU PASSIONATE about making a positive impact on people's lives? **SIERRA GRANDE SCHOOL DISTRICT** is currently accepting applications for **BEHAVIOR HEALTH COUNSELOR/MTSS COORDINATOR** for the 2024-2025 School Year. Our school has a reputation as being a great place to work. We currently have a state of the art facility, supportive administration, paid health insurance, free lunches, 4 day school week. A current license/state certification in counseling is highly recommended to apply. Application forms are located at 17523 Hwy 160 BLANCA, CO. 81123 or on the district's website at www.sierragrandeschool.net. Applications may be submitted electronically to Mr. Kevin Jones at kjones@sierragrandeschool.net or Mrs. Maria Atencio at matencio@sierragrandeschool.net, or can be turned in at the district office. For more information please contact the district office at 719-379-3259. (4/5/24)

221 - HELP WANTED

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221 - HELP WANTED

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Comics

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

NEA Crossword Puzzle

- ACROSS**
- 1 Gin mill
 - 4 Cold and damp
 - 8 Recipe amount
 - 12 Mature
 - 13 Memo starter (2 wds.)
 - 14 Repeat
 - 15 PC component
 - 16 Command for a pooch
 - 17 Ponce de —
 - 18 First version
 - 20 Certain soup
 - 21 Debtor's promise
 - 22 Cleanser brand
 - 24 Landlord
 - 26 Heavy-hearted
 - 30 "— About You"
 - 31 Mexico's — California
 - 33 Porter
 - 34 "— Just Seen a Face"
- DOWN**
- 1 — of Avon
 - 2 Culture medium
 - 3 Rest
 - 4 Trouble
 - 5 Tiny colonist
 - 6 Gun grp.

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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

- 7 Fundamen- tal
- 8 Posh
- 9 Maple genus
- 10 Brake part
- 11 Sharpen
- 19 Antagonist
- 20 "— Joey"
- 22 Tweak
- 23 — of Arc
- 24 Leave un- mentioned
- 25 Undulant
- 27 Story from Grimm (2 wds.)
- 28 Radius neighbor
- 29 Monocle
- 32 — and crafts
- 36 — bag
- 39 Hooded jacket
- 40 Word in place names
- 42 Caviar
- 45 Melville captain
- 46 Outburst of laughter
- 47 Bean variety
- 49 Actress — Perlman
- 50 Oven
- 52 Heavy weight
- 53 Loneliest number
- 54 Impost

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12			13				14			
15			16				17			
18			19				20			
	21			22	23					
24	25			26			27	28	29	
30			31	32				33		
34				35			36		37	
38			39	40			41	42		
			43				44			
45	46	47					48		49	50
51				52	53	54			55	
56				57					58	
59				60					61	

ALLEY OOP

ALLEY, YOUR POLL NUMBERS ARE WAY DOWN.

WHAT? BUT I'M THE MOST POPULAR PERSON IN MOO. EVERYONE LOVES ME.

EVERYONE LOVED YOU. NOW THEY WANT TO THROW TOMATOES AT YOU.

JUST ASK THEM TO SLICE THE TOMATOES FIRST. THIS BACON AND LETTUCE SANDWICH IS A LITTLE DRY.

ARLO & JANIS

I MISS THE PAPERBOY!

BIG NATE

WAIT, YOU THINK I SHOULD BREAK UP WITH DAPHNE?

RIGHT! DUMP HER BEFORE SHE DUMPS YOU!

BUT I DON'T WANT US TO BREAK UP AT ALL!

YEAH, I KNOW...

...BUT IF IT'S INEVITABLE, DON'T YOU WANT TO MAKE IT SO IT WON'T HURT?

I'M PRETTY SURE IT'S GONNA HURT EITHER WAY.

THE BORN LOSER

I SWEAR THIS T-SHIRT FIT BETTER LAST YEAR.

DO YOU THINK I'VE PUT ON SOME WEIGHT?

I'D SAY ABOUT ONE AND A HALF X'S WORTH.

FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE

CARRIE! IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE YOU! HELLO, MY DEAR!

HOW WAS YOUR FLIGHT?

OH IT WAS ROUGH! WE BOUNCED UP AND DOWN, UP AND DOWN.

YOU MUST HAVE BEEN WORRIED!

OH YES! WE ALL WERE!

...FOR A TIME THERE WE THOUGHT THAT WE WOULDN'T GET LUNCH!!

FRANK & ERNEST

I HEAR YOU'RE READING GREEK PLAYS IN THAT CLASS.

YEAH, IT'S A MEDEA BLITZ.

GARFIELD

HERE'S TO YOU, ARLENE. AW, HOW SWEET

SCHLURRRRK

READY FOR THE BURPING CONTEST? AND, HOW DISGUSTING

THE GRIZZWELLS

THANKS FOR REMINDING ME, JASMINE... I WANT TO FORGET FORGET WHAT?

THAT THERE'S ONLY TEN SHIPPING DAYS LEFT UNTIL APRIL FOOLS' DAY

PEANUTS

HERE'S YOUR SUPPER, SNOOPY...

HAVE YOU HEARD ANYTHING FROM MY BIG BROTHER? I THOUGHT MAYBE HE'D WRITE...

I WONDER HOW HE'S DOING... I'LL BET YOU MISS HIM, DON'T YOU?

OH, YEAH... THE ROUND-HEADED KID...

SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

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

PREVIOUS SOLUTION

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

HOW TO PLAY: Each row, column and set of 3-by-3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 through 9 without repetition.

HERMAN

COSMETICS

"I wanna buy a book about the universe."

Wife's veganism has become a third party in marriage

DEAR ABBY: My wife and I have been teachers since 1999. We married in 2011. She became vegan in 2017. It helped her beat diabetes, which I love. However, she's pure vegan for animal rights and listens to vegan podcasts all day long after teaching and on the weekends. I mean all day, EVERY day with earbuds in. I have to say, "Knock, Knock" to even talk with her.

has become. Tell her you shouldn't have to ask permission to talk to her because of her preoccupation (obsession) with her podcasts.

If you want food in the house that isn't vegan, go out and buy some. And if she's unwilling or unable to accept and adapt, try marriage counseling before calling a lawyer. The marriage you have described is not a happy one, or you wouldn't have written to me.



ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

Is this worthy of an Adult Protective Services investigation? My grandparents guilt the rest of the family by saying, "At least our tenant comes over often, unlike the rest of you." (I live three hours away). Do I need to mind my own business? They aren't suspicious at all. -- DUBIOUS IN TEXAS

Right now, she's listening to podcasts and messaging vegan people on social media and doesn't even realize I'm typing. I love my wife, but I can't escape the frustration of not being able to have a conversation with her about anything.

We have no kids together, but I raised her son from 7 years old. He moved to live with his dad because of her obsessions with work and veganism. I love her, but the fridge is filled with kale. Should I stay, or should I go? -- AFTERTHOUGHT IN OREGON

DEAR ABBY: I'm growing concerned for my grandparents. They are in their late 80s and homebound. Recently, a new tenant moved into their garage apartment. They LOVE her. The rest of the family is suspicious of her. She has no job and no car and has never paid rent. She frequently spends the day with my grandparents and recently "helped" them change all their usernames and passwords to something more "simple and easy."

DEAR DUBIOUS: An investigation is not an accusation. The relationship your lonely grandparents have with this tenant is unusual. Contact APS, inform them about what's going on with your grandparents and let someone there decide whether your concerns are worth following up on. Better to be safe than sorry.

DEAR AFTERTHOUGHT: Tap your wife on the shoulder and ask her to remove her earbuds. When she does, give her an earful. Tell her you love her but you need a partner who is willing to be more of a companion than she

My grandparents live on Social Security. They have no savings, and I don't believe they have a will. From my perspective, they are setting themselves up to be robbed, abused and left high and dry by a crook disguised as their friendly tenant.

Lifestyle

Town of Del Norte hosts Meet the Candidates

By LYNDISIE FERRELL

DEL NORTE — The Town of Del Norte in partnership with the Del Norte Chamber of Commerce hosted a Meet the Candidate night on Tuesday, March 12, at the High Valley Community Center.

The public was invited to ask questions of three mayoral candidates — incumbent Chris Trujillo, and challengers Shelly Burnett and resident Shawn Goforth.

In addition to the mayoral candidates, the audience was also introduced to the five candidates running for three open seats on the Del Norte Board of Trustees — Andrew Velasquez, Jonathon Medina, Louie Velasquez, Sarah A. White, and Bobby L. Lopez.

The meeting started with host Milcah Hawk, a long-time resident of the area and educator for many years, introducing the candidates and explaining the format.

“It takes a lot of courage to step forward and serve. So, let’s acknowledge those sitting at this

table tonight and how much it takes to come forward and take on things that are hard but also rewarding for our community,” said Hawk.

Each candidate was given the opportunity to introduce themselves, beginning with the first three initial questions and then moving onto additional questions from the audience.

Burnett began by introducing herself. Burnett is a life-long resident of Del Norte and worked for 30-plus years in the banking industry.

“I am a lifelong community member. I do know the culture and I also know our people are not rich. I think we need to try and find ways to help fix our water, but we need grant writer and other flows of income. I don’t believe that we should put the expense all on our citizens,” she said.

Next to speak was Goforth, who previously served as Mayor of South Fork for a short period during 2014 and into 2015. Goforth stated that he has worked for the Wolf Creek Ski Area

for several years and has raised his family in Del Norte. Goforth stated that he would like to see the town thrive and if elected, do what his constituents want done.

“I would like to see term limits, audits, a recreational center, park equipment for the river park and I would like to see the bad side of town get cleaned up a little bit better. I would also like to see our city water get better,” he said.

Trujillo was next to speak, stating that as a long-time resident he knows that Del Norte is a fantastic place where he raised his family and has worked since he graduated from college. Trujillo said he has managerial experience and hopes to use it to continue as mayor of Del Norte.

“My original plan was that I wasn’t going to run again,” he said. “I figured after four terms it was time for someone else to step up. The reason I am running again is because we have so many projects that were put back because of COVID and I would like to get the town

infrastructure taken care of.”

Next, the candidates for the trustee position spoke, introducing themselves to the audience beginning with Lopez, who said that he has been in Del Norte for the past 10 years having come here from La Jara.

Lopez grew up in a small town and feels that experience gives him the knowledge of how small towns work.

“My priorities is that I would like to see change. I want there to be more youth involvement. The streets in our town need more work and we need to push to clean up more as a community,” he said.

Velasquez was born and raised in Del Norte and has served on the town board for the past four years. Velasquez said that because he is a current trustee he is aware of what is happening in the town right now and is hoping to stay on for another four years.

“The reason I am running is because the town has a lot of projects like the revitalizing main street and completing the wastewater system. I want to be around to see that all completed,” he said.

White was next to speak, stating that she is a retired educator after serving in her past position as the superintendent of the school district where she worked. White has been in the Del Norte area for 30 years.

“I am here to serve the community. When I think about priority, I think the biggest priority is making sure voices are heard,” she said.

Candidate Medina was

not present for the event but sent in a comment stating that he would like to help the town move in a positive direction and that he would like to help the law enforcement get the tools they need

to fight crime and drug problems in Del Norte. In addition, Medina stated that he wanted to help the community clean up streets and have more community events.

The election is April 2.



Photo by Lyndsie Ferrell

The Del Norte Chamber of Commerce and the Town of Del Norte hosted a Meet the Candidates night on March 12. There are three mayoral candidates running for a four-year term and five candidates running for three open seats on the Del Norte Board of Trustees.

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GENERAC

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Home Improvement

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Friday, March 23, 2024

Key ways to keep children safe at home

Expecting parents process a barrage of information as they prepare for the day their child is born. No matter how many details they gather from doctors, their own research and individuals who have blazed parenting paths before them, there are still plenty of things to learn on the job.

One of the surprises new parents often face is how much trouble their youngsters can get into both inside and outside a home — particularly as they become mobile. Early lessons pertain to feeding and sleeping schedules, but it is important for parents to be mindful of all of the safety concerns they could face.

Bathing

Water is necessary to keep children clean and healthy, but also poses a significant danger. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicates more children ages one to four die from drowning than from any other cause.

Various precautions should be taken when bathing children. First and foremost, a child should never be left unattended in the bath or around water even for a second. Just a few inches of water can cause drowning. In addition, parents should exercise caution to check the temperature of the bath water to ensure that the child will not be scalded. There are special thermometers that can be used in the bath to indicate if the water has reached a safe temperature.

Nursery

It can be tempting to accept used baby items from other people in an effort to save money. However, these pieces from well-meaning friends and family may no longer meet current safety guidelines, particularly if they're from an older generation.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission advises that there should be no more than a 23/8-inch gap between crib slats (about the width of a soda can). The crib should be placed away from hazards like drapes or window covering cords. The crib should only have a firm mattress with a well-fitted sheet. Pillows, bumper pads, comforters, and the like can be hazardous in a crib.

Current safety guidelines recommend that children should be placed on their backs to sleep. After children are able to roll from back to stomach on their own, they may choose their own sleeping positions, as the risk for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is reduced at this point.

Around the house

Bathrooms, stairs, kitchens, and sharp furniture are all places where curious children can become injured. There are scores of safety products that can limit access to danger. Cushioned pads can be put on furniture edges. Heavy furniture, such as televisions and dressers, can be bolted to the wall to avoid tip-over accidents.

Parents should use gates to block

access to staircases or other off-limits spaces. Special door handle products can make it challenging for little fingers to get into rooms. Cabinet and toilet seat locks also can restrict access.

Feeding

While parents may want to dive right into offering solid foods, choking is an inherent danger. Most pediatricians urge avoiding foods that can block airways until a child reaches age four. Such foods include hot dogs, popcorn, whole grapes, and nuts. Safe finger foods include soft items that are easily swallowed, and O-shaped cereals.

Children have a tendency to put everything in their mouths, so small toys, parts and batteries can be risky.

Parents need to keep watchful eyes on their children and keep safety precautions in mind as their children grow up.



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Did you know?

Formal dining rooms were once a must-have in homes, but that popularity has waned in recent decades. Dining rooms were the spaces to host holiday dinners or family birthday parties. Slowly but surely, dining rooms became obsolete in modern homes that favored open-concept layouts. And in those homes that had formal dining areas, the need for home office spaces or playrooms for children saw many dining rooms repurposed. According to the National Association of Home Builders, 43 percent of millennials prefer the look and feel of an open-concept layout and casual dinner parties. Howev-

er, even though dining rooms may no longer be de rigueur, designers are noticing an increase in clients requesting formal dining spaces, according to a report in Southern Living. Perhaps it's a matter of open-concept fatigue. After spending a year or more during the height of the pandemic at home with few to no barriers between rooms, homeowners may be looking for homes that carve out niches for specific tasks (and privacy) once more. It may not be long until homes come back to including more traditional layouts with separate dining spaces to make hosting a little more intimate.

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Design ideas that can create a peaceful feel

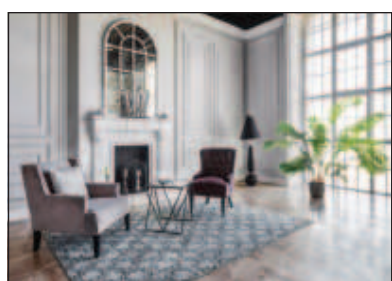
Homes are often characterized as sanctuaries for their residents. A calm place to come home to after a busy day at work or school is often just what people need to unwind.

Certain design components can help individuals turn their homes into relaxing respites from the daily grind. With that goal in mind, individuals can consider these ideas to create a peaceful feel inside their homes.

- **Paint with neutral colors.** Wall colors can define the mood in a given room, and neutral colors have long been linked to a calming effect. Subtle shades like beige, taupe and light gray are known to create a relaxed vibe in a room, so these colors can be a go-to choice. Some people consider neutral colors a tad boring, so individuals concerned by that impression can limit neutral colors to rooms designated as sanctuaries, like a reading room, a spa bathroom or a bedroom.

- **Employ natural light.** Natural light also can help to establish a serene setting at home. Large windows that let daylight in can improve anyone's mood. A 2022 study from researchers at the University of Chile in Santiago found that the more natural light that entered a home, the happier people said they felt. Study authors even noted that the largest uptick in well-being was found among participants who lived in homes in which windows covered at least 40 percent of the dwelling's wall space. Opening blinds or curtains and, if possible, installing larger windows in a home can help to establish the relaxing, happy vibe individuals are aiming for.

- **Utilize plants to set a peaceful tone.** The United Kingdom-based Royal Horticultural Society notes that



research has found that indoor plants can benefit psychological well-being. The RHS notes that improved mood and reduced stress levels are two benefits that indoor plants can provide. A good mood and less stress can help individuals establish the peaceful feel they're aiming for at home.

- **Keep devices out of bedrooms.** Watching television while lying in bed, scanning a smartphone before turning off a nightstand light and retiring for the night, or reading an e-reader instead of a print book at night can transform a bedroom from a serene setting into one that's overrun with stimuli. According to the Sleep Foundation, technology stimulates the mind, which can make it harder to fall asleep. In addition, blue light emitted by devices disrupts the natural production of melatonin, a hormone that makes it easier to fall asleep. That can negate any efforts individuals have undertaken to make their bedrooms as peaceful as possible. Designate bedrooms in the house as technology-free zones to ensure the peaceful vibe continues uninterrupted until everyone goes to bed.

A peaceful home makes for the perfect respite at the end of a busy day. Various design choices can help individuals establish a serene vibe throughout their homes.

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Photo courtesy of Beata Ramza with the city of Alamosa

Xeriscaping on properties throughout Alamosa.

Xeriscaping brings beauty and color while saving water

BY PRISCILLA WAGGONER
Courier Reporter

ALAMOSA —There have been a lot of conversations in the media lately about challenges with less and less water availability in Colorado along with steadily rising temperatures. The impact can be felt in a number of areas, not the least of which is evident in the yards surrounding people's houses. The cost of having a lush, green yard is increasing, not just in terms of how much water is consumed in keeping the yard green but also how much that water costs.

It's estimated that, in cities and towns, 50% of water consumed by residents is devoted to watering lawns and ornamental gardens. In 1981, when Denver was in a serious drought, the Denver Water Department addressed the issue by promoting water efficient landscaping practices.

As part of that effort, the Denver Water Board coined the term xeriscaping (pronounced zer-e -skaping), a combination of the Greek prefix "xero," which means dry, with landscaping. Looking back, it was a

genius move. Instead of just telling the people of Denver to be much more efficient in how they use water, they created a term that, in one word, offered an alternative approach to landscaping. Now, some forty years later, the term (and the idea behind it) has been widely embraced by states throughout the West where, like Colorado, less water and hotter temperatures are becoming part of life.

Xeriscaping is the practice of designing landscapes to reduce – or even eliminate – the need for irrigation - in other words, designing a yard where plants can be sustained with little or no more water than falls from the sky. If done correctly, it can also eliminate the need for fertilizer and pesticides.

While there may be different steps in this type of landscaping that require thought and planning, the steps themselves are relatively straightforward.

As described on the Water Smart website with the city of Alamosa, planning and design doesn't have to begin with a professional. What's important is to think about how the

■ See **WATER** page 7

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Dark skies and you

By JOHN WATERS

Courier News Editor

SAN LUIS VALLEY — We live in a remarkable place to enjoy our fantastic dark skies. Located far from any big city with light pollution and having the Sangre de Cristo Mountains blocking the bright lights of Colorado Springs, our skies are spectacular. Homeowners can take a few simple steps to reduce outdoor lighting and contribute to this great aspect of living here.

Light pollution is the human-made alteration of outdoor light levels from those occurring naturally. According to Dark Skies International (DRI), a non-profit dedicated to preserving this asset, when we overlight our outdoor environment we negatively affect migratory birds, pollinators, and mammals including humans. We also obscure our abilities to see deeply into our universe, our heavens above. In 2012, the American Medical Association Council on Scientific and Public Health reported, "Many Species (including humans) need darkness to survive and thrive."

In 2019, Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve became certified as an International Dark Sky Park, meeting strict standards for sky darkness, limiting outdoor lighting, and working with communities to reduce light pollution.

Homeowners can contribute to our dark skies by limiting the brightness and duration of outdoor lighting, and in doing so, save money.

Dani Robben, who is the Community Connections Coordinator with San Luis Valley Great Outdoors, is an advocate of dark skies and recommends that homeowners check out the Five Principals for Responsible Outdoor Lighting.

Responsible outdoor lighting is:

1. Useful. All light should have a clear purpose. Before installing or replacing a light, determine whether a light is needed. Consider how the use of light will impact the area, including wildlife and the environment. Consider using reflective paints or self-luminous markers for signs, curbs, and steps to reduce the need for permanently installed outdoor



Courtesy of Dark Sky International

This is an example of a dark sky community that has reduced and deflected outside lighting.

lighting. Robben said, "Just think if this light is really necessary and does it have a clear purpose?"

2. Light should be directed only to where it's needed. Use shielding and careful aiming to

target the direction of the light beam so that it points downward and does not spill beyond where it is needed. "Direct lighting and be sure lighting is fully shielded and points down to the ground," said Robben.

3. Illumination should be no higher than necessary. Use the lowest light level required. Be mindful of surface conditions, as some surfaces may reflect more light into the night sky than was intended.

When purchasing outdoor lighting, Robben suggests consumers think in terms of lumens and says 500 lumens or less is ideal. Instead of considering wattage, which is a measure of

■ See **DARK** page 7




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How DIY can be bad for homeowners' bottom lines

Homeowners know it can be tempting to go the do-it-yourself (DIY) route when starting a home improvement project. Home repairs and renovations can be costly, and the notion of saving money on such projects compels many homeowners to try their hand at home improvements. However, the DIY approach can be costly as well, and if things go awry, homeowners may end up with empty pockets and unfinished projects.

Online tutorials and advertisements for home improvement retailers can make DIY seem like a snap. However, there are potential pitfalls to consider that could make the ostensibly less expensive DIY route far more detrimental to the bottom line than homeowners may recognize.

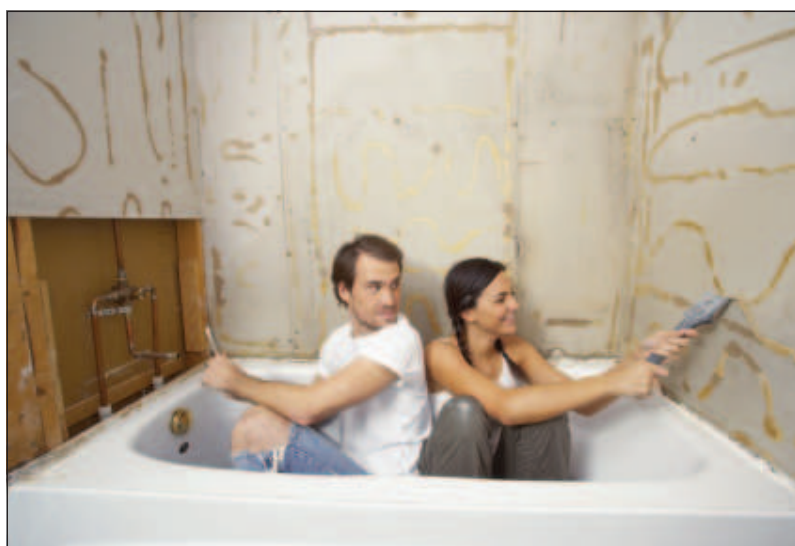
- **Permits:** Permits ensure work is done in accordance with local codes, which are designed to ensure the safety of residents and their neighbors. Licensed contractors know which permits are necessary for projects they're hired to work on, and

many even procure permits for their clients (homeowners are urged to read estimates and contracts to determine who will be responsible for acquiring the appropriate permits). DIYers may not know about local permits, and therefore go ahead with projects without procuring any. That can be harmful in the short- and long-term. In the short-term, a failure to procure the appropriate permits can make a home less safe and potentially lead to costly fines and necessitate a complete do-over of the project. In the long-term, homeowners who did not secure the appropriate permits may not be given a certificate of occupancy (CO) when putting their homes on the market, which can make it very difficult to sell the home.

- **Ancillary costs:** The ancillary costs of DIY are not often noted in online tutorials. However, such costs can dramatically increase the amount of money DIYers shell out in order to complete

projects on their own. Ancillary costs include but are not limited to the price of tools and equipment; disposal fees for materials that will need to be discarded; and the cost of permits. These costs are often included in estimates provided by contractors, but they're easily overlooked by novice DIYers.

- **Repairs:** Even experienced contractors make mistakes, so DIYers, particularly novices, can anticipate making a few errors along the way. Minor mistakes may not prove too costly, but more significant mishaps can quickly negate any cost savings associated with DIY renovations. The cost to fix DIY mistakes varies depending on the project, but a 2019 survey from Porch.com found that the average DIY mistake cost homeowners \$310 and added five and a half hours to the overall time spent to complete a project. It's worth noting the Porch.com survey was conducted prior to the dramatic increase in materials



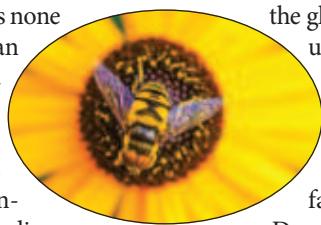
costs related to inflation in recent years. So it's reasonable to assume that fixing DIY mistakes in 2024 could end up costing considerably more than a few hundred dollars.

Before diving in to DIY, homeowners may want to consider the real costs associated with forgoing professional experience in the potentially misplaced hopes of saving a few dollars.

The important role played by bees in lawns and gardens

A colorful garden in full bloom is an aesthetically appealing sight each spring and summer. The pleasant aromas emanating from such spaces only add to their appeal.

Many variables contribute to a thriving garden, and perhaps none is more important than bees. North America is home to thousands of species of bees, but many of those species are experiencing dwindling populations. According



to Scott McArt, an assistant professor of pollinator health in the Department of Entomology at Cornell University, 53 bee species have experienced population declines or range contractions over the last several decades. Individuals accustomed to seeing bees as unwanted guests may wonder why that's a problem. Though declining bee populations pose a number of problems, perhaps none is more relatable than the link between bees and food production. A recent study published in the journal *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* noted that declines

in both managed and wild bee populations raise significant concerns about long-term food security. Authors of the study noted that crop production would be higher if crop flowers received more pollination. That's a significant benefit as the global population continues to increase, but it's also a notable benefit in the present-day from both a food security and economic perspective. In fact, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration reports that commercial production of more than 90 crops relies on roughly 3,600 bee species. Declining bee populations could put that production in serious jeopardy and create a domino effect that impacts food security and individuals' livelihoods.

But all is not lost in the fight to restore bee populations. In fact, McArt indicated in a 2019 report that bee populations are thriving in agricultural and natural areas. But bee populations also must thrive in suburban and urban areas. Planting a pollinator-friendly garden is one step McArt suggested gardening

hobbyists can take to help restore bee populations. When planting to combat declining bee populations, homeowners should always look for native plants, as they are well-adapted to local climates and unlikely to upset local ecosystems. Local garden centers can be great resources for anyone looking to plant native species. According to HGTV, the following are just a handful of the many bee-friendly garden flowers and plants homeowners can consider for their gardens:

- Bee balm
 - Honeysuckle
 - Sunflower
 - Cosmos
 - Strawberries
 - Dahlia
 - Butterfly bush
 - Crocus
 - Pot marigold
 - Geraniums
- Bee populations are in decline. If efforts to restore those populations are not embraced, the consequences for future generations could be dire. Homeowners can do their part by planting bee-friendly flowers and plants on their properties.



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Water

Continued from Page 4

yard is used and what is the look people hope to achieve.

If plants are involved in the design, adding compost to the soil can help xeric (drought resistant) plants thrive.

If a homeowner isn't set on having turf, replace that turf with soil, landscaping rocks and plants that are suited to the climate in the valley and recommended for growing in this "zone."

If a homeowner still wants some

turf in their yard, choose a grass that is native to the valley versus, for example, Kentucky Blue Grass that consumes twice the amount of water as other grasses do. There are also some great "low water drought resistant" varieties of turf.

Make sure to use efficient irrigation, such as drip lines that can be run below the rock where water use is most efficient and greatly minimizes any water loss due to evaporation.

One of the most important steps as far as the environment is concerned, choose native, low water use plants and try to group plants with similar water, sun and soil needs together.

The final point listed on the Water Smart website: Proper pruning, weeding, fertilization and maintenance of your irrigation system will preserve and enhance the quality of your xeriscape. In the long term, a landscape adapted to the local environment will require less maintenance, less fertilizer, and reduce the use of pesticides and herbicides.

"Xeriscaping is a good thing in Alamosa," says Brandon Garrison at Mortenson's Landscaping and Irrigation, an Alamosa based company with crews experienced in this water saving landscaping. "We do quite a bit of it. For the majority of people, the reason they want to xeriscape is because of their water bill. When you take out the grass, you don't have to water it."

The best time to xeriscape is after Mother's Day. Based upon the plants that are chosen, the plants are usually established within the first season. You can put a drip line system in beneath

the xeriscape but you have to have plants that work in the valley because we're basically like the desert. Some plants grow here and some don't."

The cost of xeriscaping is largely based on the size of the yard, he says, but, typically, the choice of rock is the biggest determinant of cost. Most yards use probably six to ten tons of rock, which can range in price from \$50 to \$125 a ton.

Perhaps the greatest misconception about xeriscaping is the notion that a xeriscaped yard is void of color and variety. The opposite is true. There is tremendous variety in the color and appearance of trees, bushes, grasses and flowers that can thrive in Alamosa. That, plus the placement of rocks and groupings of plants, can take an "ordinary" yard and transform it into a dynamic, highly appealing and beautiful outdoor space.

For those interested in learning more, the city of Alamosa is hosting a "How to design a low water garden"



Photo courtesy of Beata Ramza with the city of Alamosa

event at the Alamosa Public Library on Tuesday, April 9th at 5:30 p.m. The event is part of "Water Week," which will run from April 7 to the 13. For more information, call the planning department at the City of Alamosa.

Dark

Continued from Page 5

energy it takes to produce a certain luminance, you want to start thinking about lumens, which is the actual measure of light output."

4. Light should be used only when it is useful.

Use controls such as timers or motion detectors to ensure that light is available when it is needed, dimmed when possible, and turned off when not needed. This is an easy way for consumers to save money and help with dark skies. Motion detectors also contribute to home security.

5. Use warmer-color lights where possible.

Limit the amount of shorter wavelength (blue-violet) light to the least amount needed. Light where you need it, when you need it, in the amount needed, and no more.

Reducing lighting is a benefit to health says Robben, "Lighting disrupts both human and wildlife circadian rhythm. Disrupting natural lighting, we are subject to insomnia, and having these sleep issues that can contribute to further health issues."

Contributing to dark skies is easy. According to the McDonald Observatory in Texas, "The solution to light pollution is 90% education and awareness, and 10% hardware. Identify examples of good lighting in your community and show them to your friends and neighbors. Once people see it, they can't un-see it. Once people understand the implications for cost savings and improved visibility, they are far more likely to adopt good

lighting practices on their own."

The website of Dark Sky International has more information on residential dark sky lighting including links to dark sky-friendly fixture retailers. Dark Sky Week is April 2-8, more information is available on the website. www.darksky.org.

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