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Six Easter egg coloring tips

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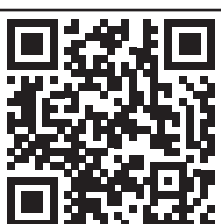
Valley Courier

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LOCAL NEWS... LOCAL VIEWS

March 23, 2024

\$1



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Daniel Brandt appears in court on pre-trial proceedings

Trial set to begin May 6

STAFF REPORT

ALAMOSA — Daniel Brandt Jr., the juvenile being tried as an adult for his alleged role in the shooting of Alamosa Police Officer Molly Heene and Alamosa resident, Ricardo Rangel on Oct. 27, 2022, appeared in court on Friday as part of the first proceedings leading up to a trial.

Brandt has been charged with two separate counts of attempt

to commit first-degree murder and three counts of first-degree assault. If convicted, the 16-year-old faces anywhere from 32 to 96 years in prison at the Department of Corrections (DOC), depending upon how the judge orders the sentences to be served.

Last August, a transfer hearing... ■ See COURT page 3

A photo taken at the site of the October 2022 shooting of APD officer Molly Heene and Alamosa resident, Ricardo Rangel.

Courier photo by Keith R. Cerny



SLV Today

Saguache County Commissioners to meet Tuesday

SAGUACHE — A work session of the Saguache County Board of County Commissioners is scheduled for Tuesday, March 24, in the County Courthouse at 9:30 a.m. The public is invited, and the meeting can also be accessed via Zoom with meeting ID 823 7485 1681 and passcode 793384.

REC meet and greet at Cloud Cafe

CRESTONE — San Luis Valley Rural Electric Cooperative will host a meet and greet on Thursday, April 4, at the Cloud Café in Crestone. CEO Eric Ericksen will be available from 8:30-9:30 a.m. to meet with members and discuss any issues or concerns. Everyone is invited to stop by and visit.

SLV commissioners to hold special meeting Thursday

ALAMOSA — There will be a special meeting of the San Luis Valley County Commissioners concerning District Attorney Anne Kelly's recent request for support of Senate Bill 2024-13, Salary Equity for DAs and Assistant DAs. The meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 28 at 8:00 am by Zoom. The Zoom link is https://zoom.us/j/2703146874 or call in 253-215-8782, or 669-900-6833 and use Meeting ID 270-314-687.

SLV WEATHER



Partly Sunny, Windy 59/31
Sun: Chance of Snow, Breezy 48/25
Mon: Chance of Snow, Breezy 46/18

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Prescribed burns to continue on wildlife refuges

By JOHN WATERS
Courier News Editor

SAN LUIS VALLEY — The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will continue prescribed fire operations on the Alamosa, Baca, and Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuges. The goal is to remove old and matted vegetation to improve wildlife habitat.

A prescribed burn is the controlled use of fire to restore wildlife habitat, reduce wildfire risk, or achieve other habitat management goals. All fires need fuel, and prescribed burns reduce the amount of this component of fire.

The USFWS has been using prescribed burn techniques to improve species habitat since the 1930s. Other federal land agencies including the National Park Service, US Forest Service, and the Bureau of Land Management use the burns that also called controlled burns. The burns are implemented under a fire management plan and ignited by firefighters under a strict prescription.

Eighty percent of lands managed by the Fish and Wildlife Service including marsh, forest, and prairie, evolved with fire and depend on periodic fire to remain productive wildlife habitat. Annually, the USFWS utilizes these burns on over 350,000 acres of land it manages.

According to a 2023 study by researchers at Stanford and



Courier photo by John Waters

A plume of smoke rises above the Alamosa National Wildlife Refuge from a prescribed burn on Thursday, March 21. These prescribed, or controlled burns can significantly reduce the risk of wildfires. The burns continue through April and will resume in October.

Columbia universities, prescribed burns dramatically reduce wildfire risk. The analysis, published last November in Science Advances, reveals that low-intensity burning, such as controlled or prescribed fires, managed wildfires, and tribal cultural burning, can dramatically reduce the risk of devastating fires for years at a time.

The findings — some of the first to rigorously quantify the value of low-intensity fire — concluded that prescribed burns can reduce wildfire risk by 60%.

The burns will continue through April and resume in October and November. For up-to-date information on prescribed burns, you may contact ■ See BURNS page 3



Mari Felix

Hearing in Mari Felix case continued to May 9

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER
Courier Reporter

ALAMOSA — Mari Felix was in court on Thursday for a “first appearance,” but the hearing was continued after her attorney, Michael Martin, informed the court he had not received all the “discovery” from the District Attorney’s office, referencing the pre-trial process where each party can obtain evidence from the opposing counsel.

Martin said he had received files from the DA but was unable to open them. Without the evidence he’s requested, he said he is unable to proceed in preparing for the case, including preparation for any conversation that might take place with the DA about a potential disposition.

■ See FELIX page 3

Ullman Colorado’s new State Engineer and Director of the Division of Water Resources

CONTRIBUTED

DENVER — Jason Ullman, Deputy State Engineer for the Division of Water Resources, has been appointed as Colorado’s new State Engineer and Director of the Division of Water Resources (DWR).

Ullman fills the position formerly held by Kevin Rein, who retired in January. Deputy State Director Tracy Kosloff had been serving as Interim Director since Rein departed.

Ullman’s appointment was announced by Gov. Jared Polis and Executive Director of the Division of Natural Resources Dan

Gibbs in a press release issued on Thursday.

“I congratulate Jason as he steps into this new role,” Polis said. “Jason brings years of experience in water management, from working with water users in the orchards and fields of the Western Slope to leading on interstate water issues like the Colorado River. At a time when the stakes are higher than ever before on water, I look forward to his contributions and leadership as our State Engineer and know his expertise will help protect Colorado’s precious water resources.”

Ullman brings significant experience with him to the position, including 20 years spent in water resources engineering. Fourteen of those years have been at DWR, most recently as the Deputy State Engineer. Before coming to DWR, Ullman was the city engineer for Montrose. He has also been a consulting engineer for various ditch and reservoir companies throughout Colorado.

“The State Engineer and Director of the Division of Water Resources... ■ See ULLMAN page 3



Jason Ullman

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OBITUARY

Ivan W. Entz



Levy; as well as several nieces, nephews and extended family and a host

Brighton and former Alamosa resident Ivan W. Entz, 66, died March 9, 2024, at the Collier Hospice in Wheat Ridge, Colo.

Ivan was born in Monte Vista, Colo., on July 5, 1957, the son of Irvin C. Entz and Bertha P. (Wilson) Entz.

Ivan worked as a recycle technician. He also enjoyed watching NASCAR on television.

Ivan is survived by his brother Mark (Debbie) Entz of Florence, Colo., and half-sister Judy

of friends. Ivan is also survived by Bill Cranford of Brighton, his caregiver of 17 years, who became his close friend.

Ivan was preceded in death by his parents.

Cremation was chosen and a Memorial Service will be announced at a later date.

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

Colorado lawmakers are finalizing a state budget plan that boosts K-12, higher education and health care

By BRIAN EASON
The Colorado Sun

Colorado's state budget panel early Friday morning approved a spending plan for next fiscal year that would invest heavily in state workers and medical services, eliminate Colorado's K-12 funding shortfall and limit college tuition increases to 3% for in-state students.

But it took a lot of cutting — and some creative accounting maneuvers — to get there.

Facing a potential \$170 million shortfall at the start of the week, lawmakers on the Joint Budget Committee dipped deeply into various state cash funds in order to balance the budget, pulling money out of a number of programs to cover the spending gap.

The JBC also rejected a number of Gov. Jared Polis' proposals to expand social services, workforce housing and public safety programs in order to redirect money to their own priorities. Chief among them were Medicaid providers and higher education, two areas lawmakers insisted had been underfunded for far too long.

The six-member budget panel backed a \$132 million increase for higher education, which they said would be enough for colleges and universities to limit tuition increases to 3% for Colorado residents and 4% for out-of-state students. Amid widespread nursing shortages, health care providers would receive an across-the-board 2% increase to the state's Medicaid reimbursement rate, down from the 2.5% bump the committee had previously approved. Lawmakers also approved a number of large targeted increases for some specialties.

State workers would get 3% across-the-board raises under the proposal, plus additional pay bumps as government agencies implement a new pay plan under the state's collective bargaining agreement.

The proposed 2024-25 spending plan, which would take effect July 1, now moves to the Colorado House, where it could be debated next week.

For months, Polis and top lawmakers had been warning that the state would face a tight budget year as federal stimulus funding runs out and economic growth slows. But state revenue forecasts released in March left the Joint Budget Committee with even less money to spend than expected.

That set off an eleventh hour scramble this week to close the \$170 million spending gap in order to balance the budget without depleting the state's \$2.2 billion general fund reserve.

"I feel good about it," JBC chair Shannon Bird, a Westminster Democrat, told The Colorado Sun after the budget was completed around 2 a.m. Through the budget balancing maneuvers, she said, "we made sure we actually grew the amount of money available to implement important programs for our constituents."

The budget is still subject to change; the spending plan must pass the House and Senate before Polis can sign it into law.

Here's some of what made it into the proposed spending plan — and what didn't:

General fund spending will increase by over \$1B

The JBC opted to use the economic forecast from the

governor's Office of State Planning and Budgeting for the second year in a row as the foundation of the budget.

The decision gave lawmakers an extra \$54 million to spend over the Colorado Legislative Council Staff forecast — arguably a departure from the JBC's typical practice, which is to adopt the more conservative of the estimates to avoid midyear budget cuts.

The total size of the budget won't be known until JBC staff analysts complete their calculations and lawmakers introduce the long bill on Monday. But early figures show general fund spending increasing to more than \$16 billion from \$15.2 billion, even as tax collections are relatively flat.

General fund revenue, which is primarily made up of income and sales taxes, has grown slower than inflation in recent years after booming growth during the coronavirus pandemic. General tax collections are expected to drop 0.7% this budget year to \$17.3 billion, before increasing 1.7% in the 2024-25 fiscal year to \$17.5 billion.

Nonetheless, the state will be able to spend more next year due to 5.8% growth in the state's revenue cap. Under the Taxpayer's Bill of Rights, state revenue can only increase based on the combined rate of inflation and population growth. Anything beyond that must be refunded to state taxpayers in the following year.

The state will issue \$3.6 billion in TABOR refunds this spring, and expects to have a \$2 billion TABOR surplus in the current budget year. The surplus is expected to shrink to \$1.3 billion in 2024-25, under the proposed budget.

Property taxes, cash stockpiles fuel education spending

One of the linchpins of the budget was a tax the state doesn't even collect.

Years of rising property tax collections at the local level enabled lawmakers to meet their promises to fully fund K-12 education for the first time since the Great Recession — achieving a longstanding goal of lawmakers in both parties without increasing general fund spending on education to do it.

"It's historic," Sen. Rachel Zenzinger, an Arvada Democrat who sits on the JBC, said after the vote. "It's taken many years of budget actions to get here."

Local property tax dollars covered over 75% of the \$526 million increase needed to eliminate the K-12 funding shortfall, with the State Education Fund providing the rest.

Lawmakers relied heavily on cash funds to balance the budget.

They dipped repeatedly into the State Education Fund for K-12 expenses, authorizing \$44 million to cover increases to so-called categorical programs, like special education. They used \$22 million to increase funding for state-sponsored charter schools, which receive less local tax dollars than other K-12 schools. And they added funding to a voter-approved school meals program that wasn't generating enough tax dollars to cover its cost.

To free up money for higher education, lawmakers transferred huge sums of cash that had been earmarked for other programs, including \$17.4 million in interest earn-

ings from a maintenance fund and \$10 million from a little-used grant program aimed at helping former college students or applicants finish their degrees.

Lawmakers also adopted some budget balancing recommendations from the governor's office that they had previously criticized when Polis first proposed them in November.

The list included exempting certain fees related to unemployment insurance from the state TABOR limit and withdrawing \$32 million in cash from the state's TABOR reserve, which is set aside for emergencies such as wildfire response. (The JBC voted to replenish the reserve using hard assets, such as a building and a parking garage. Doing so is technically allowed, though such assets are difficult to convert to cash in a true emergency.)

The JBC approved more than \$100 million in placeholders for various priorities, including housing, education and rural hospitals.

JBC nixes workforce housing, autism funding

Lawmakers didn't fund everything they — or Gov. Polis — wanted.

The JBC rejected a number of the governor's priorities and drastically pared back others, including a \$16 million request for workforce housing for the Department of Corrections. The JBC approved just \$360,000 to fund a housing project already underway in Buena Vista.

On a split vote, the JBC also rejected a plan from the administration that would have hired lawyers to prosecute federal gun crimes.

They declined to vote on a proposed bill to expand coverage for autism treatment under the state's Child Health Plan Plus program, citing financial constraints.

Sen. Barbara Kirkmeyer, a Brighton Republican who is a member of the JBC, was the lone "no" vote against the committee's decision to limit the state's Medicaid provider rate increase to 2% from the 2.5% the JBC had initially approved.

Lawmakers worked late into the night to finish the proposal, meeting in small groups behind closed doors with legislative budget staff and the governor's office to negotiate the final details.

But it wasn't immediately clear whether they wrapped up in time to draft the legislation package for its scheduled introduction in the House on Monday — a key deadline that, if missed, could derail the legislative calendar as the session heads into its home stretch.

Fishing high mountain lakes



Courtesy photo

San Luis Valley Trout Unlimited is hosting a program on fishing high mountain lakes at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, March 26, at the Alamosa Senior Center, 92 Colorado Ave., Alamosa. The program is open to the public. The program will be led by Stuart Andrews, head guide at ArkAnglers fly shop in Salida. It will focus on high mountain lakes of Colorado and how to understand and fish them. 'Many of us like to fish high mountain lakes in the summer and they can be very finicky. Don't miss this opportunity to learn secrets from a professional,' organizers stated. Light refreshments will be provided. For more information, call 719-588-7678.

Colorado Employment Situation — February 2024

Unemployment rate rises to 3.5 percent

By COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

Household survey data According to the survey of households, Colorado's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased one-tenth of a percentage point in February to 3.5 percent compared to the January rate of 3.4 percent. The number of unemployed individuals grew by 4,200 over the same time period to 114,400. The national unemployment rate increased two-tenths of a percentage point to 3.9 percent from January to February.

Colorado's labor force decreased by 1,800 in February to 3,235,500. The share of Coloradans participating in the labor force remained at 68.1 percent in February, identical to the month prior. The U.S. labor force participation rate was 62.5 percent in February, identical to the two months prior.

The number of individuals employed in Colorado declined by 6,000 in February to 3,121,000, which represents 65.6 percent of the state's 16+

population. Colorado's employment-population ratio of 65.6 in February was two-tenths of a percentage point lower compared to the January rate of 65.8 percent. The national employment population ratio decreased one-tenth of a percentage point in February to 60.1 percent.

Establishment survey data

Employers in Colorado added 8,500 nonfarm payroll jobs from January to February for a total of 2,975,800 jobs, according to the survey of business establishments. Private sector payroll jobs grew by 6,500, while government added 2,000 jobs.

January estimates were revised down to 2,967,300, and the over the month change from December to January was a gain of 5,900 rather than the originally estimated increase of 8,000 (monthly revisions are based on additional responses from businesses and government agencies since the last published estimates).

Private industry sectors with significant job gains in February were: educational and health

services (~3,400), construction (~1,200), and professional and business services (~1,100). There were no significant over the month declines.

Since February 2023, nonfarm payroll jobs have increased 60,300, with the private sector growing by 33,500 and government adding 26,800 jobs. The largest private sector job gains were in educational and health services (~18,900), professional and business services (~10,100), and leisure and hospitality (~8,300). During that same period, payroll jobs declined in trade, transportation, and utilities (~4,400), information (~1,900), and manufacturing (~1,600). Colorado's rate of job growth over the past year is 2.1 percent, outpacing the U.S. rate of 1.8 percent.

Over the year, the average workweek for all Colorado employees on private nonfarm payrolls was unchanged at 33.0 hours, while average hourly earnings grew from \$35.27 to \$37.19, two dollars and sixty-two cents more than the national average hourly earnings of \$34.57.

Rio Grande County Sheriff's Office auctioning off 2 Dodge Chargers

CONTRIBUTED

DEL NORTE — The Rio Grande County Sheriff's Office is auctioning off two used Dodge Charger police cars. These online auctions are open to the public at municibid.com and end on Sunday, March 31. Colorado residents are able to bid in these government auctions online, 24/7, on [Municibid](http://Municibid.com).

All the proceeds from these auctions are going back to the Rio Grande

County Sheriff's Office to help fund community safety initiatives. The funds can be used for new police equipment and initiatives that will help keep the Rio Grande County safe.

Up for auction is a 2012 Dodge Charger police vehicle, which has 180,712 miles on it and features a 5.7L V8 OHV 16V engine and 5-Speed Automatic transmission. It runs and drives, and the tires have good tread. The vehicle was removed from service

as a police vehicle and does not have a console between the front seats.

Also, up for auction is a 2011 Dodge Charger police vehicle, which has 188,406 miles on it and features a 3.6L V6 DOHC 24V engine and 5-Speed Automatic transmission. It starts and runs, and the tires have good tread. The vehicle was removed from service as a police vehicle and does not have a console between the front seats.

School Menu	
Monday	
March 25, 2024	
BREAKFAST	
Cereal Bar/Graham Crackers Fruit & Milk	
ELEMENTARY	
Cheese Stuffed Pizza Sticks & Marinara Steamed Broccoli Veggie Bar Fruit & Milk	
MIDDLE SCHOOL	
Cheese Stuffed Pizza Sticks & Marinara Steamed Broccoli Veggie Bar Fruit & Milk	
HIGH SCHOOL	
Cheese Stuffed Pizza Sticks & Marinara Steamed Broccoli Veggie Bar Fruit & Milk	
Breakfast & Lunch Free for all students Alamosa School District	
To sponsor the School Menu call 589-2553	

Valley News

12th Judicial District announces new Competency Court docket

CONTRIBUTED
ALAMOSA — Colorado's 12th Judicial District — Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache counties — has launched its new Competency Court docket in a push to help address the growing number of defendants in need of competency-restoration services before their cases can move forward.

The Competency Court, which for now is limited to defendants with cases in Alamosa County, began operations in January 2024 and is meeting twice a month. People charged with the most serious felonies, class 1 and class 2 offenses, are not eligible, and the prosecution and defense must agree that the individual is appropriate for the program.

"Together with our community partners, we will work collaboratively to assist those individuals already involved or at risk of being involved in the criminal

competency system to assess their needs and connect them with appropriate resources," said Judge Kimberly D. Cortez, who presides over the docket. "The goal is to reduce case delays in restoring individuals to competency as well as increase stability and reduce recidivism for those with serious behavioral health challenges who become involved with the criminal justice system."

When defendants in Colorado have been found incompetent to proceed, their case is stayed pending restoration, which can occur either on an inpatient basis at a state hospital, or on an outpatient basis if the defendant is not in custody. Some in-custody defendants have had to wait up to a year or longer before inpatient space becomes available for restoration services.

The Competency Court will determine, on an individualized basis, if community-based resources and

restoration services could be employed through a collaborative model under the supervision and direction of the Competency Court, similar to programs at competency courts in several other Colorado jurisdictions that started within the past several years. Defendants in the program will have regular check-ins with the Competency Court to ensure their compliance.

Community partners in the 12th Judicial District include San Luis Valley Behavioral Health; Center for Restorative Programs; Valley-Wide Health Systems Inc.; Crossroads' Turning Points Inc.; Alamosa County Sheriff's Office; Office of Civil and Forensic Mental Health; and Bridges of Colorado.

Once program participants are found competent to proceed in their cases, they will be transferred back to the court to which their case was originally assigned.

Faculty Piano Recital March 25 at Adams State



Courtesy photo

Dr. William Lipke will present a Faculty Piano Recital at 7 p.m. on Monday, March 25, in Leon Hall on the Adams State University campus. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$1 for students and free to AS&F. The program will include music of J.S. Bach, G.F. Handel, Claude Debussy and others. For more information, call the Music Department at 719-587-7621.

Felix

■ Continued from Page 1

Joe Hensley, prosecutor who is sitting in for District Attorney Anne Kelly, said Martin would be provided with the evidence as soon as possible.

Felix, who was appointed to serve as Alamosa County Clerk and Recorder in July of 2022 and won the election that followed a few months later, has been charged with a single count of accessory to a crime, a class five felony. The allegations against Felix are in connection to a case involving her husband, Martin Felix-Lopez, who is facing four felony charges, including sexual assault of a child by one in a position of trust, sexual assault, unlawful sexual contact, and child abuse.

Although Judge Crista Newmyer-Olsen bound the case over to district court for prosecution, Felix has yet to enter a plea.

In December of 2023, a child in the Felix-Lopez

family reported to a school counselor multiple incidents as the victim of sexual abuse over a period of several years, prompting a call to the Alamosa County Sheriff's Office. The deputy immediately instigated an investigation into the incident and, on the afternoon of the next day, Felix was arrested as she was leaving work. Her husband was taken into custody on the same day.

Allegations against Felix initially included her being complicit in the crime, a more serious felony, but Kelly ultimately reduced the charge to a single count of accessory, a less serious offense.

As stated in documents obtained from the court, "Between May 1, 2023, and Dec. 21, 2023, Mari Felix unlawfully and feloniously rendered assistance to Martin Felix-Lopez, with intent to hinder, delay, or prevent the discovery, detection, apprehension, prosecution, conviction, or pun-

ishment of Martin Felix-Lopez for the commission of a crime, knowing that person committed the crime of sexual assault of a child by one in a position of trust/pattern, C.R.S., a class 3, 5, or 5 felony; in violation of section 18-8-105(1),(5), C.R.S."

Felix's next hearing in court is scheduled for May 9. Martin assured the court that the delay would provide ample time for him to be prepared.

Thursday was the second time that Martin had brought up the possibility of reaching a resolution with the DA in Felix's case. When questioned by the Valley Courier if she was considering a plea deal, Kelly was non-committal, only saying, "I never rule that out in any case."

According to Colorado statutes, the presumptive range of sentencing if convicted of a class five felony is one to three years in prison, and/or a fine of \$1,000 to \$100,000 plus two years of mandatory parole.



Photo courtesy of the Bureau of Land Management

This firefighter uses a drip torch — a mixture of diesel fuel and gasoline — to ignite a prescribed burn.

Burns

■ Continued from Page 1

Alamosa and Monte Vista Refuge Manager Suzanne Beauchaine at 719-589-

4021 x1003 or Assistant Refuge Manager Dean Lee at 719-589-4021 x1008, or Baca Refuge Manager Ty Benally at 719-256-5527.

Additional informa-

tion can be found on the San Luis Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex Facebook page at www.facebook.com/SanLuisValleyRefugeComplex.

Court

■ Continued from Page 1

ing was held to see if Brandt should be tried as an adult. Although he was fifteen years old at the time of the alleged incident, District Attorney Anne Kelly argued the nature of the crime called for the case to be moved to district court where he would be tried as an adult.

Brandt's attorneys argued that, if convicted, it was more appropriate for him to be serve time in Youth Corrections where there was a greater chance of receiving treatment, education and counseling that would lead to him ultimately being a more productive citizen.

At the end of the emotionally charged five-day transfer hearing, District Judge Crista Newmyer-Olsen, presiding, ultimately agreed with the prosecution and transferred

Brandt's case from juvenile court to district.

Kelly is heading up the prosecution of the case. Brandt is being represented by Cobea Becker and Maralina Schoenfelder, the two attorneys who argued on his behalf in the transfer hearing.

Friday's proceedings were relatively straightforward, with Kelly informing the court that the DA's office has not received expert reports from two of the defendant's three witnesses. Defense counsel promised to deliver the information to the district attorney that same day.

There was also discussion around the jury questionnaire, which is something both parties agree on and gets sent out with juror summons. The jury questionnaire asks potential jurors to answer questions and submit them to the court before the jury selection process begins in

hopes of speeding up the process.

Defense counsel also brought up the issue of the "defendant's theory of the case instruction", which is an instruction that the defense drafts to be included with all the legal instructions sent back with the jury once they go into deliberation.

Defense counsel is permitted to provide a statement explaining their defense. That document is typically submitted by the defense on the last day of trial.

A status hearing is set for March 29 followed by a May 2 pre-trial hearing at 11am, where any additional pre-trial issues will be heard.

Trial in Daniel Brandt's is set to begin on May 6, when a jury will presumably be selected. The trial of the case is slated to begin on May 7, and is currently anticipated to last until May 15.

Ullman

■ Continued from Page 1

rector of the Division of Water Resources is charged with the difficult task of shepherding our State's precious water to users within the State of Colorado and through our interstate compacts and decrees," said Gibbs. "Jason is the right person at the right time as our next State Engineer as he must ensure these uses while balancing the increasing needs of outdoor recreation, wildlife and managing for the impacts of climate change on our water supplies. I know Jason is up for the challenge and look forward to working with him as State Engineer and Director at the Division of Water Resources."

The Division of Water Resources, within Colorado's Department of Natural Resources, has over 270 staff members working in every watershed in Colorado. The scope of their responsibilities are expansive, including administering the state's water rights, issuing water well per-

mits, representing Colorado in interstate water compact matters, monitoring streamflow and water use, approving construction and repair of dams and performing dam safety inspections, issuing licenses for well drillers, assuring the safe and proper construction of water wells and maintaining numerous nation-leading databases of publicly available Colorado water information.

"As a teenager, I developed an understanding of the importance of water in Colorado, both working to set irrigation on my grandparent's farm and backpacking to beautiful remote lakes," Ullman said. "This turned into a passion for water that led me to pursue a career in water resources engineering."

"Since the appointment of the first State Engineer in 1881, the position has managed the staff in charge of directing the use of Colorado's water resources based on the prior appropriation system and ensuring that Colorado meets its compact obligations to downstream states. Increasing demand, including to pro-

tect water in streams for environmental and recreational uses, paired with decreasing supply, have added to the complexity and challenges that DWR faces in fulfilling this role. It is an honor to be selected as the State Engineer and Director of the Division of Water Resources, and I look forward to leading our dedicated staff to tackle these challenges."

Ullman is a native of Colorado and grew up in Fort Collins, where he attended Colorado State University and was awarded a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering. The last 17 years have been spent in Montrose where he's been involved in numerous volunteer roles and raising three kids with his wife Jessica.

Ullman has worked for the Division of Water Resources since 2010, previously as the Assistant Division Engineer in Division 4 (Gunnison and San Miguel Basins) followed by serving as Deputy State Engineer until his appointment as State Engineer and Director of DWR.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March

SUNDAY • 24
Softball vs New Mexico Highlands University DH 11 a.m. & 1 p.m. Softball Field
Baseball vs New Mexico Highlands University 12 p.m. Baseball Field

MONDAY • 25
Women's Week Chalk the Walk: All Week
Japanese/American Memorial Garden
CAMP Bandana Project: 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. SUB Atrium
Kindred Spirits: Challenges Facing Women at Work 12 p.m. SUB Banquet Room
Faculty Recital: William Lipke, D.M.A., piano 7 p.m. Leon Memorial Hall

TUESDAY • 26	
Withdrawal Deadline	
Women's Week MAGE: <i>I'm Sorry, What's Next?</i> 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. SUB Atrium	
Paint the Rock: 2 p.m. until 4 p.m. Between Housing and the SUB	
Through April 2, 2024	
Cloyde Snook Gallery: <i>hum/swell - a meditative multimedia journey</i> Lares Feliciano and Bothe Kretsinger	
Hatfield Gallery: <i>Bizarre</i> Faculty & Students	
Gallery Hours: 8:30 a.m. until 5 p.m. Monday through Friday	

WEDNESDAY • 27
Zacheis Planetarium
Free Movies: 5:30 p.m. <i>Solar Superstorms</i> and <i>To Space and Back</i>
Women's Week Cycles & Sundaes: 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. Richardson Hall Auditorium

THURSDAY • 28
Softball vs Metropolitan State University Denver DH 12 p.m. & 2 p.m. Softball Field
Women's Week Walk a Mile in Her Shoes: 1 p.m. North Campus Green
Poetry Challenge: 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. SUB CoRE Center
Zacheis Planetarium
Free Movies: 5:30 p.m. <i>Lamps of Atlantis</i> and <i>Seeing</i>

FRIDAY • 29
Adams State Veteran's Center: Coffee & Donuts 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. Pettey's Hall
Softball vs Metropolitan State University Denver DH 11 a.m. & 1 p.m. Softball Field
Women's March Sign Making Party: 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. SUB Atrium
ASAP: Kayak Pool Session 5:45 p.m. Rex Activity Center
Guest Artist: Anne Maker, D.M.A., flute 7 p.m. Leon Memorial Hall

SATURDAY • 30
Women's March: 10 a.m. Corner of Richardson Ave. & Hwy 160
www.adams.edu

Opinion

Roads on the Rio Grande National Forest Land, Water, People

By KELLY DEFAYE

I know, this column typically discusses current matters in the mountains surrounding the San Luis Valley but humor me for a moment while we go a little farther afield and a little further back in time.

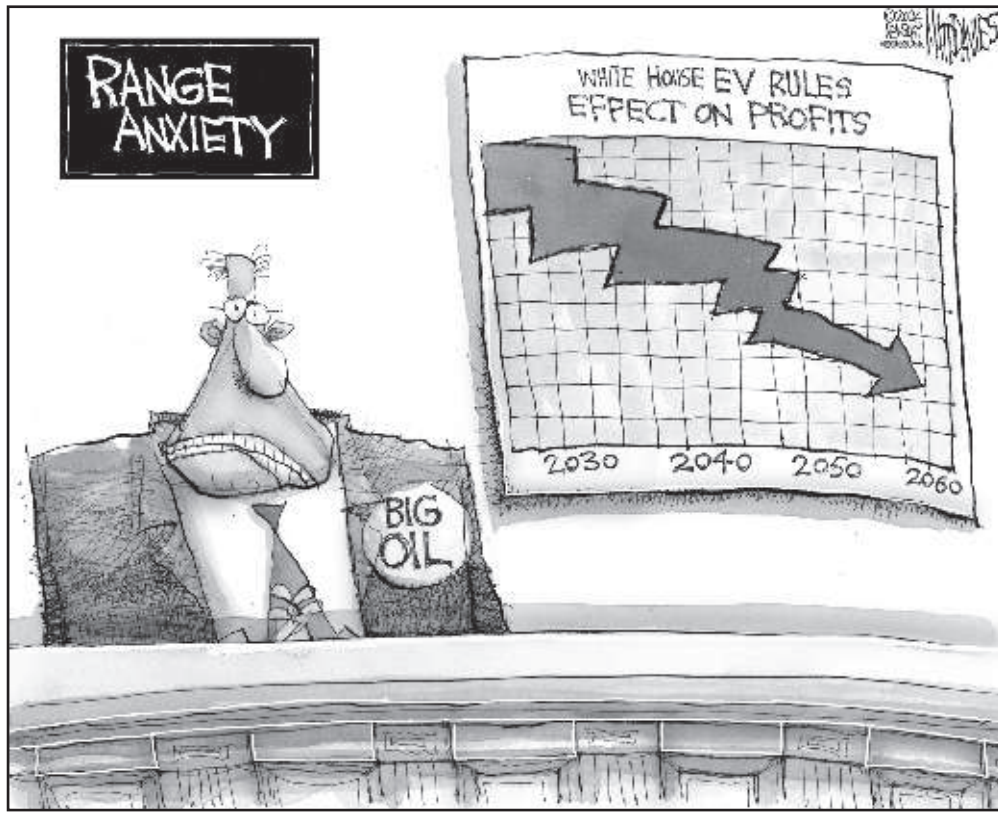
I want to tell you about Patti. In 1998, Patti began volunteering with the San Juan National Forest and their nonprofit partner, the San Juan Mountains Association. She drove the forest roads, looking at them from a visitor's perspective to see how appealing they were, checking aspects like cleanliness, hazards such as brush obscuring visibility, road and sign damage, and so on. And then Patti started forming a plan.

Patti wanted to improve the state of the roads she drove, but there were a lot of questions to consider. She started thinking about how people could safely be on the roads to clean up trash, clear brush, and note the road and sign damage. How many miles could someone realistically cover? Which roads should be covered? And, above all, how to keep everyone as safe as possible? Because, of course, that is the highest concern.

As she found the answer to her questions, Patti started talking to the community of forest users. She visited with a lot of people, A LOT of people: ranch families, jeep and OHV clubs, hiking groups, fire departments, and the list went on, and on.

After doing a complete survey of both the Dolores and Columbine Ranger Districts, the idea for an Adopt A Road program was approved in 2000. Then it was time to really get to work. Patti started signing up volunteers. They chose the road they wanted to adopt, signed the required paperwork, and got to work.

A volunteer group, which could be a family, a business, a church or school group,



etc, signs up for a five-mile stretch of a highly traveled, 2-wheel-drive Forest Service road. They agree to go out a minimum of twice a year to clean up trash, clear brush, and check for any damage like broken or missing signs or blocked culverts. While the minimum is twice a year, Patti tells me some people go out more frequently simply because they WANT to be out there. After a year, San Juan Mountains Association puts a sign on the road, identifying the group and thanking them for adopting that section of road.

Safety training is required, and some safety regulations must be followed too. Patti has been running the program for over twenty years, and she's seen the consequences that can happen when those safety measures are ignored. She told me that once someone ignored the safety regulation to never lean out of an OHV to pick up trash. The woman pulled upslope and leaned out to get something, and the OHV tipped over on her, causing serious injury. After twenty years, Patti's ironed out all the kinks in the program, which now includes over 300 volunteers in the San Juan National Forest.

So, let's bring it back to the here, and the now. We're looking at implementing this program here on the Rio Grande National Forest and need your help. We're going to start determining which roads fit the profile for use and safety, and we're going to start signing up volunteers. Does this sound like a way for you or a group you know, whoever they may be, to connect with our wild lands? Is there a stretch of the 250 or the 41G that is near and dear to your heart? Or maybe you spend a lot of time at Rio Grande Reservoir or Beaver Creek, and so watching over the 520 or 360 would be more to your liking? Or maybe you're in charge of a high school club that needs a service project, and the Rock Creek Road would work better for you? Call me at the Divide Ranger Station, 719-657-3321, and let's chat.

Kelly is the San Juan Mountains Association's Visitor Information Coordinator for the Rio Grande National Forest. Having grown up in the San Luis Valley, she has always considered the surrounding mountains her happy place.

To submit news, email:
news@alamosanews.com

To submit sports, email:
khamrick@alamosanews.com

Letters policy

Letters are welcome and encouraged. All letters submitted for publication in the Valley Courier must be typewritten, signed by the author, and must include a phone number and address where the author can be reached. Letters must not be libelous. The Courier will not run letters that are negative to specific businesses. 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."



Photo by Patti Brady

Rio Grande National Forest is looking to implement an Adopt A Road program that is in place in neighboring ranger districts.

Big bad trucks, do they own the whole highway?

I want to yell out the window – “Move it or lose it!” Of course that won't be much like a proper grammarian; but maybe that doesn't apply to me since I am retired.

The huge Ford Pickup blocks my

view as I try to back out of the parking space. Suddenly, a tiny Mini Cooper darts from the other side of the big bad truck. My vehicle is a low rider, of sorts, a Chevy Spark, and we stop. “I need adult size wheels,” I think to myself, as I almost kiss the dirt while emerging from the driver's seat.

Later, as I'm cruising with a friend toward the Smith Reservoir, a driver in another huge truck turns onto the gravel road without even a glance toward our direction. My friend quickly honks and maneuvers to the very edge

Movin' On with Nellie



Nelda Curtiss

of the ditch before another giant truck ever sees us. Those spinning wheels come within a foot of our thin compact car. I want to yell at the trucker, “Pay attention and look both ways!” I watched that trucker turning; he didn't look north to check traffic; his head was turned south; then, the Clydesdale of trucks rolled through that hard-to-miss stop sign.

Whew! Close call!

It's not that I spiritually hate big trucks, but I dislike very much the attitude that seems to accompany big trucks: “I own the road! Move over, 'cuz I'm comin' through!” How do I know this? Well, it's how they drift to the middle of the road and hug that yellow line, like they are Josh Turner singing about that “Long Black Train.” I know these eight- or ten-cylinder trucks think they own the vast highways because of how fast they go – zoom, zoom, zoom!

That time the monster-sized truck drifted onto my side of the road was the gut wrench-er, for sure. My heart fell to my Keen boots, and I swallowed, no

choked on my morning brew. I shouted out the window – “That wasn't nice! Stay on your own side, will ya?” He was long gone at that juncture with the diesel fumes lingering when I just clutched the wheel for dear breath.

It could be that I've always had troubles with trucks; all my exes live in Texas and drive big “honker” trucks, the kind you saw on Smokey and the Bandit series, or the Clooney version of Oceans 11. It could be pure emotion from years ago when that Luv truck stranded my toddler and I near Tiki Island, just five minutes from the Galveston Causeway.

Then again, it could be that trucks are marketed exclusively, mostly anyhow, to men.

When was the last time an ad showed women driving or buying? When was the last time viewers saw a truck promoted with a storyline of a young mother toting that diaper bag, a baby in a carrier, a toddler and a burgeoning teen in tow? Never. Some auto companies are slowly changing.

LETTER

Politicians show their love of power by inaction

Editor,

If you question why the American public seems so unhappy with the current state of affairs, I believe you need look no further than the Congress and more specifically the House of Representatives.

When the Biden Administration asked for additional funding for the Ukraine, they were told by the Republicans in the House, that they first had to present legislation addressing the immigration problem. The Senate did just that, and

on a bipartisan basis came up with the first piece of major legislation on immigration since the proposal from the Gang of 8 a decade ago.

The response from the Republicans in the House was that they would not bring that legislation to the floor for a vote since their candidate for President told them to not address immigration. His reasoning was that the immigration issue was one he wanted to use to attack the Biden Administration. Passing legislation that

would address the issue would benefit the public but would remove an attack issue for his campaign.

To me a political party that decides to not address legislation that would benefit the public because it would not benefit one of their candidates is reflecting their love of power rather than working in the public good and reflecting the power of love of country.

*Don Thompson
Alamosa*

Keith R Cerny
Publisher

Brian Williams
Managing Editor

Valley Courier

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Your FIRST Source for Local News

Editor's Note: The views expressed in individual columns on this page do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Valley Courier.

Write them

GOVERNOR

Governor Jared Polis (D), State Capitol Building Room 136, 200 East Colfax, Denver CO 80203; (303) 866-2471; Fax: (303) 866-2003.

STATE HOUSE

Matthew Martinez (D), Colorado State Representative, District 62, 200 E Colfax, Room 307, Denver, CO 80203; phone: 303-866-2916; email:matthew.martinez.house@coleg.gov

STATE SENATE

Cleave Simpson (R), Colorado State Senator, District 35, 200 E Colfax RM 346 Denver, CO 80203 Phone: 303-866-4875 cleave.simpson.senate@coleg.gov

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Lauren Boebert (R)
Pueblo Office: 503 N. Main, Suite 426, Pueblo, CO 81003 (719) 696-6970;
Washington Office: 1609 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-4761
Fax: (202) 226-9669;
Contact: <https://boebert.house.gov/>

Religion

Vatican chatter about another anonymous demos epistle

Catholic cyberspace equally obvious: an authoritarian, at times seemingly vindictive, style of governance; a carelessness in matters of law; an intolerance for even respectful disagreement; and -- most seriously -- a pattern of ambiguity in matters of faith and morals causing confusion among the faithful. ... The result today is a Church more fractured than at any time in her recent history.

On Religion



Terry Mattingly

the cardinals and require a confession. But he won't because he's not," wrote Kevin Beck, for the Where Peter Is website.

and is intimately concerned with every human life, He forgives but He also holds us accountable, He is both Savior and Judge; (c) man is God's creature, not a self-invention, a creature not merely of emotion and appetites but also of intellect, free will, and an eternal destiny; (d) unchanging objective truths about the world and human nature exist and are knowable through Divine Revelation and the exercise of reason; (e) God's Word, recorded in Scripture, is reliable and has permanent force; (f) sin is real and its effects are lethal; and (g) his Church

has both the authority and the duty to 'make disciples of all nations.'" While insisting Demos II is "neither incendiary nor hyperbolic," theologian Larry Chapp, writing at the What We Need Now Substack, noted that these debates are framed by a "cottage industry" of angry activists who have "flooded social media with all manner of accusations against Pope Francis. Much of the criticism is valid, but much is not, and many of the provocateurs are little more than click bait grifters."

he added, is "the same no matter from where the criticisms of this pope arise. ... To criticize Pope Francis is an act of disobedience, and even schism, and the arguments leveled against Francis are ... summarily dismissed as nothing more than fearful, right-wing cranks venting their spleen."

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Terry Mattingly is Senior Fellow on Communications and Culture at Saint Constantine College in Houston. He lives in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and writes Rational Sheep, a Substack newsletter on faith and mass media.

CHURCH DIRECTORY Your Guide To Local Houses of Worship

- All-Denominational Emmanuel Chapel - Independent Bible Church 0432 Hwy 149, South Fork 719-573-5411
Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.
Worship, 10:45 a.m.
Sunday Evening Service, 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday Night Bible Study, 7:00 p.m.
Church of the Living God 11611 2nd Avenue, Hooper 719-378-2080
Sunday, 10 a.m. - Worship
Sunday, 6 p.m. - Book of Acts Study
Monday, 7 p.m. - Youth
Thursday, 7 p.m. - Bible Study
San Luis Valley Christian Center 305 S. Broadway (3rd & Broadway), Monte Vista 719-852-6168
Sunday, 10 a.m. - Worship
Tuesday, 5:30 p.m. - Bible Study
Prayer House Church 410 Main Street, La Jara
Pastor Jaime Flores - 719-298-0007
Sunday Morning Service, 10:30 am
Wednesday Family Ministry, 6:30 pm
Friday Night Bible Study, 7:00 pm
Sargent Community Church 6967 N. County Rd. 2 E., Monte Vista (across from Sargent School)
Pastor Stephen Burns - 719-852-2980
Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.
Back Row Church - Church Community In the Alamosa Presbyterian Church Building
www.backrowchurch.com
Kim Nipple - 303-532-9342
Worship Service - Wednesday Evening at 5:00 pm
Apostolic Alamosa Apostolic Church 510 First St., Alamosa
Meets Sundays 1-2 p.m.
2-3 p.m. - Lunch
3-5 p.m. - Worship Service
Antonito Apostolic Church 710 Main St., Antonito
Meets sundays
11-12 p.m. - Sunday School
12-1 p.m. - Worship service
Apostolic Pentecostal Church of Champions, Acts 2:38
9056 Hwy 285 South, Alamosa - 719-587-3351
Dan Dawning Pastor, 719-588-7307
Sunday, 1:00 p.m. - Service
Assembly of God River of Life Church 2602 Clark Avenue, Alamosa
Sunday, 10 a.m. - Worship
Wednesday, 7 p.m. - Service
Center Assembly of God 7th & Miles - P.O. Box 507, Center, CO 81125
Sunday School, 10:00 a.m.
Sunday Worship, 11:00 a.m.
Wednesday Bible Study, 7:00 p.m.
Assembly of God Sons And Daughters Of God Ministry 677 Madison Street, Monte Vista
Pastor Leonard Sandoval, 719-849-0212
Sunday 10:00 a.m Service
Wednesday 7:00 p.m Prayer
New Life Fellowship 520 7th St., Del Norte, 81132
719-657-3360
Adult Sunday School - 9:00
Services - 10:00
Bahai Faith meets every Wednesday at 7 p.m on Zoom.
Email: harrline@gojaco.org for a Zoom invite
Baptist Grace Community Baptist Church 431 Lincoln Ave., Monte Vista
Rev. Bill Walstrom, 719-937-1451
Worship: 9:30; Sunday School: 11:00 am
Wednesday Bible Study: 6:30 pm
Living Water Bible Fellowship 2910 Clark Street, Alamosa 719-589-6351
Sunday, 9:00 & 10:45 am Worship Services**
Sunday, 10:45 am Children's Ministry (Prek-5th grade)
Sunday, 10:45 am Teen Bible Study (6th-12th grade)
Tuesday 7:00 pm Young Adults/College Group
Wednesday 6:30 pm Bible Quizzing (1st-6th grade)
Wednesday 6:30 pm Reign Youth Group (6th-12th grade)
Wednesday 6:30 pm Adult Bible Study*
Saturday 5:00 pm Worship Service*
Small Groups meets throughout week, please call for info ** Nursery is available (twice-prek)
College Heights Baptist Church Pastor Anthony Bowden 2045 Church Avenue, Alamosa
Sunday, 9:45 a.m.-10:45 a.m. - Sunday School
Sunday, 11 a.m. - Morning Worship
San Luis Valley Baptist Church 930 State Avenue, Alamosa 719-589-5938
Pastor R.L. McDonald
Wednesday 7 p.m. - Worship
Saturday, 2 p.m.
Sunday, 10 a.m. - Sunday School
Sunday, 11 a.m. - Worship
Sunday, 6 p.m. - Evening Worship
Spanish Ministry- Iglesia Bautista Rehobot
Pastor Sal Garcia, 589-3020
Calvary Bible Chapel 7160 Brush Lane, Alamosa
Sunday, 9:30 a.m. - Worship
Sunday, 10:20 a.m. - Sunday School
Sunday, 11 a.m. - Ministry of the Word
Small group studies meet during the week.
Calvary Blanca Pastor Matthew Leonard - 719-379-3317
Sunday, 9:30 am - Bible Study
Sunday, 11:00 am - Service
Wednesday, 6:30pm - Community Get to Know You
Calvary Baptist Church 2160 Sherman Ave., Monte Vista
Sunday, 9:45 a.m. - Bible Study
Sunday, 11 a.m. - Worship
Tuesday, 6 p.m. - C.L.A.Y. Youth
Thursday, 6:30 p.m. - Ladies Bible Study
South Fork Baptist Church 0130 Four Seasons Dr. (Old Chizum Bldg), South Fork
(East side near laundrymat & car wash)
Sunday School, 9:30am
Sunday, 10:30am - Worship
For more information - Pastor Paul Moon - 719-496-7702
United Presbyterian Church of Antonito P.O. Box 665, Antonito
Office Hrs. Tues, 9:00am-12:00
Sunday - 9:45am - Sunday School
10:45am - Service
Catholic Sacred Heart Church 715 4th Street, Alamosa
Saturday, 4:00 p.m. - Mass
Saturday, 6:00 p.m. - Spanish Mass
Sunday, 8 a.m. - Mass
Sunday, 10:30 a.m. - Mass
Hooper Church 3rd and Adams, Hooper
Sunday, 9 a.m. - Morning Worship
Meditation, Kriya Mountain Institute Alamosa - (575)758-5876
United Church of La Jara 522 Walnut, La Jara 719-274-5250
Terry Buckman, Pastor
Cell Phone: 339-8444
Office Hours: Mon. 9:00 am - 12:00
Sunday 9:00 am - Contemporary
Coffee Fellowship 10:00 am
Christian Science Services 400 Ross Avenue, Society Hall, Alamosa
Services - Sundays at 10:00 p.m.
The second Wednesday of each 4 p.m.
Thanksgiving Day 10 a.m.
Pioneer United Church in Del Norte, Colorado A Congregation of Evangelical Covenant Order Presbyterians
630 Spruce St. (1.5 blocks south of Hwy. 160)
Adult Sunday School - 9:30 a.m. Sunday
Coffee Fellowship - 10:30 a.m. Sunday
Worship Service - 11:00 a.m. Sunday
Church of the South Fork 0116 Lenden Dr., South Fork, Co. 81154
Sunday are at 9 am - Services
School Room. Choir is held on Wednesday at 6pm during the summer months with a final practice at 8:15am on Sunday
Christian Bethel Christian Church Pastor Erik Lira
Worship Service Sunday 3:00 p.m.
Bible Study Wednesday 7:00 p.m.
Bilingual Services
Monday Free Music Classes
Instrumental Classes 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Voice & Bass Guitar 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Word of Faith Christian Center 401 Sante Fe, Alamosa
Sunday, 10:00 a.m.
Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.
Friday, 6:00 p.m. M.O.S.H. Youth Night
The Peak Community Church 510 San Juan, Alamosa
Sundays, 6 p.m. - Fellowship
Sundays, 7 p.m. - Worship & More
Pentecostal Alamosa Pentacostal Church 184 East 2nd St., Alamosa - 719-589-0475
Pastor Carl Sutter
Bible Study Wednesday 7:00 p.m.
Sunday School Sunday 1:00-1:45
Worship 2:00-3:00
Christian Fellowship Church The Door 1300 West 12th St., Alamosa
Pastor Martin Montoya • 719-587-6197
Sunday, 11:00 a.m. - Sunday School
Sunday, 11:00 a.m. - Worship
Sunday, 6:30 p.m. - Victory Service
Wednesday, 7:00 p.m. - Revival
Christian Independent Alamosa Christian Church 410 McQuerry, Alamosa
Sunday, 9:30 a.m. - Sunday School
Sunday, 10:30 a.m. - Worship
Wednesdays, 7:00 p.m. - Family Night & Youth Group
Christian Reformed Alamosa Christian Reformed, 719-589-3493
1861 Rd 10 S, Alamosa
Pastor Philip VanderWindt
Sunday, 9:00 a.m. - Sunday School
Sunday, 10:15 a.m. - Worship
Churches of Christ Alamosa Church of Christ 408 Victoria Avenue, Alamosa
Sunday, 9:30 a.m. - Bible Classes
Sunday, 10:30 a.m. - Worship
Wednesday, 7 p.m. - Bible Study
Healing Hearts, a Bible-based 12 step group meets, every Friday at 7 p.m.
South Fork Church of Christ 205 Birch St., South Fork, 719-873-1259
Nathan Wheeler Pastor
Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.
Sunday Worship, 10:00 a.m.
Central Church of Christ 200 Franklin Street, Monte Vista, 719-852-3811
David L. Baker Preacher
Sunday, 9:30 a.m. - Bible Class
Sunday, 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m. - Worship
Wednesday, 7 p.m. - Bible Study
San Luis Valley Church of Christ 704 Del Sol, Alamosa, 719-589-2114
Sunday Bible Study 9 am
Sunday Worship 10 am
Wednesday Bible Study 6 pm
Cornerstone Community Church Hwy. 160 Del Norte next to Rio Grande Medical Clinic
Pastor Mark 719-657-9107
Sunday 9:50 a.m. free breakfast
Sunday 10:20 a.m. Contemporary Worship & Children Sunday School
Wednesday 5:15 p.m. Dinner, music, fellowship, teachings
Episcopal Saint Thomas Episcopal Church 607 4th Street, Alamosa
Sunday, 9 a.m. - Service
Saint Stephen the Martyr 729 3rd Avenue, Monte Vista
Sunday, 10 am Service
First Christian Church 518 First St. (First & State) Alamosa 589-6805
Sunday, 9:15 a.m. - Sunday School
Sunday, 10:00 a.m. - Church Service
Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. - Bible Study
Valley Fellowship 240 East 5th Street, Center - 719-754-3904
Sunday, 10:30 a.m. - Contemporary Worship, Prayer and Bible Study
*Bible Studies during the week, call for information.
First United Methodist Church 2005 Mullins Ave., Alamosa - 719-589-2243
*Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors
Morning Worship - Sunday, 11:00 am
Children's Church - Sunday, 10:30 am
Community Churches United for Christ Community Church (SBC) *Community Centered Around Love*
7th & Broadway in Blanca - 719-379-3317
Sunday School 9:30-10:30
Worship Service 11am
Bible Believer's Community Church 11762 E US HWY 160, Alamosa, Co 81101
719) 206-3239
Sunday worship 10:30
Wednesday Bible Study 7 pm
www.bbcchurch.co
Presbyterian Alamosa Presbyterian Church 330 San Juan Avenue, Alamosa
Sunday, 10:30 a.m. - Traditional Worship
Hispanic Pentecostal Iglesia Pentecostal Unida LA 907 Tenth St. Alamosa - 719-587-3546
Guadalupe Salazar Pastor
Wed. 7:00 p.m. Service
Sat. 7:00 p.m. Youth Service
Sun. 10:00 a.m. Sunday School
Sun. 5:00 p.m. Worship
New Hope Church "The Church on the Hill" 25258 Hwy 160, South Fork, Co. 81154
Pastor John Jayne • 719-873-1202
www.newhopest.com
Morning Worship - 10:00 am
Sunday School for all ages - 9:00 - 9:45
Anabaptist Fellowship of Alamosa 330 San Juan Ave., Alamosa, CO 81101
alamosafellowship@gmail.com
Sunday 4:30 PM Worship in the north wing of the Alamosa Presbyterian Church
Independent, Fundamental Baptist First Baptist Church of Costilla County 9717 County Rd H, Mesita - 719-206-0011
Pastor Paul Jones
Sunday, 9:45 am - Sunday School
Sunday, 10:45 am - Morning Worship
Sunday, 12 Noon - Potluck Dinner
Sunday after dinner - Afternoon Worship
Thursday, 7:00 pm - Mesita, Bible Study and Prayer meeting
DEAF MINISTRY FOR ALL SERVICES Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Alamosa YSA Ward 300 Richardson Avenue, Alamosa
Sunday, 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Alamosa Second Ward 927 Weber Drive, Alamosa
Sunday, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Alamosa Third Ward 300 Richardson Avenue, Alamosa
Sunday, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Alamosa Fourth Ward 927 Weber Drive, Alamosa
Sunday, 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Sierra Vista Branch (Spanish Language) 300 Richardson Avenue, Alamosa
Sunday, 10:15 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.
Lutheran St. Peters Lutheran Church & School Church: 1821 Grande Avenue, Monte Vista School: 330 Faraday Street, Monte Vista
Sunday, 10:15 a.m. - Services
School: K-8, Monday-Thursday
Trinity Lutheran Church & School 52 El Rio Drive, Alamosa
Sunday, 8:45 a.m. - Bible Study
Sunday, 10 a.m. - Worship
Small Bible Study Groups Throughout the Week
-Pre-School through 5th grade
Church: 589-4611, School: 589-3271
Conejos Canyon Community Chapel 20062 Slate Hwy. 17 (between mile posts 21 and 20)
Fellowship Sunday, 8:30 a.m.
Sunday, 9:00 a.m. - Worship Service
Mountain Valley Church 408 State St., 17 Alamosa
Pastor: Richard Pinkerton
589-2899 or 588-7662
Sunday, 9:30 a.m. - Sunday School
Sunday, 10:30 a.m. - Worship Service
Presbyterian Church of Monte Vista 702 Second Avenue, Monte Vista (719) 852-2555
Sunday, 9:45 a.m. - Sunday School
Sunday, 11 a.m. - Sunday Worship
Seventh-day Adventist Seventh-day Adventist Church 315 Craft Drive, Alamosa
Saturday, 9:30 a.m. - Bible Study
Saturday, 11:00 a.m. - Worship
United Methodist Mosca United Methodist Church 538 Barker Street, Mosca
970-270-3078
Pastor Steve Dunkel
Sunday Worship: 8:00 a.m.
Unitarian Universalist Unitarian Universalist Fellowship 330 San Juan Ave., Alamosa
*North Wing of Alamosa Presbyterian Church 719-587-5529
Service & Youth Programs at 10:30 am Sunday
Valley Church of the Nazarene Pastor: Chris Yocom 228 Madison, Monte Vista - (719) 852-8588
churchoffice@valleynaz.com
Sunday
Sunday Morning Worship 10:15 a.m.
Sunday School Classes 9 a.m.
Wednesday
Dinner at 6 p.m.
Small Group Classes at 7 p.m.
Thursday
Teen Activities (beginning at 6:30 p.m.)
*Nursery is available during all services
Visit website at www.valleynaz.com for online bulletins and service information or the number above.
Church of Scientology 511 Main Street, Suite #12, Alamosa
719-587-5554
Monday and Wednesday, 7-10p.m., - Services
Grace Assurance Ministry Church without Religion 9851 CR 4 S, Alamosa, CO
Sunday Mornings - 10:30
Randy Brown - 719-588-7004
Eric Wolf - 719-480-3977

Bible Digest

Saturday, March 23, 2024 "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." (2 Timothy 3:7 AKJV) This is a description of our day. We have facts but no wisdom without God. Lord, help us. Sunday, March 24, 2024 "Yes, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Timothy 3:12 AKJV) Dear Christian don't be surprised by persecution. Keep living for Jesus. Monday, March 25, 2024 "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

(2 Timothy 3:16 AKJV) The Bible is the Word of God. There is no other book its equal. Tuesday, March 26, 2024 "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?" (Psalms 94:9 AKJV) Have you given this much thought? We should. We are all accountable to God. Wednesday, March 27, 2024 "In the multitude of my thoughts within me your comforts delight my soul." (Psalms 94:19 AKJV) The Lord can give you the peace you need. Cast

your cares upon Him and leave them there. Thursday, March 28, 2024 "Nevertheless the foundation of God stands, having this seal, The Lord knows them that are his. And, Let every one that names the name of Christ depart from iniquity." (2 Timothy 2:19 AKJV) Christians should be holy people. Friday, March 29, 2024 "Be you also patient; establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draws near." (James 5:8 AKJV) Jesus is coming back. Get ready.



The Fruitful vs. the Frustrated Life



In John 15:16 Jesus says, "I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last" (NIV). In fact, the Bible has a lot to say about how Christians bear fruit—and there are two ways that we can do it. One is by displaying the fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). And the second way is by getting out in the world where God has planted us and being good to people. I'm talking about helping people who are hard to love or don't seem to deserve it. Or giving to the poor and getting involved with people so you can make a difference and help make their lives better, rather than spending all of your time trying to make yourself happy. I've discovered that being selfish and self-centered never makes anyone happy. Living for God is really just the opposite of that. God does want to bless us and give us the things we need, but when we give our lives to Him, our purpose is to serve Him. In Matthew 12:33 (NIV) Jesus says, "... The tree is recognized by its fruit." And this is how people know who we are. Just as you recognize an orange tree by the oranges it produces, you know a Christian by the fruit of their lifestyle. I've said often that you won't be recognized as a Christian just because you have a Christian bumper sticker on your car or you wear Christian jewelry or go to church every week. Most of the time people won't care what you have to say if your behavior doesn't back it up. The fruit of our lives is seen in our behavior—what we do to help others and our attitudes—as well as what we

through you. Every day is a gift from God and it's so precious! Ephesians 3:20 (AMP) says that God "is able to [carry out His purpose and] do superabundantly more than all that we dare ask or think [infinitely beyond our greatest prayers, hopes, or dreams], according to His power that is at work within us." He has a plan for you and He will give you everything you need to fulfill your destiny as you seek Him and grow stronger in your faith in Him. I want to encourage you to focus on Jesus and live by the wisdom He reveals to you in His Word. If you choose today to help someone else, not only will you be happier, but you'll find that good fruit brings true satisfaction and fulfillment. 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 (Faith Words). She hosts the Enjoying Everyday Life radio and TV programs, which air on hundreds of stations worldwide. For more information, visit www.joycemeyer.org. Please note: The views and opinions expressed throughout this publication and/or website are those of the respective authors and do not necessarily reflect those of Joyce Meyer Ministries.

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See you at Sunday School

Sports

Mustangs sweep Burros in season opener

By **KEN HAMRICK**
Courier sports editor
SANFORD – The Sanford High School baseball team got off to an impressive start to the 2024 season as the Mustangs swept a doubleheader from South Park Friday at the Sanford baseball field.

The Mustangs won the first game 15-4 and they won by an even wider margin in the night cap with a 27-3 victory.

“We have a good bunch of boys here and they all want to play,” said Sanford coach Ty Crowther. “We put the bat on the ball and we’re going to do a lot of things. This Mustang team is going to be fun to mess with all season long.”

Game 1

The Mustangs took the early lead in the opener with a run in the bottom of the first inning. Cash Caldon got a two-out single and he stole second and third. He came home on Lucas Miller’s single.

The Burros tied the score in the top of the second. Jaden Walker led off with a walk, and Caleb Miller followed with a single. An error allowed both runners to move up a base, and after Kyle Bassnet walked to load the bases, Trinity Walker also received a base on balls to drive in the tying run.

South Park took the lead in the top of the third. J.W. Miller singled, stole second and took third on a wild pitch. Jaden Walker drew a walk and Aiden Wilson reached on an error to drive in J.W. Miller.

Caleb Miller singled home Jaden Walker for a 3-1 Burros lead.

The lead didn’t last long as Sanford scored five runs in the bottom of the third. Trason Gartrell led off with a single and he stole second and third. Dylan Mortensen was hit by a pitch, and Gartrell scored as the Mustangs executed the double steal.

An error put Mortensen on third and he came home on Caldon’s single. Caldon also stole second and third, and Alex Sittler walked and Bryce Keck was hit to load the bases.



Courier photo by Ken Hamrick

Sanford High School’s Cash Caldon (5) is safe at third before South Park’s J.W. Miller (20) can apply the tag. The Mustangs swept the Burros in a doubleheader winning by scores of 15-4 and 27-3. For the doubleheader, Caldon went 8-8 with two doubles, eight RBIs, eight stolen bases and he was the winning pitcher in the first game.

J.D. Faucette cleared the bases with what appeared to be a single. However, he was called out for not touching second. But the runs counted and the Mustangs led 6-3.

South Park scored another run in the fourth. Blake Bassnet had a leadoff single, and he stole second and advanced to third on a passed ball. He scored on J.W. Miller’s single to cut the lead to 6-4.

The Mustangs put the game away with a nine-run fourth. Gartrell led off with a single and he stole second and third. Mortensen was again hit by a pitch, and both runners scored on Caldon’s

double.

Keck was hit by a pitch and Emmitt Larsen walked to fill the sacks. Faucette also walked to drive home Caldon, and Keck scored on a wild pitch for a 10-4 advantage.

Kendall Christensen also received a base on balls, and Travis Canty’s infield single plated Larsen. Gartrell was safe on an error, and Caldon emptied the bases with a double for a 15-4 lead.

The game ended after five innings on the 10-run rule.

Miller started on the mound for the Mustangs and he allowed one run and one hit and he struck

out four and walked six. Caldon relieved Miller in the third and earned the win by allowing three runs and four hits with six strikeouts and four walks.

Sanford had nine hits and was led by Caldon who went 4-4 with two doubles and six RBIs, and Gartrell who went 2-4 with one RBI.

The Mustangs stole 14 bases and were led by

Caldon and Gartrell both with five.

Game 2

South Park jumped out to an early 3-0 lead in the first. Kyle Bassnet led off with a walk and stole second and third he scored on a wild pitch.

Caleb Miller was hit by a pitch and J.W. Miller drew a walk. Caleb Miller scored on Trinity Walker’s groundout, and J.W. Miller also came home on a wild pitch.

Once again, the Burros’ lead didn’t last long as Sanford answered with six runs in its half of the first.

Gartrell was safe on an error and he scored on Mortensen’s double. Caldon singled home Mortensen, and after Caldon stole second and third, he scored on Sittler’s single. Sittler scored on a wild pitch to give the Mustangs a 4-3 lead.

Larsen continued the inning with a walk and Faucette followed with a single. An error allowed Larsen to come home and Faucette also scored on the play.

Sanford iced the victory with 21 runs in the bottom of the second. Gartrell had a leadoff double and Mortensen was hit by a pitch. Gartrell scored on the double steal.

Caldon beat out an infield single and a balk brought Mortensen home. Sittler was hit by a pitch, as was Faucette to load the bases. Caldon scored on another wild pitch, and Christensen also walked to again fill the sacks.

Canty walked to drive home Sittler, and Joshua Fairhurst was safe on an error to score Faucette. Gartrell also reached on an error to drive in Christensen, and Mortensen also reached on an error to plate Canty.

Caldon’s single brought home Fairhurst, and Sittler cleared the bases with a double to increase

the lead to 17-3. Sittler scored as Kaulen Miller was safe on an error to continue the inning, and Mason Harvey and Jared McCarroll both walked to again load the bases.

Canty doubled in two runs and Fairhurst singled in another one. Gartrell also doubled home two runs, and Mortensen walked and Caldon singled to again load the bases.

Sittler walked, Kaulen Miller was hit by a pitch, and McCarroll and Canty were both safe on errors to wrap up the scoring.

The game ended after three innings on the 20-run rule.

Gartrell went the distance to pick up the win. He gave up three runs and one hit and he had six strikeouts, five walks and one hit batter.

Sanford had 12 hits in the second game and once again was led by Caldon who went 4-4 with two RBIs. Sittler went 2-2 with a triple and four RBIs, and Gartrell went 2-4 with two doubles and three RBIs.

Sanford had 10 stole bases and was led by Caldon with three and Gartrell with two.

For the doubleheader, Caldon went 8-8 with two doubles and eight RBIs with eight stolen bases.

What’s next

Sanford (2-0, 2-0) will host a single game against Center on Tuesday beginning at 4 p.m.

“It should be a good game,” Crowther said. “If we play our game, nobody’s going to compete with us.”

Sanford 15, South Park 4

South Park 012 10-4 5 2
 Sanford 105 9x-15 9 3
 Newman (L), C. Miller (4) and T. Walker, L. Miller, Caldon (3, W) and Gartrell.

Sanford 27, South Park 3

South Park 300-3 1 8
 Sanford 6(21)x-27 12 0
 K. Bassnet (L), Shannon (2), Wilson (2) and T. Walker, C. Miller (2), Gartrell (W) and McCarroll.

Cisneros to compete at NHSCA National Tournament

By **KEN HAMRICK**
Courier sports editor

ALAMOSA – Monte Vista High School’s Kevin Cisneros will compete at the National High School Coaches Association Senior Tournament on April 5-7 at the Virginia Beach Sports Center in Virginia Beach, Va.

The senior tournament will begin at 1 p.m. on April 5. It will conclude with the finals on April 7 at 10 a.m.

Cisneros had a successful senior year at

Monte Vista as he was a state runner-up at 150 pounds. He had a record of 36 wins and four losses. He was also All-League, All-State and was a regional champion.

The tournament will be televised on FLO Wrestling.

Cisneros is looking for sponsors for himself and his coaches for the trip to Virginia. To make a donation, calls (719) 852-0741 and ask for Jose or Kevin. Make out the check to Monte Vista High School.

Sports Bulletin

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

SCOREBOARD FRIDAY

Prep baseball
 Centauri 17, Center 10
 Las Animas 7, Centauri 1
 Sanford 15, South Park 4, 5 inn.
 Sanford 27, South Park 3, 3 inn.
 Sargent at Sierra Grande – no report
College baseball
 Adams State 9, New Mexico Highlands 6
College men’s lacrosse
 Condordia-Irvine 19, Adams State 3

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

(2), noon
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), 11 a.m.

TUESDAY

Prep baseball
 Centauri at Walsenburg, 4 p.m.
 Center at Sanford, 4 p.m.
 Ignacio at Monte Vista, 4 p.m.
Prep girls soccer
 Alamosa at Durango, 2 p.m.



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Lifestyle

Outdoor gear sales dropped in 2023, leaving mountain retailers struggling with high rents, high taxes and too-few workers

By JASON BLEVINS
The Colorado Sun
Mountain Outfitters outdoor gear shop shut down last fall, after almost 40 years in business.

Owner Doug Bittinger said it was "one of the most difficult decisions" he and partner Cindy Reese ever made. After the best year ever in 2020, when the pandemic drove hordes of people into the outdoors and into outdoor gear shops, an economic storm led to the worst years ever for the Breckenridge gear shop.

"It all goes back to housing," said Bittinger, who bought the store with Reese in 2012.

The explosion of home prices during the pandemic drove away his workers, who could not afford to remain in Breckenridge as new owners took over properties, he said. He was short-staffed and paying the employees he could find 75% more than 2019 wages. Property taxes tripled as the value of the building he and Reese owned soared.

And then, around December 2022, people stopped shopping.

"We were a locals' shop and when locals lost their housing, we lost our core customers," said the 59-year-old Bittinger, who now lives in Las Cruces, New Mexico, with Reese, where they "spend a lot of time riding our bikes."

Bittinger was among many outdoor shop owners who endured a rough 2023. After a record surge of new outdoor participants fueled unprecedented growth in outdoor gear sales in 2021 and 2022, the outdoor retail industry is losing steam. Sales of outdoor gear, ap-

parel and accessories fell 3% to \$27.5 billion in 2023 compared to 2022, with chain stores, e-retailers and independent shop owners all posting declines. Sales at independent stores fell 10% to \$4.2 billion in 2023.

At least half of the nation's independent stores — the main street ski and paddle shops like Mountain Outfitters that cater to core outdoor participants — were down "way more than 10%" in 2023, said Kelly Davis, the number-crunching maven at the Outdoor Industry Association.

Davis' annual retail sales trend report for OIA landed this week, revealing an expected flattening after frothy post-pandemic years, when "the whole world went out and bought something for outdoor activities," she said.

The outdoor industry sold 6% fewer items in 2023 compared to 2022. Core outdoor folks — the lithe, tanned people who ski, climb, pedal, paddle, fish and run through the woods more than 50 times a year — didn't buy as much. But the newcomers, the people who came to the outdoors during the pandemic, are still buying.

The new consumers — as many as 15 million Americans since 2020 — participate casually in the outdoors with less frequency. And they are buying stuff differently, fueling, for example, record sales for insulated mugs, up 84% to \$630 million in sales in 2023; men's and women's casual pants, \$527 million in sales; and road running shoes, \$2.3 billion.

While the overall spending on outdoor products fell

in 2023, Davis said participation remains strong. For years the outdoor industry languished with a mere 50% of Americans older than age 6 actively participating in outdoor activities. The pandemic changed that and by 2022, participation reached a record 55.1%.

Davis is still crunching the numbers on Americans getting outside in 2023 but she said it looks like participation will grow by at least another couple of percentage points.

But that growth is being driven by new arrivals. The number of every-weekend outdoor warriors is flat. There are 91 million core outdoor consumers in America today, a number

that has not changed since 2007. That poses a challenge for outdoor gear-makers and shops that rely heavily on people who like to buy new kayaks, skis and bikes.

"So if you are focusing on core, you are not growing your consumer base for the last 15 years," Davis said.

Davis said the industry needs to embrace the millions of freshly minted outdoor enthusiasts who are diverse, young and different from the buyers who have sustained outdoor businesses for decades.

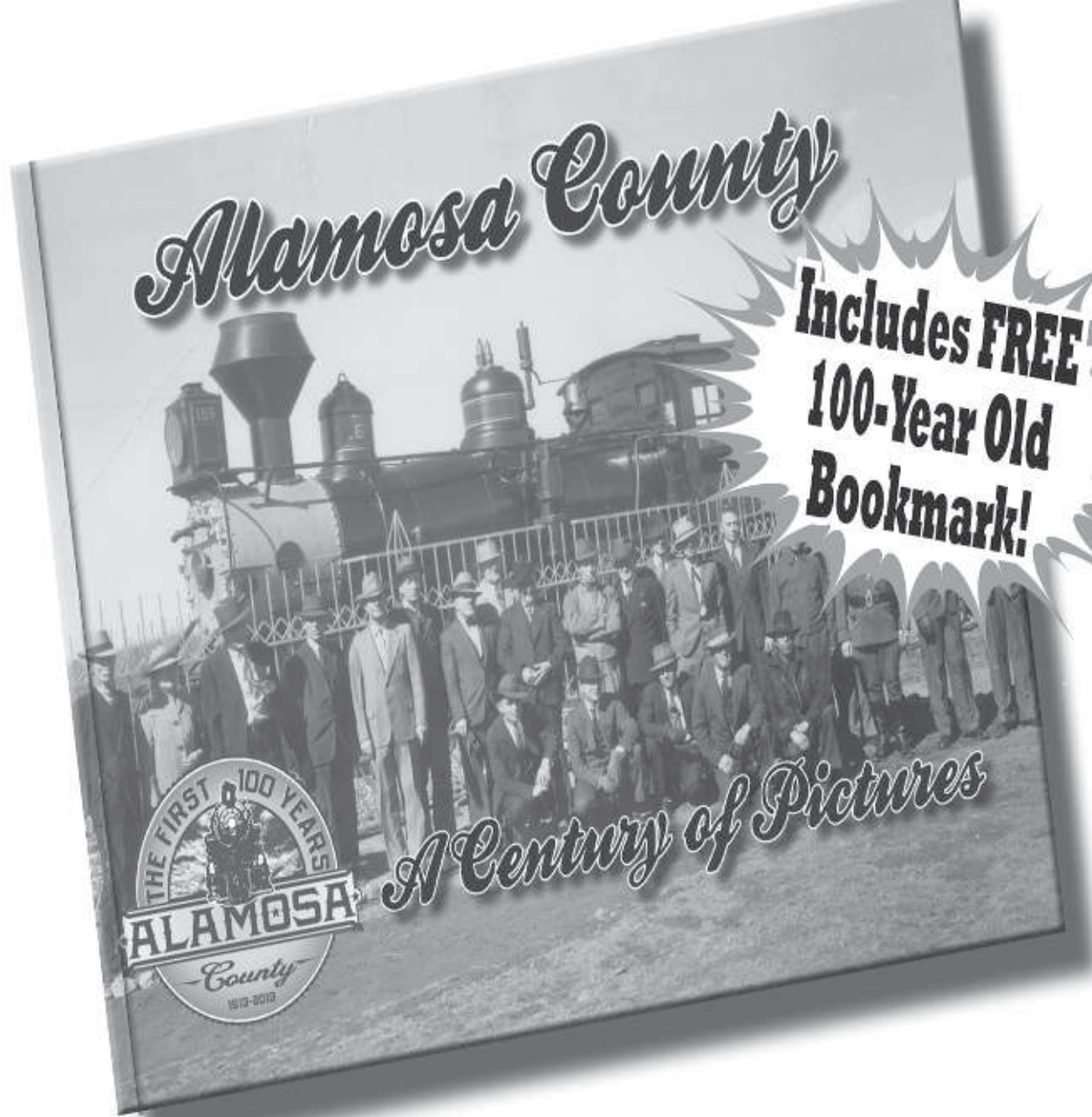
"They are absolutely going to change our market," Davis said. "It will be interesting to see how the industry can get to know these new consumers a little bit



Photo by Hugh Carey, The Colorado Sun
Mountain Outfitters owners Cindy Reese and Doug Bittinger interact with regulars during the store closing sale on Aug. 17, 2023, in Breckenridge. The locals' favorite outdoor gear store closed due to post-pandemic challenges stemming from the mountain town's high cost of living.

better and we can understand how they are participating in the outdoors and what their needs are."

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<p>NOTICE OF JOB opening for JOURNEYMAN LINEMAN. SAN LUIS VALLEY RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, Inc., located at 3625 US Hwy 160 W. MONTE VISTA, Colorado currently has an opening for a certified Journeyman Lineman. The hourly rate of pay for the certified journeyman is \$50.87 with a very competitive benefit package. Forty hours/week plus additional time as duties require. After hours on-call required. Duties include construction, maintenance and repair of lines. Requirements: high school graduate or equivalent, certified journeyman lineman, must have CDL and be CPR certified. Visit our website at www.slvrec.com to complete the job application. Applications will not be accepted after March 25, 2024. SLVREC is an Equal Opportunity Employer. (3/23/24)</p>	<p>CITY OF MONTE VISTA is currently accepting applications for an EQUIPMENT OPERATOR I position. This position will perform skilled work in equipment operations, maintenance and repair work of streets, etc. This position may be asked to perform work for the Water/Sewer Dept. and the Parks Dept. A valid Colorado Class B CDL License with air brakes is highly desirable. Requires HS diploma or GED equivalent and one-year prior experience as equipment operator. Candidates must be able to pass a pre-employment background check and drug test. This is a 40 hour per week full-time position. The general starting wage is \$16.75 - \$18.00 per hour plus an excellent benefit package. Please visit: https://cityofmontevista.colorado.gov/government/departments/human-resources for a complete position description and application. (3/23/24)</p>	<p>SARGENT EARLY LEARNING CENTER (SELC) is hiring an EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR for the 2024-2025 school year! The SELC is a nonprofit childcare center that offers daycare and preschool programs. The Executive Director is responsible for providing a developmentally appropriate program for children ages 12 months to 5 years old, program accountability, financial management of the SELC, staff development, and parental involvement activities. The successful applicant will have the following qualifications: Large center director level qualification; Minimum of an AA, BA preferred; Knowledge and experience in working in early childhood education; Knowledge and experience in staff development and leadership; Ability to work closely as a team player with staff, parents, and the community; Previous experience with grant writing, grant management, and financial management preferred; Ability to be flexible, open to learning, and to take on new tasks/problems as they occur; Knowledge of State Licensing and Colorado Shines Rating; Must be able to pass CBI/FBI/TRAILS background checks. Salary starts at \$35,000 per year dependent upon qualifications and experience. Benefits include paid holidays, sick pay, vacation time, and a simple IRA. Learn more about the SELC at https://sargentearlylearningcenter@gmail.com. Position open until filled, but applications received by March 15th will receive priority. (3/23/24)</p>	<p>SOUTH CONEJOS SCHOOL DISTRICT is seeking a SECONDARY SCIENCE TEACHER for the 24-25 school year. Applicants must possess a Colorado Teaching License or be eligible to apply for one. Salary schedules are available on the district website. Please submit a district application, resume, cover letter, and transcripts at https://www.southconejos.com/page/how-to-apply. (4/2/24)</p> <p>½ TIME TIGER CONNECTION COACH (attendance & family connection) needed at DEL NORTE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. This will be a 2-year part time classified position paid for with the Stronger Connections Grant. For more information please contact Principal Amy Duda at 719-657-4050 or aduda@urtigers.co. Applications may be picked up at the District Office or online at: urtigers.co. (4/17/24)</p>	<p>ALAMOSA MOSQUITO CONTROL DISTRICT is now hiring for SEASONAL STAFF. Please go to their website www.mosquitobytes.org. Click on EMPLOYMENT for job descriptions and applications. Alamosa Mosquito Control District is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Must be 18+ to apply. (4/3/24)</p> <p>MONTE VISTA SCHOOL DISTRICT is accepting applications for a HS HEAD BOYS' BASKETBALL COACH. The salary for this position will be paid from the current MVSD Extra Duty Salary Schedule, which can be viewed on the district website - Employment Opportunities page. Placement on the salary schedule will be determined by experience at time of hire. Applications may be submitted through our online employment application https://www.pirates.monte.k12.co.us/employmentopportunities, by March 28, 2024 or until the position is filled. For questions, contact the District Administration Office at 719-852-5996. (4/3/24)</p>	<p>SARGENT SCHOOL DISTRICT Board of Education is seeking applications for the following positions for the 2024-2025 school year. SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS: Salary/Benefits: \$90,000 to \$110,000/Full family medical insurance coverage Negotiable. The Superintendent of Schools shall be responsible for the general management of the schools of the district under the requirements of the state and the policies of the Board. The superintendent is responsible for guiding the development of the educational objectives and programs of the school district to fulfill the educational needs of all students. The superintendent shall provide overall direction to the activities of the school district and its personnel toward the accomplishment of district goals, administer the policies of the Board, conserve the school district's assets and resources, and maintain and enhance the school district's standing in all its internal and external relationships. The management responsibilities of the superintendent shall extend to all activities of the district, to all phases of the educational program and to all parts of the physical plant. Applicants must hold a current Colorado Professional Administrator License or Master of Arts degree in School Administration. More information concerning job requirements, qualifications, and application process can be found at www.sargent.k12.co.us. EOE. (3/30/24)</p>	<p>HOSPICE DEL VALLE is currently seeking a REGISTERED NURSE PRN or part time with a possibility of full time. We are a great team looking for someone special to fill this position. Competitive wages and among other benefits. Please call or stop by Hospice del Valle for further information. 514 Main Street, ALAMOSA, Colo 81101 or 719-589-9019. (4/17/24)</p> <p>SARGENT SCHOOL DISTRICT Board of Education is seeking applications for the following positions for the 2024-2025 school year. ELEMENTARY READING INTERVENTIONIST: Full-time position, starting salary Step 0 \$35,845.00, placement on the salary schedule will be based on years of experience up to 10 years. Benefit package including employee health, dental, vision, optional \$1,200 a year toward an HSA, and life insurance coverage. 4-day week, professional learning opportunities, free admission to all home athletic events, mentor program for new teachers, staff wellness room, discount rates to Monte Vista Athletic Club, Sand Dunes Swimming Pool, and Monte Vista Golf Course. Elementary Teaching License and Reading Specialist K-12 required; please complete the certified application and submit with unofficial transcripts, three letters of recommendation and resume. More information concerning job requirements, qualifications, and application process can be found at www.sargent.k12.co.us. EOE. (3/30/24)</p>	<p>MAINTENANCE ASSOCIATE (FT). Skilled multipurpose person needed to support on-going repairs/maintenance of facilities, appliances, vehicles etc. Skills needed: (moderate) plumbing/electric, carpentry, general construction, auto maintenance/repairs, appliances. Salary: \$40-42K DOE full benefit package. Requirements: initiative, good people skills, references. Training and support provided. Join our staff of dedicated professionals and learn the joys and satisfaction of serving others. Send cover letter, resume/request job description to Emily: hr@lapuente.net, 719 589-5909, ext238. www.lapuente.net (3/29/24)</p> <p>EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER needed for the 2024-2025 school year. Lead Teacher qualification preferred. Assistant Director qualified is a bonus. Please pick up an application at TRINITY LUTHERAN SCHOOL, 52 El Rio Drive, ALAMOSA, CO. (3/27/24)</p>
<p>SDEC SCHOOL DISTRICT is seeking a HIGH SCHOOL VOLLEYBALL COACH for the 2024 fall season. Applicants must have CHSAA certification or have a CDE teaching license. Applications may be picked up at the school office: 8751 Lane 7 North in MOSCA, CO. For more information, contact David Mejia at 719-378-2321 or 719-677-8217. (4/3/24)</p>	<p>CITY OF MONTE VISTA is currently seeking a dynamic and experienced individual to fill the role of CHIEF OF POLICE. This position offers an exciting opportunity for a proven leader with a strong commitment to community safety and effective law enforcement practices. Salary range \$95,000 - \$105,000, plus benefits. Position open until filled, EOE. Please visit: https://cityofmontevista.colorado.gov/government/departments/human-resources for a complete position description and application. (3/23/24)</p>	<p>JR. HIGH CHEER COACH needed at DEL NORTE JR. HIGH SCHOOL. Experience as a coach is preferred. Please contact Gilbert "Gibbs" Sanchez, Athletic Director, at: gsanchez@urtigers.co, 719-657-4020; or Annie Hardy, Principal, at: ahardy@urtigers.co, 719-657-4020. Applications may be found on our website; www.urtigers.co. (4/17/24)</p>	<p>HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS ALAMOSA now hiring Room Attendants, Laundry Attendant, Front Desk and Night houseman. Apply in person. (3/22/24)</p>	<p>HOSPICE DEL VALLE is currently seeking an ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT. A part time to full time position available. Knowledge in payroll and QuickBooks preferred but not necessary. Please call or stop by Hospice del Valle for further information: 514 Main Street, ALAMOSA, Colo 81101 or 719-589-9019. (4/17/24)</p>	<p>ALAMOSA STORAGE 5929 Road South 106 Alamosa, CO 81101 Call us today or visit our website alamosastorage.com (719) 992-3440</p>	<p>HEATING & GAS RMHG Rocky Mountain Heating & Gas Service Installation, Service & Repair Heaters, Fireplaces, Wood & Pellet Stoves Sales Stason Gomez 719-628-9310 RMHGENT@gmail.com</p>	<p>SLV FEDERAL BANK is now accepting applications for MORTGAGE LOAN PROCESSOR in our ALAMOSA OFFICE. Applications and position descriptions are available at www.slvfed.bank or at each branch location. Equal opportunity Employer, including considering individuals with Disabilities and Veterans/Affirmative Action Employer. (3/26/24)</p>

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Classifieds

221 - HELP WANTED

MONTE VISTA SCHOOL DISTRICT is accepting applications for a MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN. This is a full-time position with benefits. A complete list of desired qualifications and experience can be viewed on the district website. Monte Vista School District offers a competitive salary and an excellent benefit package including employee health, dental, vision, HSA match, and life coverage. The salary for this position will be paid from the current MVSD Maintenance Technician Salary Schedule, which can be viewed on the district website - Employment Opportunities page. Placement on the salary schedule will be determined by experience at time of hire. Applications may be submitted through our online employment application <https://www.pirates.monte.k12.co.us/employmentopportunities>, by March 21, 2024 or until the position is filled. (3/26/24)

CENTER CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT 26Jt is paying years of service and single health insurance benefits. Apply now to become part of our dynamic district as we are now accepting applications for the position of ELEMENTARY SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER, for the remaining 2024-2025 School Year. Qualifications; Special Education Certification as required by the State of Colorado or such alternative to the above qualifications as the Board of Education may find appropriate and acceptable. Applications can be found on the District Website <https://www.center.k12.co.us/page/employmentopportunities> or contact the District Office at (719) 754-3442. Application Deadline: Until Position is Filled. EOE. (4/5/24)

CENTER CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT 26Jt is paying years of service and single health insurance benefits. Apply now to become part of our dynamic district as we are now accepting applications for the positions of ELEMENTARY 3RD GRADE & 5TH GRADE TEACHER, for the 2024-2025 School Year. Qualifications; Must hold a valid State of Colorado Teacher's License or, such alternative as the Board of Education may find appropriate and acceptable. Applications can be found on the District Website <https://www.center.k12.co.us/page/employmentopportunities> or contact the District Office at (719) 754-3442. Application Deadline: Until Position is Filled. EOE. (4/5/24)

CENTER CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT 26Jt is paying years of service and single health insurance benefits. Apply now to become part of our dynamic district as we are now accepting applications for the positions of HIGH SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHER, for the 2024-2025 School Year. Qualifications; Must hold a valid State of Colorado Teacher's License or, such alternative as the Board of Education may find appropriate and acceptable. Applications can be found on the District Website <https://www.center.k12.co.us/page/employmentopportunities> or contact the District Office at (719) 754-3442. Application Deadline: Until Position is Filled. EOE. (4/5/24)

CENTER CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT 26Jt is looking for a MIDDLE SCHOOL HEAD TRACK COACH for the 2024 season. Qualifications; Must be over 18, have a high school diploma/GED and be able to pass a background check, or, such alternative qualifications as the Board may find appropriate and acceptable. Non-Certified Applications can be found on the District Website <https://www.center.k12.co.us/page/employmentopportunities> or contact the District Office at (719) 754-3442. Application Deadline: Until Position is Filled. EOE. (4/5/24)

221 - HELP WANTED

GUNBARREL STATION IS hiring a full-time store ASSISTANT MANAGER. Starting pay is \$16/hour. Must be 18 with high school diploma. Must be willing to work some weekends. Call 719-754-3543 or stop in for an application. (3/27/24)

VEGI EDUCATION AND GARDEN MANAGER, VEGI (Valley Education Gardens Initiative) teaches both youth and adults the craft of gardening with the goal of enhancing participants' understanding of health and nutrition. VEGI is seeking a motivated garden enthusiast to manage the program's garden operations, coordinate garden / nutrition education efforts in partnership with local school districts, supervise staff and volunteers, and oversee special events. We're looking for someone with knowledge and enthusiasm about gardening, experience working with children, and strong communication and organizational skills. This person will have opportunities to work with their hands both in the dirt and in an office space. Initiative essential; training and support provided. Join our staff of dedicated professionals and learn the joys and satisfaction of serving others. Salary \$44k-47k DOE, full benefit package. Send cover letter, resume/request job description to Emily: hr@lapuente.net, 719 589-5909, ext238. www.lapuente.net(4/3/24)

BOE OF CENTER SCHOOLS is now accepting applications for an ASSISTANT DIRECTOR TO SUPERINTENDENT. Qualifications: Advanced Degree, Administrative License, or such alternative to the above qualifications as the Board of Education may find appropriate and acceptable. This position will assist the Superintendent in the professional organization and administration of the School District. Salary commensurate with experience. For information and application materials please visit the District Website <https://www.center.k12.co.us/page/employmentopportunities> or contact the District Office at (719) 754-3442. Application Deadline: April 1, 2024. EOE. (3/30/24)

ELEMENTARY BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONIST / SCHOOL ASSESSMENT COORDINATOR / RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION COORDINATOR needed at DEL NORTE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL for the 2024-2025 school year. We are seeking a hardworking and enthusiastic teaching professional to join our dynamic, vibrant and fun-loving team. Applicants must have a Colorado Teaching License. Please submit your application, resume and cover letter to: Amy Duda, Principal at aduda@urtigers.co or contact Amy at 719-657-4050. Applications can be picked up at the District Office or online at: urtigers.co. (3/26/24)

INSTRUCTIONAL COACH NEEDED AT DEL NORTE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. Candidate should be proficient in all areas of teaching and learning, with an emphasis on professional practice and the teaching and learning cycle. The coach will be responsible for consulting with and supporting the instructional teaching staff in using resources that impact student learning. The coach will provide support and professional learning to instructional staff as needed. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree or higher and possess or be able to obtain a Colorado Teaching License. Please submit your application, resume, and cover letter to Amy Duda, Principal at aduda@urtigers.co. Applications can be picked up at the District Office or online at: urtigers.co. (3/26/24)

SOLD MY WHEELCHAIR IN 2 DAYS. WONDERFUL, HEARTWARMING EXPERIENCE. A WIN-WIN FOR BOTH OF US! Yolanda. (AS)

221 - HELP WANTED

MACKEY CONSTRUCTION CO., LLC is looking for a WELDER/FABRICATOR with MIG experience and some field stick welding. Salary will be based on skill and experience. Please call 719-852-3222. (4/3/24)

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. (3/26/24)

SEED SORTERS WANTED: will last two weeks. Job will start soon. Please text or call 719-850-2137. (3/26/24)

LABORERS AND SORTERS needed for POTATO WAREHOUSE in CENTER. Experience not necessary, willing to train. 40+ hours/week. Stop by MOUNTAIN KING SPUD GROWERS, 1090 South Miles Street, Center, CO 81125 to fill out an application. (3/22/24)

304 - LAWN & GARDEN

SPRINKLER REPAIR & INSTALLATION. Quick Service! Call evenings & weekends: 719-580-0033 or 719-376-2593. (5/24/24-monthly)

307 - APPLIANCES

PAT SOLD HER ELECTRIC STOVE IN JUST 3 DAYS THROUGH THE VALLEY COURIER'S CLASSIFIED ADS. (AS)

314 - CLOTHING

FOR SALE: CHEROKEE BOOTS size 12 MEN. Like new - \$50. Call 719-256-4058 or 719-429-9900. (2/17/24)

324 - SEED & FEED

HORSE & COW HAY: GRASS, GRASS/ALFALFA, ALFALFA. 3x3 bales, various quality and pricing. 719-850-8917. (4/24/24AS-monthly)

345 - WOOD

THANK YOU, VALLEY COURIER. I SOLD MY WOOD SPLITTER! Frank.

353 - FARM & LIVESTOCK

I SOLD MY HORSE IN 2 DAYS TO A GOOD HOME. THANKS VALLEY COURIER! Rick. (AS)

REGISTERED BLACK ANGUS BULLS for sale. Low pap scores, calving ease and groove, oldest Angus herd in Colorado. Smalley's Angus. 719-588-4665 or 719-378-2459. (4/19/24)

ATTENTION FARMERS & RANCHERS. Show special. Seal leaking stock tanks, ponds, or reservoirs with BENTONITE. 719-580-6652. (5/24/24)

360 - MISC. FOR SALE

SOLD MY WHEELCHAIR IN 2 DAYS. WONDERFUL, HEARTWARMING EXPERIENCE. A WIN-WIN FOR BOTH OF US! Yolanda. (AS)

368 - PETS & SUPPLIES

FOR SALE ROTTWEILER/MASTIFF PUPPIES, adorable, will have soft hair, current shots given. \$400 each. Please call or text 719-588-7644 for info or pictures. Ready now. (3/26/24)

387 - WANTED TO BUY

TOYOTA TRUCKS ONLY: 4x4 from 80's to early 90's, running or not, wrecked ok. 719-580-8101 call or text. (3/27/24)

401 - BUSINESS PROPERTIES

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www.alamosarentals.com

415 - HOMES FORSALE

3 BEDROOM, 2 BATH, 1900 sq.ft., family room, living room, all appliances, pellet stove, patio between home / garage, 3 car garage, with chicken coop or shed, 6 acres plus fenced, and fenced yard, 15 minutes from ALAMOSA. \$325,000. 719-480-1856. (3/27/24)

420 - LOTS & ACREAGES

5 ACRES FOR sale - \$7,000. Contact Rick 928-277-6140. (4/6/24)

426 - MOBILE HOMES FORSALE

FOR SALE IN ALAMOSA County: 1980 GLENWOOD TRAILER HOUSE \$6,700. Must be moved. 402-269-7172. (E-TFN-AS)

525 - GUNS

ZACH'S EUROPEAN MOUNTS. Professional work, low prices. 719-580-0398. (TFN-AS)

601 - APARTMENTS FOR RENT

EAST ALAMOSA: SINGLE STUDIO, \$615/monthly, \$700/ deposit, utilities included, no smoking, lease, references. 719-580-3710. (3/30/24)

Accepting applications for 1 bedroom apartments. Must be 62 or older or disabled

Cielo Vista Apartments

166 S. Wills
Center, Colo
754-3664

TTY
1-800-659-2656
This institution is an equal opportunity provider & employer

Accepting Applications for 2 & 3 bedroom family units

Valley Grande Apts.

2256 E. Drive
Monte Vista, CO

852-4302

TTY
1-800-659-2656
This institution is an equal opportunity provider & employer

Accepting Applications for waiting list for 2 & 3 bedroom apartments. Family units available

West View Villas

510 Dunham
Monte Vista, Colo
852-3949

TTY
1-800-659-2656
This institution is an equal opportunity provider & employer

Accepting applications for 2 & 3 bedroom apartments. Rent based on income for qualifying households.

Gomez Manor Apts.

804 State St.
Antonito, Colo.

376-2388

TTY
1-800-659-2656
This institution is an equal opportunity provider & employer

601 - APARTMENTS FOR RENT

Accepting applications for 2 bedroom apartments.

Family living at an affordable price.
Guadalupe Hacienda Apts.
404 W. 8th
Antonito, Colo.
376-2025
TTY

1-800-659-2656
This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer

Accepting applications for 2 & 3 bedroom apartments. Family living at an affordable price. Disabled Unit Available.

Casita del Sol
1405 West 11th St.
Alamosa, Colo.
589-8663
TTY

1-800-659-2656
This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

606 - BUSINESS PROPERTY FOR RENT

RENT COMMERCIAL SPACE SETUP FOR HAIR SALON
888-641-3750 / 719-232-3388. (4/9/24)

611 - HOMES FOR RENT

KUDDOS TO THE VALLEY COURIER FOR RENTING OUR HOUSE IN 2 DAYS! Thanks, Gerry. (AS)

RENT 3 BEDROOM BUNGALOW ALAMOSA 888-641-3750 / 719-232-3388. (4/9/24)

701 - AUTOS FOR SALE

1 DAY ADVERTISED IN THE VALLEY COURIER, SOLD MY CAR! GREAT SERVICE! Samuel. (AS)

2017 CHEVY TRAVELER SUV: 96,000 miles, new tires, good condition. \$12,000 OBO. 1-832-683-3533. (3/30/24)

715 - 4X4 VEHICLES

2017 POLARIS RZR XP 1000 EPS, top of the line model 2 seater. 110 Horsepower, 14" HD tires with bead lock rims, power steering, full skid plates, winch with 6 1/2' adjustable snow plow blade. Comes with lots of extras and has only 61 ACTUAL MILES. It is LIKE BRAND NEW! Call or text 719-850-2775. (3/27/24)

742 - TRUCKS & TRAILERS

2019 ALUMA 14 1/2' single axle ALUMINUM TRAILER, wood floor, 4' flip up ramp, spare tire and toolbox. The trailer is LIKE NEW with only 90 ACTUAL MILES. Call or text 719-850-2775. (3/27/24)



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Comics

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

NEA Crossword Puzzle

- ACROSS**
- 1 Rum-soaked cake
 - 5 Collections
 - 9 Outdo
 - 12 Unknown auth.
 - 13 Horse's gait
 - 14 Card up a sleeve
 - 15 Comic book writer — Lee
 - 16 Prince in opera
 - 17 D.C. bigwig
 - 18 Shiny cloth
 - 20 Scottish pattern
 - 22 Yin and —
 - 23 Itty-bitty
 - 24 Burn
 - 26 Seize
 - 28 Golfer's goal
 - 29 "— Like It Hot"
 - 31 Play parts
 - 35 Between a rock — — hard place
 - 37 Neck part
 - 39 Chest wood
- DOWN**
- 1 Food fish
 - 2 Wall pier
 - 3 Where watercraft are built
 - 4 Temper, as metal
 - 5 Police trap
 - 6 Work unit
 - 7 Drinking spree

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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

- 8 Rock layers
- 9 Liking
- 10 Vast expanse
- 11 Coin for a loafer
- 19 Stops
- 21 Singer — McEntire
- 24 Health resort
- 25 "— you believe it?"
- 26 Agent (hyph.)
- 27 Salesperson, for short
- 30 Yoko —
- 32 Go on
- 33 Schoolyard game
- 34 Proverbial limit
- 36 "Pronto!"
- 38 Actress — Falco
- 41 Salem's state
- 43 Sudden crowding
- 44 Theater drop
- 45 Chicago hub
- 46 Cake tier
- 47 Enough
- 49 Etna's output
- 51 Scarlett's home
- 52 Took legal action
- 55 Uncle —

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12									14	
15									17	
18				19			20		21	
		22							23	
24	25					26	27			
28				29	30				31	32
35				36		37			38	39
				40	41				42	43
44	45	46					47			
48					49					51
53					54		55			56
57					58					59
60					61					62

ALLEY OOP

Panel 1: I CAN'T BELIEVE MY SUBJECTS TURNED ON ME SO QUICKLY. WHAT A BUNCH OF JERKS.

Panel 2: I WROTE A BOOK, BECAME FAMOUS, AND NOW I'M THEIR KING.

Panel 3: AND SURE, MAYBE I COULD TREAT THEM BETTER AND BE NICER TO THEM. BUT HOW FUN WOULD THAT BE?

Panel 4: DO YOU THINK IT WOULD BE MORE FUN THAN GETTING FORCEFULLY DEPOSED BY AN ANGRY MOB? BECAUSE ONE'S HEADING THIS WAY RIGHT NOW.

ARLO & JANIS

Panel 1: I KEEP LOOKING AT HOUSING PRICES NEAR THE KIDS!

Panel 2: IT'S PRETTY GRIM!

Panel 3: WE EXPECTED THAT!

Panel 4: IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE OUR HOME IN A LEAGUE WITH THESE!

Panel 5: NO HURRICANES OR RISING SEA LEVELS! HOW CAN WE EXPECT TO COMPETE?

BIG NATE

Panel 1: HI, DAPHNE.

Panel 2: OH! UM... HI, NATE.

Panel 3: I NEED TO TALK TO YOU.

Panel 4: I NEED TO TALK TO YOU, TOO.

Panel 5: I... UH... HAVE SOMETHING ON MY MIND.

Panel 6: SO DO I.

Panel 7: YOU GO FIRST.

THE BORN LOSER

Panel 1: LOOKS LIKE A FROZEN PIZZA FOR DINNER TONIGHT.

Panel 2: BE CAUTIOUS WITH FROZEN MEALS, UNCLE TED, MANY OF THEM ARE LOADED WITH PRESERVATIVES!

Panel 3: AT MY AGE, I'LL TAKE ALL THE PRESERVING I CAN GET!

FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE

Panel 1: THE KIDS HAVE REALLY BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU, CARRIE!

Panel 2: GUESS WHAT! YOU GET TO SLEEP IN MICHAEL'S ROOM!!

Panel 3: HE'S GONNA SLEEP DOWNSTAIRS! WE GOT A NEW PUPPY, AN' HIS NAME IS EDGAR, AN' WE MADE COOKIES AT SCHOOL, AN' I GOT A CUT ON MY KNEE—DO YOU WANNA SEE IT?!!

Panel 4: LIVABEFF GOT A BOYFRIEND! IT'S MY BIRTHDAY SOON! I KNOW MY AFFABET! A, B, C, D...

Panel 5: APRIL, GRANDMA JUST GOT HERE. DON'T WEAR HER OUT ALL AT ONCE!

Panel 6: ...YOU'VE GOT TWO WHOLE WEEKS TO DO IT IN!!

FRANK & ERNEST

Panel 1: HE'S TRYING TO QUALIFY FOR THE FREQUENT FLOWER PROGRAM.

Panel 2: (A bee buzzes around flowers)

GARFIELD

Panel 1: WELCOME TO "EATING HEALTHY WITH ORGANIC GARY!"

Panel 2: TODAY WE'RE HAVING WHEAT GERM, KALE AND ALMOND MILK

Panel 3: PEPPERONI PIZZA DELIVERY, SIRI!

Panel 4: BUSTED!

THE GRIZZWELLS

Panel 1: HOW'D IT GO AT THE BANK?

Panel 2: LET'S JUST SAY...

Panel 3: ...THAT I'M UP THE CASH FLOW WITHOUT A PADDLE

PEANUTS

Panel 1: OKAY, AUSTIN... THIS IS THE PITCHER'S MOUND...

Panel 2: THIS IS WHERE YOU'LL STAND WHEN YOU PITCH THE BALL TO THE BATTERS

Panel 3: (Charlie Brown stands on the mound)

Panel 4: HOW DO I GET DOWN?

Best friend bitter that fall football ritual has changed

DEAR ABBY: My best friend since the 9th grade and I have always watched NFL football on Sundays. We have watched through the births of my children (he is the godfather to both; they are now adults), deaths in the family -- everything. He has never married or had a significant other. He is very family-oriented, though. He has two sisters and two brothers.

Two years ago, his siblings moved to other states. It was a very sad time for him. The bond I thought would never be broken now has been. I completely understand his visiting them during Thanksgiving, Christmas and any special event, but my view is, besides those visits, he could see them at any time during the entire six-month offseason from football.

When I said this, he told me things have changed, and although he has been back both summers, he tells me it's cooler and more pleasant to visit them in autumn. Of course, I am the one who drives him to the airport every time. I truly miss my best friend on those Sundays. I'm hurt and would like your advice on what I can do.

— LONELY SPORTS FAN OUT WEST

DEAR SPORTS FAN: I understand your sadness

and hurt feelings, but it's time to start accepting reality. Your friend has explained that his family circumstances have changed, and you must accept it. The changes in his circumstances have nothing to do with you and everything to do with his desire to stay connected to his siblings.

It's time to become proactive. Your next step should be to find ANOTHER sports fan who can watch (or attend) these sporting events with you, which will help to fill the void that now exists on football Sundays.

DEAR ABBY: My friends of 20-plus years bought their "dream home," and they're now 90 miles away. They have not cleaned the place even once since they moved in. Ten years ago, I lived with the wife and her parents for six months. I quickly realized that she and her family never cleaned their home.

I understand she had an injury from an accident several years ago, but I have chronic pain from arthritis and still find a way to clean my apartment. Her husband was enabled by his mother for the first 35 years of his life, so he never learned to do anything except pay bills and save money.

The moment you walk into their home, you are hit



ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

with a smell. And forget using the bathroom -- the toilets have brown rings, and their shower is so cruddy I wait to return home to shower. I can hardly eat there because of the smell and the dirty tables and kitchen. Would it be awkward to send them a gift card for house cleaning? Also, how do I decline an overnighter? -- METICULOUS HOUSEGUEST

DEAR HOUSEGUEST: Why this couple hasn't thought of hiring a cleaning service is anybody's guess -- unless the husband is so intent on saving money that he's too cheap to spend it. By all means, send them the certificate, and after you do, postpone any return visits until you know it has been used.

HERMAN

Panel 1: "I told you it wouldn't float!"

SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

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

PREVIOUS SOLUTION

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

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

Lifestyle

Six Easter egg coloring tips

(METRO)—Coloring Easter eggs is a time-honored tradition dating back more than 2,500 years. There is evidence that people living in the ancient settlement of Trypillia dyed eggs. Ancient Persians also were believed to paint eggs for Nowruz (Persian New Year).

Christians adopted similar traditions to symbolize aspects of the Easter story. Originally Christians dyed eggs red to represent the blood of Jesus Christ that was shed on the cross, according to Chase Oaks

Church. Good Housekeeping reports early Christian missionaries adapted the dying tradition to include more egg colors to represent different aspects of the Easter story. Yellow represented the resurrection, blue represented love and red remained a symbol of Christ's blood.

Whether families dye eggs to symbolize the Easter miracle or simply for fun, the following are some coloring tips to enhance the process.

1. Prevent cracked eggs.

Most colored eggs are hard-boiled. To prevent cracking during the boiling process, add a teaspoon of vinegar and a tablespoon of salt to the boiling water. Additional anti-cracking measures include rubbing half a lemon on each shell before boiling.

2. Boil eggs and cool completely. It takes roughly 10 minutes to hard-boil an egg. Fill a pot with enough water to submerge the eggs, then bring it to a boil over medium-high heat. Gently lower the eggs into the water with

a slotted spoon. Cover, reduce the heat to a simmer, and cook for 10 minutes. Drain the eggs and cool in a bowl of water or run under cold tap water.

3. Don't forget the vinegar. Whether you use colored dye tablets or drops of food coloring from the pantry, use a mix of water and vinegar in the coloring solution. According to Education.com, food coloring is an acid dye and bonds using hydrogen. This chemical process only works in an acidic environment. Vinegar is added to water to make it more acidic and help the dyes adhere more strongly to the eggs and produce brighter colors.

4. Stick to white eggs. Stores sell both brown and white eggs. The species of chicken determines whether the eggs will be white or brown. When coloring eggs, it might be better to



METRO photo

Coloring eggs is a popular Easter tradition, and there are many ways to ensure this beloved activity produces beautiful results.

purchase white eggs, as the dyes will show up more vividly on the white shells.

5. Create distinctive designs. By covering portions of the bare eggs before dipping into color, people can create unique designs. Things like masking tape, rubber bands, wax (or crayons), and even twine can be used. The dye will only

take on the uncovered areas, leaving white behind.

6. Dyes are not the only way to color eggs. Everything from watercolor paint to acrylics to decoupage can be used to cover eggs in vivid colors. Egg decorators also can use colored yarns, fabric or stickers. Search for creative materials to set Easter eggs apart this year.

What buyers can do to get the best mortgage rate

(METRO) — Mortgage interest rates have been headlining financial news segments for several years running. Much of that news has been met with less than open arms, as rates have risen dramatically in recent years, an increase that is related to the ripple effect of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mortgage interest rates did not immediately spike after the World Health Organization declared a global pandemic in March 2020. In fact, data from the lender Freddie Mac indicates mortgage rates were still well below 4 percent on Jan. 1, 2022. However, those rates hovered around 7 percent by the end of that year and were still around that level at the start of 2024.

With such high interest rates, it's understandable if prospective home buyers feel helpless. However, there's much buyers can do to help themselves as they seek to secure the lowest mortgage interest rate possible.

• Read your credit report and improve your score, if necessary. Many prospective home buyers save up for years in anticipation of the day when they will purchase their own home.

During this period, buyers can read their credit reports and address any discrepancies while taking steps to improve their credit scores. Lenders consider many variables to determine an applicant's credit worthiness, and credit history and scores bear significant influence. The higher an applicant's credit score, the more favorable mortgage rate he or she is likely to get.

• Take control of your debt-to-income ratio. Debt-to-income (DTI) ratio refers to what you owe in relation to how much you earn. The lower your DTI, the better you look to lenders. According to Bankrate, lenders typically want to avoid issuing mortgages to individuals if the monthly payment will exceed 28 percent of their gross monthly income, and people who may be near that threshold for a given home may be denied a mortgage if their DTI is high. Prospective home buyers currently carrying significant debt, including consumer debt like credit cards and/or student loan debts, should make a concerted effort to pay down that debt prior to applying for a mortgage. Prioritize paying off consumer debt

before applying for a mortgage.

• Maintain a strong employment record. Steady employment and consistent earnings make mortgage applicants more attractive in the eyes of lenders. If you are currently shopping for a home or about to make the best time to switch jobs. Self-employed individuals and freelancers working multiple jobs can still qualify for a good mortgage rate, but they may need to provide more extensive documentation that indicates their earnings going back several years. Individuals who have been working full-time for the same company for years may only need to provide W-2 forms from the two most recent tax years.

• Shop around for rates. Rates may not fluctuate much between lenders, but it's still worth shopping around for mortgage rates. A study from Freddie Mac found that the benefits of shopping around for a mortgage rate were especially notable in 2022 compared to the decade prior, saving borrowers who took the time to shop for rates substantial sums of money.

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