



Shorts

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

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

For a petition packet, call Michelle Trujillo at 852-3538 or email mtrujillo@slvrec.com to have a petition packet mailed or pick up at SLVREC's office at 3625 US Highway 160 West, Monte Vista.

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

Completed petitions must include 15 valid SLVREC member signatures and be returned to SLVREC no later than Thursday, April 11, (or Thursday, April 4 to have a brief bio included in the Annual Report). It is recommended to obtain 20 signatures in the event that any of the signatures are invalid. Call Trujillo at 719-852-3538, with any questions.

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

High School Honor Bands at Adams State is March 9

ALAMOSA — The Adams State University (ASU), Top of the Nation High School Honor Band, a program similar to the ASU choral honors program, will host about 60 musicians to ASU this weekend and have a free concert under the direction of James M Lind, Visiting Assistant Professor of Music at Adams State. The concert will be held in Richardson Hall on the university campus at 12:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 9, and the public is welcome to attend this free event. Lind said he is excited to welcome clinicians Andrew Trachsel and Mark Emery to the program.

Rainbow's End in Center is currently being remodeled

Grand reopening set for Saturday, April 6

By MARIE MCCOLM

CENTER — La Puente Enterprises Director Jessica Ornelas is excited about the remodeling and reopening of Rainbow's End Thrift Store in Center. The thrift store is an extension of La Puente.

"This is going to be something really great for the community," Ornelas said. "It was open for a little while last year, we closed the store to add, remodel and revamp everything. We have a group of great staff that will be helping with the remodel. We anticipate everything going really well. We hope everyone will come and join us for the grand opening. We are excited and looking forward to having our doors open again."

On March 8 and 9, people can come to the Center location, 350 S. Worth St., for a clothing giveaway.

Please see RAINBOW'S on Page 6A

La Puente Enterprises Director Jessica Ornelas and AmeriCorps member Sam Salazar at Rainbow's End in Center. They are excited about the store reopening on April 6.

Photo by Marie Mccolm



Health fair in Center will be on April 12

CONTRIBUTED

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

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

People can come and have blood work done at the health fair. There will be free screenings, including height, weight, blood pressure and blood glucose finger sticks.

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

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

Honoring the 'face of Colorado potatoes' — Jim Ehrlich

By CHRISTINA HERRICK

The Packer

WASHINGTON — When presented the award as the 2024 Potato Person of the Year, Jim Ehrlich was speechless — well, almost.

"I'm extremely humbled," he told *The Packer*, which presented the award Feb. 26 in conjunction with the National Potato Council during the 2024 NPC Washington Summit. "I have been so blessed to work for the potato industry and the wonderful people in the industry. I've made great friends from all across the country. There's nothing more noble than producing food for people to eat."

Please see EHRLICH on Page 2A

Christina Herrick, produce editor for *The Packer*, presented Jim Ehrlich, at left, with the 2024 Potato Person of the Year award at the National Potato Council's 2024 Washington Summit. Outgoing NPC President RJ Andrus, right, thanked Ehrlich for his nearly two decades of service to the potato industry.

Photo courtesy of National Potato Council



Haskin Elementary kindergarteners celebrate 100 days of school

By MARIE MCCOLM

CENTER — Haskin Elementary kindergarten classrooms recently celebrated 100 days in school. Kindergarten teacher Jaton Najera's class was just one of many that celebrated the milestone.

Najera said the children enjoyed the celebration.

"It was a fun day for the kids. The kids were so cute. I have been a teacher for 11 years now and every year we have the 100-day celebration," Najera

Please see 100 on Page 2A

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

Courtesy photo



Evening of self-care organized in Crestone

By MARIE MCCOLM

CRESTONE — On Saturday, March 9, Julia Corlett has organized an evening of self-care, connecting, and anointing. The Sisterhood Circle will take place in Crestone and will be an expansion of consciousness for the future, according to Corlett. The ceremony will take place on the last moon of the astrological calendar.

Corlett is excited about the evening and spoke about some of the things that are planned for the people who attend.

“We will sip Legacy Cacao. A sacred Cacao from a lineage of Mayan priestesses,” she said.

Corlett explained that the Cacao has been touched only by women for the last 3,000 years.

“During this event, we will also

be teaching people how to anoint themselves,” she said. “We will be anointing ourselves with Young Living Essential Oils. I have been working with Young Living Essential Oils for the last couple of years. A lot of people don’t realize that essential oils have the power to release stuck emotions, or stagnant energies in our body, especially when we use our voice at the same time. It can be an extremely powerful practice in self-care.”

Corlett said that essential oils will also help create a space of openness and vulnerability.

Corlett said two of her friends and her are planning to guide people through the method of using essential oils, using their voices, and using movement to help release stagnant

energy within people, as a form of self-care.

Everyone is invited to attend the gathering, but pre-registration is advised as the event will take place in a private area. Pre-register by calling 213-359-0137. There is a cost to attend. A sliding fee discount is available, and the terms will be discussed when you call.

Corlett said the event will be interactive.

“All of us will be speaking. Everyone will be learning with us together,” she said.

Colett said they will also teach how the different essential oils can help people.

“We won’t have essential oils for sale, but people will have experience with the oils. So, what usually happens

at these functions is people get so excited with the experience that they have, that they say how can I get these oils. I can help them with that,” she said.

Corlett said the event will be where everyone can sit in a comfortable circle and there will be some chairs available, but people are also welcome

to sit on the floor.

“We are calling this a self-care evening because that is what this gathering is about,” she said. “It is about people spending time on their own and thinking of their own wants and needs.”

For more information about the evening, call 213-359-0137.

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

By LYNDSIE FERRELL

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

The Rio Grande Club and Resort, with help from the South Fork

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

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

EHRlich Continued from Page 1A

Potato Person of the Year recognizes an individual who has gone above and beyond the call of duty during the past year to further the potato industry. Award winners have devoted a significant amount of time promoting potatoes to consumers and representing the industry on trade missions and in front of regulatory agencies.

Ehrlich, dubbed the “face of Colorado potatoes,” has served as the executive director of the Colorado Potato Administrative Committee for the past 18 years after the late Tom Ford approached him to take over the post. Ehrlich announced his plan to retire this year.

While he plans to step back, Ehrlich said he intends to stay connected to the industry.

“My roots are in agriculture deep,” he said.

Bob Mattive, NPC’s incoming president, said he’s known Ehrlich for a long time, having somewhat similar paths to a career with potatoes. Mattive said Ehrlich is a selfless person whom many consult about for anything from marketing to legislative issues on state and national levels.

“He’s worked hard for our potato industry in Colorado and also on the national scene,” Mattive said. “He’s been very proactive. ... People look to him as a resource if they need to find out something about potatoes in Colorado. Jim is their go-to person.”

Mattive said Ehrlich was instrumental in organizing a tour of Colorado packing facilities for

a delegation from Mexico, which was a critical moment to build relationships as U.S. potato exports to Mexico grew. Ehrlich also helped organize tours for the EPA and Colorado legislators to help them better understand the concerns and needs of the potato industry, Mattive said.

“Jim has really been good about bringing those people to the [San Luis Valley in Colorado] to get a firsthand view of some of the things that we do to produce potatoes,” he said.

Ehrlich held previous roles with Coors Brewing Co. and JDE Farms. He also gives back to the community as vice president of San Luis Valley Health Hospital’s board of directors and as the current president of the San Luis Valley Overall Extension Advisory Board, where he has served as a board member for more than 20 years.

When asked what his favorite memory of his time with the Colorado Potato Administrative Committee, Ehrlich said he fondly enjoyed his time in Washington, D.C., over the years at NPC’s Washington Summit, as well as some of the things he and his fellow Colorado delegates experienced.

“We actually left one of our fellow growers at the airport one day on our flight back. And then we had another grower that was sick on the plane, and we kept downplaying it, and he had to have his gallbladder removed the next day,” he said. “It’s just the friendships you make and the experiences you have. They’ve been awesome.”

OBITUARY

Joyce Elizabeth Roden



Joyce Elizabeth Roden (née Riggs), a humble servant of God was called to her eternal rest on Feb. 22, 2024, at the age of 83 in Creede, Colo. Born March 27, 1940, in Big Spring, Texas, her life was a testament to the virtues of faith, hope, and charity.

Professionally, Joyce served with humility as a bookkeeper in the banking industry. She was known for her meticulous attention to detail and strong work ethic.

Joyce’s leisure time was an extension of her love for creation through sewing and painting. Her time was a cherished gift that she bestowed upon her family, including her daughters, grandchildren, and the extended family of her community, through acts of selfless volunteering. Joyce was a devoted member of the Creede Baptist Church.

The legacy of Joyce’s love is carried forth by her children Melanie (Bo) Freedle, Rhonda (Duane) Young, and Jeff (Nancy) Roden; her six

A Celebration of Joyce’s life, a life lived in the grace of God’s love, will be held on Monday, March 11, 2024, at 11 a.m. at the Creede Baptist Church in Creede, Colo. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that offerings be made in Joyce’s memory to Operation Christmas Child as expressions of our collective gratitude. A fundraising page has been set up on her behalf at <https://fundraise.samaritanspurse.org/fundraiser/5305599> or to the Creede Baptist Church-Operation Christmas Child Nana.

Creede Baptist Church in Creede, Colo., will be assisting the family with services as they prepare to honor Joyce’s journey of faith and the gentle footprint she leaves on the sands of time.

Rogers Family Mortuary of Monte Vista are in care of the arrangements. To leave online condolences, tributes, and words of comfort for Joyce’s family, please visit www.RogersFunerals.com.

grandchildren Kimberly Cain, Justin Roden, Jordan Roden, Isabelle Freedle, Casper Freedle, and Zachary Young; and one great-granddaughter, Kyla Rhoades.

She now joins in Heaven her earthly ancestors, including her parents Jefferson H Riggs and Lora Gobbel Riggs; her brothers Felton Riggs, Delbert Riggs, and Tommy Riggs; her sister Jackie Phillips (Harris); and her beloved spouse of over four decades, Van D Roden.

100 Continued from Page 1A

said. “The kids were told they could dress up like they were 100 years old, and there were kids that came dressed up like they were 100 years old. The boys were wearing suspenders with big pants, and some of the boys even wore stick-on moustaches. The girls had curly hair and lots of fancy jewelry, it was a fun time for all.”

Najera said that the classroom often celebrates different things based on happenings at the school and holidays. She said that the kids were informed of the celebration, and they all acted like they were 100 years old.

“A lot of the kids also brought in

canes. They were walking around with canes and giggling. The kids had a fun time for the celebration,” she said.

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

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

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

also had 100 dots on them in honor of the 100 days at school.

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

“He has a video called the one hundredth day of school, and in the video, he counts to 100. The video has him and another lady also dressed up like they are 100 years old counting too. The kids were able to watch the video and count to 100 with him and the lady on the video. We also listened to some different books about one hundred days at school,” she said.

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OPINION & EDITORIAL

Get the lard out

Anyone that has ever been involved with sports has had a coach yell “get the lead out” usually paired with an anatomical part of your body that is synonymous with your neighbor’s donkey. That phrase has been used “since Hector was a pup” and generally means to get moving faster.

Many attribute “getting the lead out” to soldiers who had to reload lead balls faster or, more likely, to horse racing where lead was added to the saddles to even up the differences in the jockey’s weight and thus even the competition. But wherever it came from, it’s been used a lot to get slowly moving people into a more generous state of propulsion.

Just the other day Ol’ Dutch got to thinking -- a dangerous proposition according to Miss Trixie – about what he had read on the Internet about lard. Yes, that lowly concoction made from the fat of animals that grandma used to cook everything from grits to fried chicken.

Old fashioned lard, just like a lot of things that we were sold a bill of goods for lately, was given a death sentence many years ago in favor of mass-produced oils. We were fed a continuous crock of bull about the dangers of lard and the great things to come from the new oils. We were then given Corn Oil, Canola Oil, Vegetable Oil, Sunflower Oil, Rape seed Oil and of course to go with that last one, Virgin Olive Oil.

Not to be outdone on the last one we also have Extra Virgin Olive Oil but for the life of me I don’t have a clue how you can rate virginity on any kind of scale regardless of its purity. But they do and people buy it for an inflated price. But regardless of semantics, the food industry proclaimed the dangers of using lard and they laughed all the way to the bank with the proceeds from the sale of the bottled oils that they produced. Now it seems that using lard like your grandmother did is better for you than all the processed, preservative-laden slickness they sell in clear bottles at the store.

This rush to supposedly better products also included the replacement of butter with oleo, margarine and other unrecognizable mixtures of chemicals which were supposed to be better for you. And of course, they now find out that the plain old butter is better for you.



Trout Republic
by Kevin Kirkpatrick

And you may ask just why they would do such a thing and I can tell you this. No matter the situation in this old world, if you follow the money trail long enough you will come to the reason something occurs. So yes, people made a killing producing oils from all kinds of things and selling them to people under the guise that it was better for you than what your own past generations had used and prospered on. And they seemed to do just fine too.

Of course, the key to anything we consume is not so much what we eat but how much of it we let go down the old gullet. But I am sad to think that for most of my life I have been deprived of the scrumptious goodness of fried chicken cooked in a cast iron skillet filled with lard.

I cannot see that eating all those other concoctions has really benefited me a whole lot either and that adds to the disappointment that I have for missing out on so much good food. Of late Ol’ Dutch has had to put a whip to himself and Miss Trixie to “get the lead out” as we are building a house and doing a lot of the work ourselves.

And now I am going to start a new campaign to “get the lard out” and start having some tasty fried chicken, okra, steaks, gravy and cornbread. I’ll at least be living the last years of my life in comfort and satisfaction.

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



War comes home to my small town

At the coffee shops in Talent, the little Oregon town where I live, the conversation is often about the high cost of housing or the way the weather has been dramatically changing.

But lately another topic has crept in — the escalation of violence in Israel and Palestine.

That might seem surprising since my town is more than 7,000 miles from Gaza, where in just a few months more than 29,000 people have been killed and nearly 2 million have been driven from their homes. But what is happening there reverberates here in its own way.

For one thing, much of the funding for Israel’s assault on Gaza comes from U.S. taxpayers. Since Israel was formed 75 years ago by displacing more than 700,000 Palestinians from their communities, the United States has provided the Israeli military with more than \$225 billion in today’s dollars.

“A lot of us are questioning why our elected officials sign off on billions for military spending overseas with such ease,” said Rianna Koppel, a solar-energy worker who lives in our community of 6,000.

Koppel is a member of a local group of Jewish residents, affiliated with the national organization called Jewish Voice for Peace. They have organized a series of protests, film showings and Hanukkah events, all aimed at encouraging elected officials to support a change in U.S. policy.

They say their focus is on four goals: “bringing about an immediate and permanent ceasefire, freeing hostages

and prisoners held by both Hamas and Israel, getting much needed humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza, and ending U.S. military aid to Israel.”

Responding to those concerns, the mayor and city council of Talent sent a letter to our representative in Congress and our state’s two U.S. senators, urging them to support those same four goals.

Jason Clark, the town councilor who drafted the letter, said that he is “deeply saddened and horrified by the loss of all innocent life in this conflict and that it has been allowed to go on for this long.”

He added, “People all over the world want a negotiated solution that provides peace and justice for both Israelis and Palestinians. More military aid just provokes more resistance and makes a negotiated solution harder to achieve.” One recipient of the letter from our town, Oregon Democratic Senator Jeff Merkley, joined the call for a ceasefire.

Of course, this issue is highly controversial, and not everyone in the valley where I live agrees that it needs to be open for public discussion. In November, local rabbis organized what they said was a Rally Against Antisemitism. One of them, whose synagogue was fundraising to send military equipment to Israeli soldiers, equated criticism of Israeli government policies with antisemitism and urged residents to “call it out.”

To be sure, antisemitism is present in many rural western communities like ours. A few days after Thanksgiv-

ing, law enforcement agencies in four towns within a few miles of my home reported that during the night, antisemitic material had been deposited outside hundreds of local residences. The material directed residents to a video that included laudatory clips of Adolf Hitler. But local critics of the Israeli assault on Gaza, supposedly to rid it of Hamas, say hateful antisemitic attacks like we have seen here recently make it even more important to speak out for a just peace in Palestine and Israel.

“Incidents of antisemitism and Islamophobia are increasing, not just around here, but all over the world as a side effect of this war,” Koppel said. “We need our elected officials to help find a better way.”

Matt Witt is a contributor to Writers on the Range, writersontherange.org, an independent nonprofit dedicated to spurring lively conversation about the West. He is a writer and photographer in Talent, Ore.



Writers on the Range
by Matt Witt

LETTER

Local funeral directors privileged to serve their communities

Editor,
Doug Manning, a best-selling author, former Pastor, and grief expert wrote “The calling of the funeral director is to be there when someone is in need. To be there no matter the time or the conditions. To be there with words of comfort and concern. To be there to give quiet guidance through the storm. To be there for the final tribute that honors a life. There is no higher privilege.”

To the large majority of funeral directors in this country and our state,

these thoughts are reflective of the call to service we feel as men and women in the funeral industry.

In the past few months, especially in Colorado, the spotlight has been focused on the tragedies that have affected many families regarding the irresponsible acts of a very small minority of people associated with funeral homes. We are often reminded of the sales of body parts in Montrose a few years ago, the issues at a funeral home in Leadville, and more recently

the alleged improper storage of close to 200 decedents in Penrose and as of this past week cremated remains and a body found in Colorado Springs in relationship to a funeral home that had closed over a year ago.

With all that is going on, it is important to know that legislatures are working on new bills, to put protections in place for families and their loved ones.

As a member of the Colorado Funeral Directors Board, we are working with legislatures to ensure that the

bills presented benefit the families of Colorado.

Where I grew up, the local funeral directors were an active part of the community, they went to our churches, served on our local non-profit boards, and were active in local civic groups. These were individuals that the community looked up to and held in high regard.

In the San Luis Valley, the local funeral homes that we have do much the same. We serve the communities

of the San Luis Valley with dignity and compassion. We all strive to honor the life of the decedents in our care to the best of our abilities. The funeral home staff that serves the community strives to provide the highest quality of service in our ways.

Much like the town I grew up in, as your funeral directors, we live, worship, and share in the same community as those we serve.

*Stephen Hunzeker
Mountain Valley Mortuary*



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

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- Monte Vista Journal/Center Post Dispatch Reporter
- Lyndsie Ferrell..... South Fork/Creede Reporter
- Diane Drekman..... Conejos/Costilla Reporter
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Saguache Commissioner meets with community

Saguache County Commissioner Tom McCracken held a Town Hall style meeting at the Cloud Station in Crestone on Feb.19. About 35 people attended the event and heard about issues in the Crestone-Baca area and Saguache County.



Photo by John Waters

Southwest Conservation Corps Los Valles Youth Crews: Empowering youth through environmental stewardship this summer

CONTRIBUTED

SALIDA — The Southwest Conservation Corps recently announced the return of the Los Valles Youth Crews program for the upcoming summer.

Dedicated to nurturing the next generation of environmental stewards, the program offers a unique blend of employment, education, and conservation work for youth aged 15-18 in select Colorado counties.

The Los Valles Youth Crews will embark on a range of projects across Alamosa, Chaffee, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral/Rio Grande, Park, and Saguache counties. These projects include invasive species removal, tree planting, trail maintenance and construction, habitat improvement, and community cleanup efforts. Beyond contributing to significant environmental conservation efforts, participants will be compensated at a rate of \$14.42 per hour, working Monday through Friday across two five-week sessions this summer.

“Our program is about so much more than just the critical conservation work we accomplish,” said Samantha López, Youth Program Coordinator at the Southwest Conservation Corps. “It’s a comprehensive developmental opportunity

for our youth. They learn about leadership, team building, communication, and civic engagement, all while earning a wage and making tangible improvements to their local communities.”

The first session runs from May 27 to June 28, with the second session from July 8 to Aug. 9. The program caters to both Day Crews and Camping Crews, providing flexible opportunities for youth to engage in this transformative experience. Friday of each week is dedicated to education, focusing on enriching the participants’ understanding of environmental stewardship and their role in the broader ecosystem.

“We’re calling on our community to help spread the word about this incredible opportunity,” added López. “Whether you’re a parent, teacher, or community leader, you can play a crucial role in connecting us with potential participants who are eager to make a difference this summer.”

For more information on the Southwest Conservation Corps Los Valles Youth Crews program, including how to apply or support, contact López at slopez@conservationlegacy.org or visit Los Valles Region Youth Crews | Southwest Conservation Corps (sccorps.org).



San Luis Valley Scoreboard Basketball 2023-2024

BOYS

Class 1A

Otis 50.....	Sangre de Cristo 48
Peetz 60.....	Centennial 41
Sierra Grande 67.....	Wiley 42
Stratton 73.....	Moffat 39
Sierra Grande 51.....	DeBeque 38

Class 2A

Sanford 60.....	Golden View Classic 42
Monte Vista 39.....	Walsenburg 30
Fowler 49.....	Sargent 36
Merino 50.....	Monte Vista 25
Sanford 62 ...	Loveland Classical 60 OT

Class 3A

Centauri 50.....	Timnath 30
Centauri 61.....	Manual 37

GIRLS

Class 1A

Hi-Plains 36.....	Sangre de Cristo 26
Flatirons Academy 67	Sierra Grande 10

Class 2A

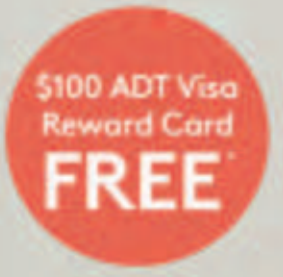
Sanford 58.....	Crowley County 18
Sargent 49.....	Fowler 28
Mancos 38.....	Del Norte 26
Sedgwick County 51.....	Center 35
Wray 55.....	Monte Vista 31
Wiggins 37.....	Sanford 32
Merino 80.....	Sargent 33

Class 3A

Centauri 67.....	Thomas MacLaren 21
Centauri 41.....	Cedaridge 13

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Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area awards History Fair Scholarships to students

CONTRIBUTED

The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area (SdCNHA) presented seven students with \$4,000 worth of History Fair Scholarships. SdCNHA provides annual scholarships to students who participate and compete in the Regional History Fair, with projects based on this year's theme "Turning Points in History" that involve local history, culture, or traditions.

Laila Martinez, Violet Sandoval, Tynnley Buhr, Samuel Malouff, Parker Mitchell, Joseph Torres, and Joshua Ortiz were the students who received an SdCNHA scholarship for 2024.

The Regional History Fair took place at Adams State University and was hosted by the Adams State University (ASU) Department of History, Anthropology, Philosophy, Political Science, and Spanish (HAPPSS).

The Regional History Fair is part one of the National History Day competition that takes place nationwide.

Students participate in a project-based learning curriculum that emphasizes critical reading and thinking, research, analysis, and the drawing of meaningful conclusions.

Students can complete these projects in groups or as individuals in one of five categories: documentary, paper, exhibit, performance, or website.

This year's round of annual Regional History Day submissions demonstrated the broad array of historical topics rooted in history from the San Luis Valley, five documentaries and two exhibits qualified for the SdCNHA scholarship.

Martinez created a documentary titled; "Spanglish to the Valley Speakers of the San Luis Valley."

Laila interviewed many individuals who talked about Spanglish spoken in the valley.

Buhr created a documentary titled, "The Cumbres and Toltec." She shared many historic photos and information on the historic train.

Mitchell also created a documentary titled; "Cultivating the Future: Evolution of Potato Breeding." He talked about the different genetically modified potatoes in use today.

Sandoval shared an exhibit titled, "Maestas Case". On the exhibit, she shared about one of the first desegregation cases that happened in Alamosa.

Malouff created a documentary titled, "The Cumbres and Toltec



Photo by Julie Chacon

From left to right: Violet Sandoval, Board Member Sharleen Farmer, Samuel Malouff, Tynnley Buhr, Board Member Barbara Kruse, Joseph Torres, Joshua Ortiz, and Board Member Jason Medina. Not pictured: Parker Mitchell

Railroad." He shared historical information and photos of the narrow-gauge train.

Torres had a documentary titled, "The History of the SPMDTU and the Maestas Case." In the documentary, he interviewed a member of the SPMDTU and shared about work being accomplished on the historic building in Antonito.

He also shared about how the SPMDTU was involved in the Maestas desegregation case.

Ortiz created a senior exhibit titled, "The Gettysburg of the West: How the Colorado Volunteers and Fort Garland helped win the Civil War."

"The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area congratulates all

students who participated in this year's competition and is excited to see what heritage area youth come up with next year," SdCNHA officials stated.

For more information on National History Day, visit www.nhd.org. For more information on SdCNHA scholarships and fieldtrip grants, visit www.sangreheritage.org.



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Creede Arts Council annual Variety Show auditions April 2 and 4

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

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

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

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

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

RAINBOW'S

Ornelas said she is inspired by her job every day. Ornelas oversees all three Rainbow's End Thrift Stores in the Valley. She along with AmeriCorps member and volunteer for the stores, Sam Salazar, put a lot of work into Alamosa's Rainbow's End store and boutique, and are now working hard to remodel and open Rainbow's End again in Center.

"We are all a big family together," she said. "The job is very family oriented. Just a couple of weeks ago, we had staff members helping with the Center store, helping to hang clothes and organize things. They were playing music, dancing around, laughing and having a good time. Honestly, we are just like family. We are hoping to make the store very family oriented as well. This store is all about us helping the community with their needs. We are hoping to make this store as welcoming as possible to everyone."

Salazar will oversee the Center store but will go back to working in the Alamosa location, after August of 2024. Salazar said he is looking forward to opening the doors and making the store a place for community members to come in and enjoy.

"It's not just about it being a store. We are hoping to see people come in and network and socialize with each other," he said. "I have ties to this town. Jessica has ties to this town. We want to have a small play area for kids. We want people to come in and enjoy themselves, and know that we aren't just a store, we are a place to come together, and see each other. We want the store to be a place where families feel safe. We are not here just to turn a profit. We are about clothing people and helping them with their needs. We want to help the community. If people come in without money, we will work with them if they need things. We don't want people to feel they have to take anything if they lack

money. We want to help people that travel for work, we want to help local people, we want to help everyone. This store is not going to be just a store, we want it to be a welcoming place for the community and their families to gather also."

There is a food bank in the store, so the big back room in the store will be the dedicated area for the food bank.

"I think the remodel will benefit both the food bank and the store," Salazar said. "There will be more room in different areas, for different things."

Ornelas said working at La Puente Enterprises is unlike any other job.

"It's so totally different than any other job I have had. I drive a forklift to move things. I drive a U-Haul. I have to load clothing. I have to sort bags. It's different than the other jobs that I have worked. I put my blood sweat and tears in, but I am so excited about doing all of this and giving back to the community," she said.

Ornelas said this is "where she is supposed to be."

"I care for people so much. This is a real eye opener," she said. "I have loved my position since the first day I started. I can bring my kids to work. I remember the first day I ever worked, and I remember calling my mom and telling her this is where I am supposed to be."

Salazar said he is happy volunteering at the Center store and being a part of bringing the community together.

"We were sad to see it close last year, but we are happy about reopening and making this place a place for the community to depend on and enjoy. Giving back to the community is what this is all about. Helping people is our main goal. We are looking forward to the grand opening and really bringing the place together."

For more information about the Rainbow's End Store in Center, contact Ornelas or Salazar at the Alamosa store at 719-589-8778.

Spend Your Time Without Acquiring Regrets

Imagine we're at a graveyard. You look at a tombstone and see the person's name, the date they were born, and when they died. In-between the dates there is a dash. I think it's interesting that a person's whole life—from the time they are born until they die—is represented by that dash.

The question is: What are you doing with your dash? Time goes by so fast, and you don't want to get to your later years in life and have nothing but regrets. David talks about this in the Psalms.

Psalm 39:4-5 (AMPC), says, "Lord, make me to know my end and [to appreciate] the measure of my days.... Behold, You have made my days as [short as] handbreadths, and my lifetime is as nothing in Your sight. Truly every man at his best is merely a breath!"

It's so important for us to invest our time in the important things of life. Because you don't want to spend your life climbing the ladder of success only to find out your ladder is leaning against the wrong building when you get to the top!

First Peter 5:8 (AMP) says we should "be sober [well balanced and self-disciplined]...." This is the key to living with purpose, making your time count. Are you living a balanced life, getting enough sleep, drinking enough water, taking care of yourself so you have the energy you need to do what God is leading you to do?

Are you focused on the important things—your relationship with God, spending time with family and friends? The people in your life are more important than money. Are you striving to store up material possessions that are already in the process of decay and will someday end up in a junk yard? That's what happens to all the things we "worship" here.

There is nothing wrong with having nice things and enjoying them, but we cannot afford to put them before the really important things. So I ask you again: What are you doing with your

time? Are you investing it or wasting it?

Wisdom is doing now what you will be happy with later on. A good example of this happened when I had a hip replacement in 2015. After the surgery, I healed very well and quickly. The doctor said it was because I was in great shape physically before surgery. I was in great shape because I've spent lots of time working out, eating properly, getting good sleep consistently, and doing other healthy habits. I paid the price, investing my time in ways that bought me strength and helped me to recover successfully.

Here's another example: I only have six teeth that don't have crowns on them. This is because when I was growing up, I never went to the dentist unless I had an emergency. My dentist finally said, "If you're not going to come in for your regular checkups and cleanings, then don't call us when you have an emergency."

Because I wouldn't take the time to go to the dentist on a regular basis and take care of my teeth like I should have, I ended up spending more time getting my teeth repaired later on. It takes a lot of time to get your teeth crowned—and a lot of shots and pain!

The bottom line is if you take a little time to do the right thing to begin with, then you won't be forced to take a lot of time later on taking care of problems that could have been prevented in the first place.

I've discovered eight simple, practical ways you can avoid wasting your time:

Stop getting upset about things you can't do anything about. Be determined to keep your peace in every situation (John 14:27).

Don't complain (Philippians 2:14). It's useless and changes absolutely nothing. The more we talk about problems, the bigger they seem to become.

Don't try to "buy" time by getting less sleep. This actually causes you to lose more time because when you're



tired, you make more mistakes than you would if you were properly rested. And every mistake costs time to fix.

Stop hurrying. This also causes us to make mistakes and waste time.

Enjoy what you have instead of craving and going after things you don't have (Ecclesiastes 6:9).

Don't live in the past. You can't go back and do anything over again. Let it go and get on with life (Philippians 3:8-13).

Take time to deal with little problems and you won't spend more time later dealing with big ones.

Identify things that hijack your time and be firm in avoiding them.

We all have room for improvement in our lives. I want to encourage you to make a decision to begin making changes, with God's help, in the areas you need to grow in. You'll have abundant life in Christ (John 10:10) and make your "dash" count as you invest your time following the plan He has for you!

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

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

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Adre Baroz pleads guilty to all charges in Los Sauces murder cases

Julius Baroz and Francisco Ramirez plead guilty to lesser charges

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER

ALAMOSA — After three and a half years of court proceedings, Adre Baroz, 29, has pleaded guilty to all charges in connection with the murders and dismemberment of five people whose remains were found in two burn pits in Los Sauces in late November of 2020.

Over a period of several months, as forensic pathologists examined the remains, the victims were identified as Korina Arroyo, Selena Esquibel, Xavier Zeven Garcia, Myron Martinez and Shayla Hammel. A court documents in each case obtained by the Valley Courier revealed, those five individuals were murdered between Aug. 25, 2020, to Nov. 13, 2020.

Baroz pleaded guilty to five counts of murder in the first degree, a class 1 felony, with each count carrying a sentence of life in prison with no hope of parole; five counts of tampering with remains of a deceased human body, a class 3 felony, which will carry a sentence of 4-12 years for each count; one count of assault in the first degree with serious bodily injury, a class 3 felony, which will carry a minimum sentence of 10 years and a maximum of 32 years in prison; second degree kidnapping, a class 3 felony, which will carry a sentence of 10-32 years; and second degree assault, a class 4 felony, which has a sentencing range of 5-16 years.

For the "lesser" felony charges, Baroz will serve anywhere from 45 to 140 years in prison. However, in the resolution reached between Baroz's defense counsel, David Lipka, and special prosecutor, Fred Johnson assigned from the Boulder District Attorney's Office, the life sentences will be served consecutively, totaling 200 years sentencing Baroz to spending the rest of his life in prison.

Baroz went through the court proceedings with, initially, three co-defendants: his brother, Julius Baroz, 33, Francisco Ramirez, 41, and C.J. Dominguez, 31.

Dominguez reached an agreement with prosecutors in December of 2022 when he entered a guilty plea of tampering with a deceased human body, which severed him from the case.

However, Julius Baroz and Ramirez remained as co-defendants until Monday's resolution with the prosecution.

Julius Baroz pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit murder in the first degree of Myron Martinez, which will carry a prison sentence of 16-25 years with 5 years mandatory parole.

Ramirez pleaded guilty to three counts of tampering with deceased human bodies, where he will be sentenced to eight years in the Department of Corrections for each sentence to be served consecutively.

All resolutions reached on Monday were entered after Adre Baroz's plea of not guilty by reason of insanity (NRGI) was withdrawn. On April 29, 2022, Baroz had entered the NRGI plea, which began a protracted period of 22 months where two psychological evaluations — the second one requested by the defense — led to a series of continuance after continuance due to delays in getting the evaluations completed.

Finally, several months ago, Judge Gonzales stated that "enough was enough" and the case needed to proceed in a timely manner. In fact, today's proceeding was slated as a hearing, based on the assumption that the results of the second evaluation had been completed and in possession of both defense and the prosecution.

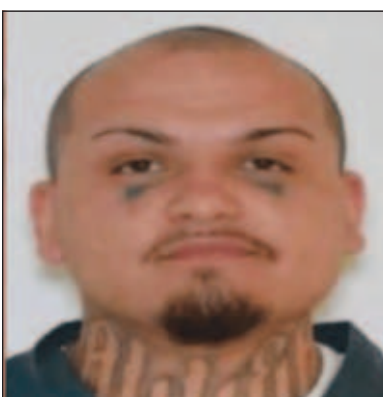
When Judge Gonzales entered the courtroom, counsel requested to meet in chambers and Gonzales said, "the case was headed in a different direction."

As Gonzales read each plea deal, he asked Johnson if the victims — in this case, members of the families of the five people Baroz murdered — had any objections to the agreements that had been reached. Although there was mention of some opposition to Julius Baroz pleading guilty to conspiracy with other charges dismissed, Johnson said that, with the sentence enhancer that increased Julius Baroz's sentence, the family was satisfied.

This case originally garnered national attention when, in late November of 2020, the deceased remains of human beings were found in two separate burn pits in the small town of Los Sauces in Conejos County. At that time, Adre Baroz was identified as a suspect as the Colorado Bureau of Investigation, along with local law enforcement from Conejos, Alamosa and Rio Grande Counties and agencies in New Mexico, began a manhunt.

On Nov. 19, 2020, Baroz, who already had several outstanding warrants in Alamosa for failure to appear on a drug related charge, was taken into custody in Gallup, N.M.

Back in the Valley, investigators



Courtesy photo CBI photo of Adre Baroz when a statewide bulletin was issued naming him as suspect in the murders.

immediately began interviewing people associated with Baroz and soon built a case that led to his initial charge in the murder of Selena Esquibel.

Sentencing for Julius Baroz and Francisco Ramirez is scheduled for May 3, at which time victims — should they so choose — may address the court directly as well as individuals who may choose to speak on behalf of any of the defendants.

"These pleas represent a tremendous victory for justice in the Valley," wrote District Attorney Anne Kelly in an email to the Valley Courier. "I am thrilled that we can deliver a result for the families of these victims that may help them move through their nightmare. I cannot express enough how appreciative our community is for the tireless and fearless work of our law enforcement team in achieving this result."



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

Future farmers attend leadership event at Adams State University

CONTRIBUTED

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

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

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

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

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

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

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RG Hospital gives update on Wellness Center, thanks donors

By LYNDIE FERRELL

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

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

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

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

At the beginning of the planning phase of the project, Rio Grande Hospital CEO Arlene Harms looked at what are termed Blue Zones throughout the US and through her research and with the help of several different organizations and people they began to form a plan for what



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

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

The Wellness Center will have a community center where members

of the community can come host meetings, meet for coffee or utilize resources offered by the center. It will be an intersection for employees who can take their breaks there, there will be games, books and computers to use, and help families that have members in the hospital.

The center will also house a teaching kitchen so that families can come and learn how to cook healthy meals; a greenhouse and herb garden; an educational room; meditation room; access to the nearby trails and hiking as well as so much more. For more information, visit the hospital’s website at www.riograndehospital.org.

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

“A huge thanks goes out to Rio Grande Bank, Del Norte Bank and San Luis Valley Bank and to everyone who helped make this dream a reality,” hospital officials stated.



Courtesy photos

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

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

By COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Please note: if you are buying a small game license only as a qualifying license

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File photo

The 41st annual Crane Festival is flying into Monte Vista on March 8-10. The festival is collaborative effort of the Friends of the San Luis Valley National Wildlife Refuges, the City of Monte Vista, the Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce, and the San Luis Valley National Wildlife Complex.

Crowds will flock to MV for glimpse of Sandhill Cranes

Annual festival set for March 8-10

By MARIE MCCOLM

MONTE VISTA — It is that time of year again, the 41st annual Crane Festival is flying into Monte Vista on March 8-10. The festival is collaborative effort of the Friends of the San Luis Valley National Wildlife Refuges, the City of Monte Vista, the Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce, and the San Luis Valley National Wildlife Complex.

Soon people will be able to witness the majestic flight of these beautiful birds on their springtime migration through the San Luis Valley. Every year, people flock to the Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge to view the cranes.

Along with the festival the Craft and Nature Fair will be held at the Outcalt Event and Conference Center at the SLV Ski-Hi Complex. There will be

photography for everyone to enjoy along with nature art, carvings, baked goods, handmade jewelry, clothing, and much more. It will take place from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, and from 9 a.m. to noon on Sunday.

Bus-guided crane tours will be available during the festival and new this year, the festival will offer Spanish language bus tours. The new tours will help the festival reach a larger audience. Tickets must be reserved, to ensure a spot on the tour.

There will be morning, afternoon, and evening crane tours during the festival. The tours will leave the Ski-Hi grounds and will be led by specialists who will speak about Sandhill Cranes and other birds as the tour proceeds to the Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge.

A special access tour of the Blanca Wetlands is also scheduled.

Drive-yourself-tours at Trincheras Ranch and Home Lake are also available.

All tours will be expert led; the Home Lake Tour will feature John Rawinski, a local ornithologist and author, who will share his expertise on local birds and where to find them. This tour will involve some walking, less than a mile on level ground.

The Trincheras Ranch tour is a half-day tour which will allow attendees to learn more about forestry, wildlife, and fisheries. Visit mvrancfest.org, for more information on specific times, costs and to register.

The Monte Vista Crane Festival is a unique event for all different ages of people.

The Sandhill Cranes are known to roost and feed at the Monte Vista Wildlife Refuge. In the past, attendees have enjoyed viewing and taking pictures of the cranes, early morning when the sun is rising and early evening while the sun is setting.

For more information and to register for events, visit mvrancfest.org.

SLV Seed Exchange celebrating food sovereignty, self-reliance, and community

By JOHN WATERS

SAGUACHE COUNTY — The 14th Annual San Luis Valley Seed Exchange is gearing up for a fantastic event on March 30 and 31. This event continues to be an important community gathering to share seeds, knowledge, and enthusiasm for promoting the mission of making our community more resilient and food secure.

The SLV Seed Exchange is at Joyful Journey Hot Springs Spa in Saguache County. The gathering offers many opportunities for attendees to engage in the vibrant local food, gardening, and agricultural communities of the San Luis Valley. Activities will start at 10 a.m. each day, and end at 5 p.m. on Saturday and 2 p.m. on Sunday.

The event is a cornerstone of the region's commitment to sustainability, biodiversity, and community resilience. This year's event continues the tradition with an exciting lineup of educational speakers, vendors, and attractions for plant and gardening enthusiasts. This year's theme is "Wild Foods & Medicines of the Valley."

Jae Sanders, executive director of the seed exchange told the Valley Courier the exchange began in Saguache County, "Where neighbors showed up and brought their seeds and they went through them, traded and brought them home. That tradition has been kept alive, now it is just a much bigger event. The community can come, bring their seeds, leave them on the tables and people can collect whatever they want and bring them home. This is a great, big seed swap."

"One of the things I and the board want to highlight is, we think there should be more food and seed sovereignty in the region. That is why I have been doing this for six years, I want our community to have access to food and have that food grown here. This is really about enabling, inspiring and educating



Courtesy photo

Local mycologist Tylor Berreth will speak about Wild Mushrooms in the San Luis Valley and Their Medicinal Use at the San Luis Valley Seed Exchange March 30 and 31 at Joyful Journey Hot Springs in Saguache County.

ing people on providing for themselves and their community," said Sanders.

"That is what this event is about. This is a great opportunity to lift up food production and help our neighbors by sharing. That is why this event is free, the educational speakers are free.

"Food sovereignty is a big deal; we need to support our local farmers and ranchers if we want to have any say in our food system. I'm a local farmer-rancher advocate and the local foods coalition has done a lot to support the seed exchange."

The event is free and there will be vendors selling food related items-and food will be available for purchase.

Sanders is grateful to the many supporters and sponsors of the event including Joyful Journey Hot Springs, Saguache County, San Luis Valley REC Energy Foundation, Saguache County Tourism Council, Crestone Energy Fair, Mountainside Realty and, the San Luis Valley Local Foods Coalition.

"It takes a community to put this on, and this builds the community that

Please see SEED on Page 8

Community Ambulance Service presents Fly the Coop 5K run-walk

Event is sponsored by Rio Grande Hospital

CONTRIBUTED

MONTE VISTA — The second annual Fly the Coop 5K run and walk will be held at 10 a.m. on March 9, during the Monte Vista Crane Festival. The race will begin at the Monte Vista Athletic Club at 2360 Sherman Ave., across the street from the Ski-Hi Complex.

The race is presented by the Monte Vista Community Ambulance Service and sponsored by the Rio Grande Hospital of Del Norte.

This race is for all abilities, ages, and sizes. Make this race as fun or challenging as you like. Runners, walkers, and baby strollers are welcomed as this is a fun family event. After the race, medals will be awarded to

the top three male and female runners and top three male and female walkers. There will also be ribbons for the top three finishers of each age and gender group for both the run and walk. The age groups are: 6 and under, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15, 16-19, 20-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44, 45-49, 50-54, 55-59, 60-64, 65-69, 70-74, 75-79, 80-84, 85-89, 90-plus. While waiting for awards, people can have a cookie donated by Sunflour Bakery, and fruit, and water.

This year's proceeds will be used to purchase state-of-the-art vacuum splints to help Monte Vista Community Ambulance Service better serve the community.

"We look forward to seeing you at this year's event. If you want to be involved but do not want to walk or run, people can help support the racers," organizers stated.

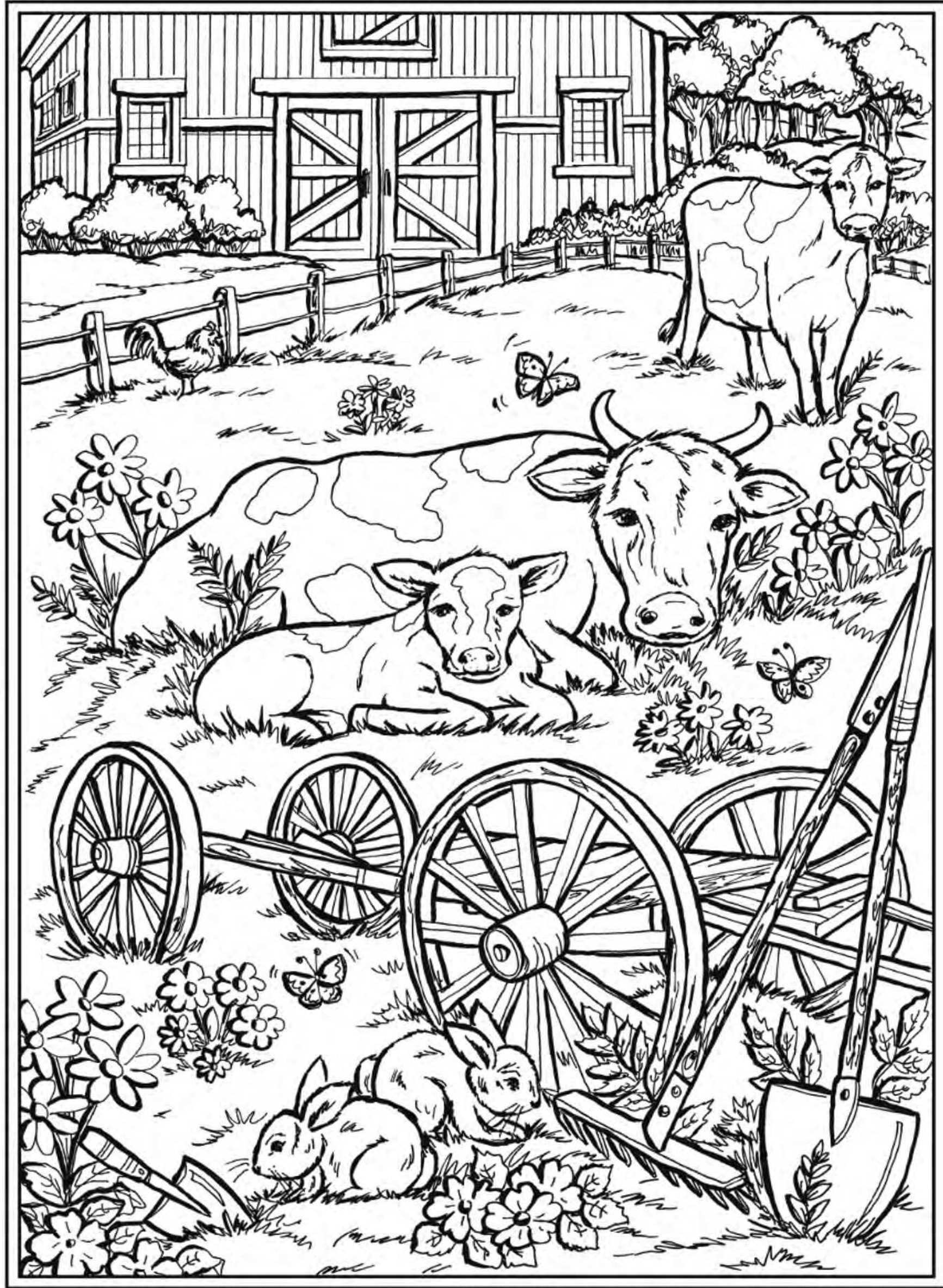
For more information, contact Deb Haverfield at 719-850-7777.



Courtesy photo

The second annual Fly the Coop 5K run-walk is scheduled for March 9 in Monte Vista. The first event was held in 2023 during the Crane Festival.

COLORING CONTEST



NAME: _____
AGE: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____
EMAIL: _____
PARENT/GUARDIAN: _____

ONE WINNER FROM EACH AGE GROUP WILL WIN A \$50 MVC GIFT CERTIFICATE

**ENTRY DEADLINE
MARCH 29, 2024**

**WINNERS WILL BE
ANNOUNCED APRIL 1, 2024
AT MVCOOP.COM & MVC
SOCIAL MEDIA.**

Winners will be asked for consent for social media marketing

ELIGIBILITY:
•Child must be between the ages of 3-17 yrs and adults 18 yrs +.

COLORING CONTEST GUIDELINES
•The picture provided by the Monte Vista Coop should be used as the official entry into the coloring contest.
•Coloring must be the original work of the child/ adult submitting the entry.
•The artists name, age, address, phone number, and email (opt), parent/guardian name(s) should be written on the entry form.
•Age categories will include: 7 and under, 8-10, 11-13, 14-17, and 18 +.
•There will be one winner from each age category.
•Only one entry per child/ adult.

QUESTIONS?
Stephanie Schaefer, MVC Marketing Director
Phone: 719-852-5181 Ext. 1054
Email: mvcads@mvcoop.com

TIMELINE
•The coloring contest is in correspondence with the Monte Vista Coop National Agriculture Month celebration - March 2024.
•Deadline to submit entries will be March 29, 2024.
•Winners will be announced April 1, 2024 at mvcoop.com and MVC social media.
•Entries submitted to the Monte Vista Coop can be submitted in hard copy form via mail, dropped off at the Monte Vista Coop main office, or electronic format (email), and must be received by the March 29, 2024 by 5:00 pm.

CONTEST PRIZE:
• \$50 Monte Vista Coop Gift Certificate

MAIL ENTRIES TO:
Monte Vista Coop Ag Month Coloring Contest
ATTN: Stephanie Schaefer
PO Box 111
Monte Vista, CO 81144
Email: mvcads@mvcoop.com

MVC FARM STORE 

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MARCH 22 & 23

VISIT MVCOOP.COM FOR DETAILS! 

Valley-Wide Classified **FREE!** ON LINE! MARKETPLACE

Sell your household items for FREE. Total value of items must be \$50 or less. See details below.



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59 VEHICLES WANTED
60 CLASSIC CARS
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62 VANS
63 TRUCKS
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To ensure your ad is correct, check it the first day it appears in the paper. If there is an error in your ad, call us right away so we can correct it. If an error appears in your ad, Valley Publishing will credit you with one additional day of advertising.

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DEADLINE

Thursday 5:00 pm

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05 Notices

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

07 Help Wanted

The City of Monte Vista is accepting applications for the position of Utilities Maintenance Worker II. Utilities Maintenance Worker II is a skilled position with a minimum requirement of a Small Systems Wastewater Certification and preferably a Class D Wastewater Treatment Certification. A HS Diploma, and one year of experience working within a treatment facility is required. The hiring range for this position is \$21.00 to \$24.00 per hour DOE. Candidates will need a valid driver's license and be able to pass a pre-employment background check and drug test. Please visit: <https://cityofmontevista.colorado.gov/government/departments/human-resources> for a complete position description and application. (3-13)

Elementary Behavior Interventionist / School Assessment Coordinator / Response to Intervention Coordinator needed at Del Norte Elementary School for the 2024-2025 school year. We are seeking a hardworking and enthusiastic teaching professional to join our dynamic, vibrant and fun-loving team. Applicants must have a Colorado Teaching License. Please submit your application, resume and cover letter to: Amy Duda, Principal at aduda@urtigers.co or contact Amy at 719-657-4050. Applications can

FULL-TIME SALES

Valley Publishing has an immediate need in advertising sales (full-time). Any sales experience is appreciated but will train. Email resume to General Manager Brian Williams at bwilliams@valleypublishinginc.com



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Valley Wide Classifieds

be picked up at the District Office or online at: urtigers.co. (3-27)

Instructional Coach needed at Del Norte Elementary School. Candidate should be proficient in all areas of teaching and learning, with an emphasis on professional practice and the teaching and learning cycle. The coach will be responsible for consulting with and supporting the instructional teaching staff in using resources that impact student learning. The coach will provide support and professional learning to instructional staff as needed. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree or higher and possess or be able to obtain a Colorado Teaching License. Please submit your application, resume, and cover letter to Amy Duda, Principal at aduda@urtigers.co. Applications can be picked up at the District Office or online at: urtigers.co.

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

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SLV Fast Friends donates \$2K to Sangre de Cristo HS drum line

By MARIE MCCOLM

MOSCA — Larry Garner, the director of the non-profit organization SLV Fast Friends, made a \$2,000 donation on Thursday, Feb. 22, to help support music at Sangre de Cristo High School drum line — Blue Thunder.

Music Teacher Al Duran was excited about the donation.

“We don’t have a very big budget for the music class, so this money is really going to help the classroom and kids a lot. I am excited to receive this donation from SLV Fast Friends and want to say thank you to Mr. Garner for supporting our kids and music,” Duran said.

Garner was all smiles as he handed the check to Duran inside of the music classroom at Sangre de Cristo High School.

“I am tickled to make this donation to the music department,” Garner said. “I was a band kid. I started when I was 8 years old. All through grade school, junior high and high school I played in the band. I have been a band kid forever. I think band is beneficial to kids, it teaches them a lot of skills that they can use. They get a chance to do something for themselves that matters, like a solo or something,

too. I am very happy about making this donation, and would encourage others, if they are able, to make one to the school, too.”

Garner is no stranger to donations and supporting Valley projects. Garner has directed many different non-profit organizations and enjoys helping children succeed.

Garner has lived in many different areas and raised money to help families with children who are ill and terminally ill, with different expenses and things they might need. Garner has also donated money to help 4-H clubs, and the Monte Vista Kids Connection.

Garner started SLV Fast Friends after having another non-profit organization with a similar name Fast Friends. Garner had decided to close down SLV Fast Friends, due to personal reasons, but wanted to make a final donation to a worthy cause.

“I held the event Dragging Main to help 4-H students last year,” Garner said. “I have decided to close out SLV Fast Friends and wanted to donate to some students who could really use the help. I was talking to my wife, and she mentioned the music department

at Sangre de Cristo High School.”

Garner said that after talking to Duran, he felt good about making the donation because Duran had mentioned that the department only had a budget of about \$300 for the class.

“My kids went to school at

Sangre de Cristo, and they didn’t

have a music department then,” Garner said. “So, in talking to the principal, the teachers, the superintendent, and hearing about the budget, I figured that making this donation was just the right thing to do. I gave the department a check

for \$2,000.”

Garner said that he’s hoping that the department can use the money to help the kids travel, and to repair instruments. He hopes others can be “sympathetic to the cause” and help the students in the music department.



Photo by Marie Mccolm

SLV Fast Friends Director Larry Garner makes a \$2,000 donation to Sangre de Cristo High School music teacher Al Duran on behalf of the non-profit.

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DR. KRISTY L. DURAN

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DAVID MAURIELLO

Medicinal Properties of Hops

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PENN PARMENTER

Responsible Collecting of Wild Seeds

TYLOR BERRETH

Mushroom Species of the SLV & Their Medicinal Uses

SLVSE.ORG

Attend Adams State for free with Adams Promise Scholarship

By ADAMS STATE UNIVERSITY

ALAMOSA — Free tuition and fees at Adams State University — with the Adams Promise Scholarship eligible students can now attend college for no tuition and fees cost.

The Adams Promise Scholarship provides the opportunity to have tuition and fees waived. Eligibility includes first-time incoming freshmen and transfer students who are enrolled full-time on campus at Adams State; who are considered dependents on their parental income tax return; whose parental's adjusted gross income is \$70,000 or less; and students from a county south of Denver, including the San Luis Valley.

The Adams Promise Scholarship will be automatically awarded to qualified students who meet the criteria for each academic year.

“Adams State administration has pledged real support to students who qualify, in the form of the Adams Promise Scholarship,” said President David Tandberg, Ph.D. “Adams State continues to recognize and honor the deep roots of this University and its mission to serve the students who most need our support. The Adams Promise Scholarship is part of that commitment.”

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for admission to Adams State. Application to Adams State is now free.

Adams State financial aid and admissions staff members are available to help with completing the FAFSA and applying to Adams State. For more information visit adams.edu and click on The Adams Promise; call 719-587-7306 or email onestop@adams.edu.



Great Stories Begin Here

3RD ANNUAL EQUIPMENT & CONSIGNMENT AUCTION



**MARCH 16, 2024
AT 10 AM**



**CONSIGNMENT DEADLINE:
MARCH 15, 2024**

*CONSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED ON SITE MARCH 11TH-15TH.
PLEASE NO ELECTRONICS OR JUNK.



**SALE BILL DEADLINE:
FEBRUARY 17TH
ITEMS NOT ON THE
BILL WILL STILL BE
ACCEPTED**



LOCATION:

**Monte Vista Livestock Auction
5660 E Hwy 160
Monte Vista, CO 81144**

FOR MORE SALE AND CONSIGNMENT INFORMATION:

JOHN YODER: 719-298-2648

MELVIN COBLENTZ: 719-849-3292

San Luis Valley Area Real Estate

5299 County Road 12 S. Alamosa
160-acre circle planted in Alfalfa. Two shares of Commonwealth Ditch and use of Carmel Drain. Zimmatic Pivot, three stock wells. Waverly area. MLS#810432
\$400,000



**Dee Plucinski • Steffens & CO. Realty
(719) 873-5605 • dee@steffenscorealty.com**

28 acres on the Rio Grande River in South Fork.
Approx 1/2 mile of prime fishing - own to the middle of the river.
\$1,500,000.
MLS#807305



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61 Red Tail Court
- 6 acres with incredible views in the gated subdivision of Bear Creek, South Fork, CO. Owner financing is available for this gorgeous lot. MLS#803984
\$99,000



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Rito Hondo Estates - 18 Rural Mountain Lots Available
West of Antonito in the Conejos Canyon OWNER FINANCING AVAILABLE
\$950,000 home on 35 acres located on lot #2
\$85,000 (6 acre lots)
\$200,000 (17.5 acre lots)
\$400,000 (35 acre lots)
\$950,000 (35 acres with home)



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7541 Indian Creek Road Ft. Garland
Off Grid Cabin on 5 acres ON THE CREEK
\$279,000.
Virtual tour and Drone video available. MLS#809447



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Steffens & Company Realty

719-873-5605

**30635 US HWY 160
South Fork**

dee@steffenscorealty.com

Dee - formerly known as Diane Chapman - Local Luxury Home Broker. Licensed in 2011, Dee knows the area and knows local real estate.



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Residential Photographer

Licensed and Insured Drone Pilot

Lots 11 & 12 in Riviere Estates Two lots together in a quiet community. VRBO & Air B&B OK subject to town guidelines. All utilities are available at the lot line. MLS 808212



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23 Fairway Drive - OWNER FINANCING AVAILABLE
- this beautiful lot is a 1-minute walk from the Clubhouse on the Rio Grande Club and Resort in South Fork. Flat and easy to build, this lot has water, sewer, electricity, landline phone and high-speed internet at the lot line. MLS#794077.
\$56,000



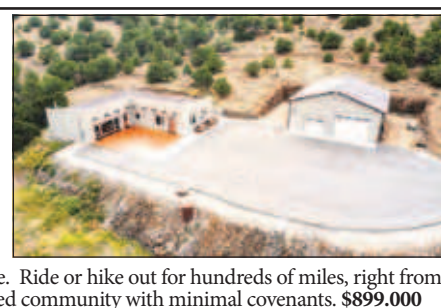
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242 Birch \$69,000
MLS#810124 and 64 Vista \$49,000
MLS#810125. Two adjacent commercial lots in South Fork, each .35 acres. Right behind Mtn Pizza. Easy paved access off of Hwy 160.



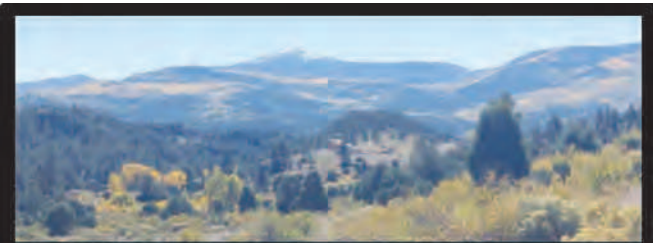
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4100 Wilderness Canyon Road - Mountain Luxury at the end of the road, secluded and private, this gorgeous, bright, energy-efficient home sits on 42 acres bordering the National Forest with views of the Natural Arch, Ghost Mine Ranch, near Del Norte. Ride or hike out for hundreds of miles, right from your backyard. Gated community with minimal covenants. **\$899,000**



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San Luis Valley Area Real Estate



YEAR-ROUND CREEK FRONT! Idyllic location with picturesque Mountain, Bear Creek Canyon views and live water runs the entire length of this 7.52-acre lot. Paved roads buried fiberoptic and electric to lot. Well and septic will need to be installed. Hike the Bear Creek Canyon trail, walking/horseback access to National Forest from the subdivision and owner access to the Rio Grande River. Hundreds of miles of ATV trails close by skiing at Wolf Creek within 30 minutes.

\$171,750 | MLS# 801331
1416 Bear Creek Circle, South Fork, CO

YVONNE HOFFMAN
BROKER | REALTOR®
M: 719-580-1901
O: 719-873-1700

30635 W. US HWY 160, South Fork, Colorado



THE SUN HOUSE FARM has a total of 1910.5 +/- acres with 1,433 acres under pivot irrigation, which is 12 center pivots and all in excellent condition. 25 irrigation wells. Each Pivot has two wells. Two homes, one for hired help and one main home with corrals/sheds. Farmers Union water rights on the entire 1,910.5 acres. Call Bruce Steffens today for more information.

\$15,000,000 | MLS# 807640
57075 County Road C, Center, CO

BRUCE STEFFENS
OWNER | BROKER | REALTOR®
M: 719-580-0770
O: 719-873-1700

30635 W. US HWY 160, South Fork, Colorado



Nestled in the community of Del Norte, this property is a gem. With San Francisco Peak views through the entire property, allowing fishing, hunting, and the residence itself. Call Bruce Steffens today for a showing appointment.

\$975,000 | MLS# 808345
6680 County Road 13, Del Norte, CO

BRUCE STEFFENS
OWNER | BROKER | REALTOR®
M: 719-580-0770
O: 719-873-1700

30635 W. US HWY 160, South Fork, Colorado



Approx. 36.34 acres of Del Norte. This property has 2 bedrooms, plus 2 brand new appliances. Two sunrooms with outdoor patios on each side of the house. It has a 3 car detached garage with a 2 bedroom apartment above. Check out the greenhouse and/or chicken house along with a 2-story barn with horse stalls. Experience the beauty of the Colorado landscape in this amazing mountain retreat. Call Bruce Steffens today for more information.

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

BRUCE STEFFENS
OWNER | BROKER | REALTOR®
M: 719-580-0770
O: 719-873-1700

30635 W. US HWY 160, South Fork, Colorado



Amazing business opportunity located in Antonito, CO. This car wash is in the perfect location, and is the only one for many miles! Much work has recently been done to the property including new cement being poured in both bays. This car wash is completely up to date and is ready to put money into YOUR pocket. Don't pass up an amazing opportunity to own this cash flowing property.

\$225,000 | MLS# 809144
219 Main Street, Antonito, CO

TATE HUFFAKER
ASSOCIATE BROKER | REALTOR®
M: 719-298-6560
O: 719-873-1700

30635 W. US HWY 160, South Fork, Colorado



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

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

BRUCE STEFFENS
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O: 719-873-1700

30635 W. US HWY 160, South Fork, Colorado

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O: 719-873-1700



30635 W. US HWY 160
South Fork, Colorado



The **FLYING W Ranch** is level, buildable, accessible year around, and is close to neighboring towns. This acreage is located 5 miles east of Monte Vista on Hwy 160 and 4 miles north on County Line Road.

- 7 available lots
- Lot 2 - 35+/- acres
- Lot 3 - 37+/- acres
- Lot 4 - 83+/- acres
- Lot 5 - 35+/- acres
- Lot 6 - 35+/- acres
- Lot 8 - 81+/- acres

Call Bruce Steffens for pricing and additional information.

\$2,700 - \$2,900 per acre
TBD County Road 100, Del Norte, CO

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30635 W. US HWY 160, South Fork, Colorado



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

Call Bruce Steffens today for more information.

\$87,000 - \$180,000 per lot
Pronghorn Ranch Development
Del Norte, Colorado

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SEED

Continued from Page 1

is out there. This is about the community connections that get made and the chance interactions people have. Everyone just loves it, they bump into neighbors they haven't seen, and share seeds, this is a niche group; people who are gardening, or growing food. This is just a really sweet event."



Photo by Ameille Warner, Dandelion Creative

The annual San Luis Valley Seed Exchange is more than the exchange, attendees can learn about local food cultivation, ethnobotany, mycology and more.

- Highlights of this year's event include:
 - Local Vendors: Explore a variety of offerings from local artisans, growers, and producers showcasing the best of what the San Luis Valley has to offer. Sanders said she expects to have between 25 and 30 vendors.
 - Food Options: Enjoy delicious food offerings crafted from locally sourced ingredients, highlighting the rich flavors of the region.
 - Seed Swap Table: Participate in the time-honored tradition of exchanging seeds, fostering biodiversity, and promoting the preservation of heirloom varieties.
 - Door Prizes: Anyone in attendance is eligible for a chance to win exciting prizes generously provided by event sponsors and supporters.
 - Speaker Series: Dig into the theme of "Wild Foods & Medicines of the Valley" with engaging presentations from eight knowledgeable speakers, offering insights into the rich botanical heritage of the region. Spanish interpretation will be available for the speaker series happening in the yurt. Sanders said she is excited that this year the event will have eight speakers including the following:
 - Dr. Kristy L. Duran is a sixth-generation native to the San Luis Valley. As a professor at Colorado Mesa University, she worked with the CSU Extension Office to create the Ute Ethnobotany Garden and will speak about plants and ethnobotany of the San Luis Valley. Duran also taught at Adams State University and is currently on the faculty at Metropolitan State University in Denver.
 - Tylor Berreth is a mycologist who owns Saguache-based Alpine Valley Mushrooms with his wife Danielle. Tylor will speak about Wild Mushrooms in the San Luis Valley.
 - Teresa de Jesús Vigil is a rural herbal practitioner who is familiar with natural healing methods traditional in the upper Rio Grande bioregion. She will speak about Reflections on Herbal Use by Our Ancestors. Sanders said she is looking forward to recording de Jesús Vigil and it may be the first time anyone has recorded her.
- The seed exchange will include a Community Sharing Hour: Take the stage and share your passion, projects, or announcements with fellow attendees during this interactive session dedicated to community engagement and collaboration.
- Discount Soaking at Joyful Journey: The event program contains a \$2 coupon for soaking at Joyful Journey Hot Springs Spa.

The organizers of the seed exchange are actively seeking sponsors. Various sponsorship levels are available, providing businesses and organizations the chance to show their support for community-based initiatives and sustainable agriculture. For sponsorship inquiries, contact Ame Warner at 719-207-2597 or via email at marketing@jjhotsprings.com.

Volunteers are needed to help throughout the event. To sign up as a volunteer or vendor or for more information, reach out to Sanders at 575-999-5319 or slvseedex@gmail.com.

For those interested in becoming the Executive Director of the San Valley Seed Exchange, email Sanders at the email address above.

Stay informed about the latest updates regarding speakers, sponsors, and vendors by visiting www.SLVSE.org. The San Luis Valley Seed Exchange is a non-profit and donations can be made via their website or at the seed exchange event.

Puzzle Sponsored by MDS Waste & Recycle



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SUDOKU

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

Fun By The Numbers

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

Level: Advanced

Here's How It Works:

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

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

Solution to last week's puzzle

San Luis Valley Area Real Estate

Thinking of Selling in 2024
Expect the Best,
Call Bernadette



exp REALTY

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

193 Whispering Pines Drive • South Fork

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



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

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