



HIPPY holds graduation ceremony

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King inducted into NHSACA Hall of Fame

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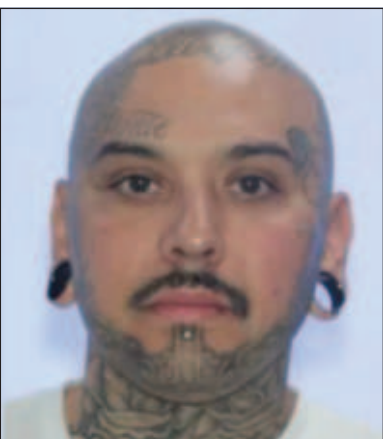
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LOCAL NEWS... LOCAL VIEWS

June 28, 2024

\$1

Bond for Henry Corral set at \$5M



Henry Corral, 44, is being held on \$5 million bond in the Alamosa County Detention Center for allegedly fatally shooting one man and critically injuring two others.

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER
Courier Reporter

ALAMOSA — After allegedly shooting three men, one of whom died, and leading multiple law enforcement agencies on a 14-hour manhunt, Alamosa resident Henry Corral is being held in the Alamosa County Detention Center on a \$5 million bond to be paid in cash only.

Bond was set by Alamosa County Judge Jason Kelly, presiding, when Corral, 44, appeared in court Wednesday afternoon related to his arrest for one count of murder in the

first degree and two counts of criminal attempted murder in the first degree plus aggravated robbery, tampering with evidence and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon.

District Attorney Anne Kelly addressed the court, stating that Corral had “executed one man and tried to execute two others”, was going to be charged as a “habitual criminal” and poses “an extreme danger to the community.”

She then provided the court with a summary of Corral’s criminal history. Corral has been charged with murder twice before - once in 2000

and a second time in 2016. In both cases, he pleaded guilty to lesser charges of manslaughter and felony menacing, respectively. After he was released from the Department of Corrections, “He tried to kill his girlfriend by strangling her,” Kelly said.

Kelly requested the court set bond at \$10 million, to be paid in cash, as a means of assuring that Corral would remain in jail and the community “would be protected.”

Defense counsel James Waldo viewed the amount as excessive, saying, “That might as well be an imaginary num-

ber.” He cited two other clients he was representing who were involved in a “shoot-out” and their bond was \$3 million with a \$300,000 cash surety.

Judge Kelly said he had reviewed Corral’s criminal history and “the charges are as serious as they can be.” He went on to say, “We want to assure the public is protected,” and set bail at \$5 million, cash.

According to an arrest affidavit received from the court, officers with the Alamosa Police Department were dispatched to the Sunset Inn,

■ See BOND page 3

SLV Today

Boys and Girls Clubs Cookout on Saturday

MOFFAT — The Boys and Girls Clubs of the San Luis Valley will host a cookout at the KV Clubhouse in Moffat on Saturday, June 29, from noon to 1:30 p.m.

There will be food, yard games, fishing and a family resource fair.

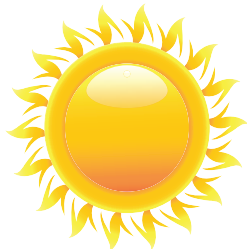
The KV Clubhouse is at 26415 Woodward Ave. in Moffat.

Alamosa Farmers’ Market to resume on July 6

ALAMOSA — The Alamosa Farmers’ Market welcomes locals and visitors to downtown Alamosa, on Saturdays at the corner of Ross Avenue and 6th Street (Highway 160) for its opening day of July 6.

Vendors will sell regional farm fresh food products, various foodstuffs, and handcrafted goods this season. Live music will be back. Free kids activities will be going on from 10 a.m. until noon, or as long as supplies last.

SLV WEATHER



Sunny, Breezy 84/50

Sat: Chance of Afternoon Showers, Breezy 87/54

Sun: Slight Chance of Morning Showers, Breezy 81/55

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K-5 summer school program wraps up



Courier photo by Priscilla Waggoner

The Alamosa K-5 summer school program wrapped up Wednesday night with a community celebration of food and beverage provided by Linda Jalisco restaurant and entertainment by some of the summer school students who danced for their families and friends. According to Alfonso Castillo, Alamosa Elementary School K5 summer school principal, about 95 students attended summer school where they focused on core subjects plus other learning activities. Recommendation from the student’s teacher was a requirement to be enrolled. Wednesday night also marked the end of the time that visiting teacher, Selene Paque Diaz, an elementary school teacher from Tabasco, Mexico, was in Alamosa. A second teacher, Thalia Juarez from San Luis Potosi, also participated in the binational teacher exchange program but was sick and unable to attend Wednesday night’s festivities.

McCracken wins Saguache County Commissioner primary

By JOHN WATERS
Courier News Editor

SAGUACHE COUNTY — Tom McCracken, incumbent Saguache County Commissioner District 1 fended off challenger Adam Kinney with 503 votes to 373 votes. Turnout was 33.86% of active votes. McCracken and Republican challenger Marcus Weir will be on the November general

ballot. McCracken told the Valley Courier, “I wish to thank all the dedicated supporters who worked so hard at their own time and expense to facilitate my primary win. I am humbled by the trust placed in me and will work hard to realize the common visions we share.”

In a February state-

ment, McCracken offered “I think it is a real waste of taxpayer money to train a commissioner for four years and not have them continue. It took me three years to learn the ropes and I’m just getting comfortable with things like the county budget. We have 1,600+ lines on our spreadsheet for the budget. It is really complicated, and it takes

a while to learn these things, develop relationships, and work with all the employees. There are

■ See PRIMARY page 3
Saguache County Commissioner Tom McCracken won the Democratic Party primary race and will face-off against Republican Marcus Weir in the November General Election.



Courtesy photo

Hope in the Valley brings addiction treatment services to the region

By JOHN WATERS
Courier News Editor

ALAMOSA — Valerie Gurule-Duran, Clinical Director from the Hope in the Valley recovery center in Alamosa briefed county commissioners on June 26 regarding progress the addiction treatment facility has made recently.

Gurule-Duran told the commissioners, “We are a community-led program, we currently offer a detox that is a social, medical withdrawal detox. We don’t carry narcotics onboard, but we have nurses on staff 24-7. Our doctors can call in and

prescribe [meds] we are trying to get patients medications like Suboxone [opioid dependence treatment medication] we can definitely do that.

“We also have a partial hospitalization program, that is five hours a day, five days a week where they participate in groups. We are using a curriculum out of a company based in Los Angeles that is evidence-based and it covers many aspects [of recovery.] We also have outpatient treatment, which is three hours a day, three days a week.

“Our goal is we are trying

■ See HOPE page 3



File photo

Hope in the Valley recovery center has been open in Alamosa since May 22.

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Record



Photos by Lyndsie Ferrell

Rio Grande Hospital CEO Arlene Harms cuts the ribbon at the ceremony for the grand opening of the hospital's Wellness Center on Saturday, June 22.



Rio Grande Hospital welcomed over 200 people Saturday, June 22, to its grand opening and ribbon cutting event for its new Wellness Center in Del Norte.

RGH opens doors to wellness

By **LYNDSIE FERRELL**

DEL NORTE — Rio Grande Hospital rolled out the red carpet on Saturday and welcomed more than 200 people to its new Wellness Center in Del Norte. The project has been in the works since 2017 and was near and dear to many who work at and support the hospital.

Arlene had hearing about but really there was such a big community that came together to make this a reality. Rio Grande Hospital is a community hospital and the whole reason this hospital exists is to give back to the community," said Brown.

past 100 years old. Harms was the next to speak, stating that her vision for the Wellness Center began during a conference in 2016 when keynote speakers addressed the commonalities of Blue Zones.

The vision of the Wellness Center was to model health and wellness and offer another resource in the region that serves the community as a means of preventative health care.

"Blue Zones are rural, they have lots of community, they have a background and family is very important. I thought to myself, the Valley would be really an easy place to have something like that," said Harms.

Off was the next to speak. He focused on how the project came to be.

Harms said that through her passion and perseverance, she did not work on this project alone. Funding came from the Rio Grande Hospital Board, private donations, donations from local organizations like the Outcalt Foundation, the LOR Foundations, local banks like the Del Norte Bank and RG Bank and several other organizations and businesses.

"I want to follow up with a little bit about Arlene's piece in this. She has been a driving force with this even when there was some resistance from the board. We could see the vision, but not as clearly as she could. She turned this into a passion and made this her goal. It is really inspiring what it has become and where we are at today," Off said.

Harms thanked all the people who worked on the project, including Owners' Representative Joe Aldrich, Phipps Construction and Keyes and Lauer Architects, and many others who pulled together to make this a reality. The ribbon cutting ceremony was followed by refreshments and tours of the property.

Harms emulated cultures where long life has become something of a norm in places termed as Blue Zones. These locations span the globe and through the concept of preventative health, wellness and community, people who live in these areas tend to live



Courtesy photos

Jim Jones and Randy Palmer will be performing on June 28 at Society Hall.

Western music doubleheader on June 28 at Society Hall

CONTRIBUTED ALAMOSA—Society Hall is excited to host an evening of original western music with Jim Jones and Randy Palmer in concert at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, June 28.

the coming of the train – songs about people and land, rivers and mountains, the beauty of the Western sky.

things on our lives, and to cultivate the awareness and appreciation of the many gifts we find along the way.

Doors will open at 6:30. Tickets are \$20 and are available at the Green Spot, 711 State Ave., Alamosa, or online at www.societyhall.org. The concert will also stream live on the Society Hall Facebook page and You-Tube channel.

Jones has produced twelve Western/Folk albums and is currently celebrating his newest release - "Storyteller: Tales From the West", as well as five Western novels, a novella and a Children's Book in the Western genre. His Western novels include the Jared Delaney series, "Rustler's Moon," "Colorado Moon" and "Waning Moon," and the spin-off series including "The Big Empty" (2016) and "The Lights of Cimarron" (2019), published by both Five Star Publishing and Speaking Volumes Press.

Palmer is celebrating the release of his new CD "Waterline" produced by the legendary Merel Bregante of Austin, Texas, and will be featuring songs from his new release as well as songs from previous recordings.

Jones is a Western/Folk Singer/Songwriter, an author and a native Texan who lives in New Mexico. He's won just about every award out there for both his western music and his writing! He was the International Western Music Association's 2014 Male Performer of the Year and winner of that organization's 2019 Song of the Year, along with the Academy of Western Artists 2016 Western Song of the Year and the Western Writers of America 2013, 2017 and 2021 Spur Awards for Best Western Song. His songs and books are about the West – cowboys, horses and cattle, cattle rustlers,

Jones is also a member of the western trio "The Cowboy Way", which was awarded "Traditional Group of the Year" from the International Western Music Association in 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2021.

Palmer is a cross between a painter and a poet. And not fine art but scraping, sanding, priming, make it like new, painter. The son of a paint contractor, he has a desire to make things beautiful. You read it in his lyrics and you hear it in his voice as he brings his songs to life. Songs from down deep in the bucket, with clean lines, brushed to bring living into a sweeter better focus. Every song is a reflective rendition of life at its most basic core. No apologies for songs close to the heart. He celebrates frailties, friendships, and family. Join him for an adventure. A deep dive into the interesting and intoxicating twists and turns of the joy of life.

Palmer comes from the high plains of Amarillo, Texas. He sings songs of life lived to its fullest, and of the beauty of the everyday and the commonplace. He helps us all to celebrate the good

BIRTH

Teo Cuauhtemoc Herrera

Teo Cuauhtemoc Herrera was born June 15, 2024, to parents Melva Herrera and Julio Herrera both of Alamosa. He weighed 8 pounds and 15 ounces and was 21 inches long.

Maternal grandparents are Francisco Espinosa of Lake Forest, Calif., and Rosa Solis of Alamosa. Paternal grandparents are Peggy Herrera of Alamosa and the late Wally

Herrera. Great-grandparents are Valentin Solis, Maria Luna, Melba Presuel, Armando Espinosa, Bernardino Herrera, Olivia Herrera, Genevieve Vigil and Mariano Vigil

PENDING OBITUARY

Lillian Maes

Ft. Garland resident Lillian Maes, 92, was called home June 26, 2024. Arrangements are pending and will be announced through Romero Funeral Home of Alamosa.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS MEETINGS

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

ules for friends and family. For information, call 719-937-5083 or see our website:slvaa.org

719-937-5083 or see our website:slvaa.org



People enjoyed tours of the new Rio Grande Hospital Wellness Center on Saturday, June 22, in Del Norte, refreshments provided by the hospital and a grand opening ceremony with keynote speakers, Rio Grande Hospital CEO Arlene Harms, Rio Grande Hospital Board President Tyler Off, left, and Vice President and Secretary Emily Brown, right.

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

There are AA and NA 12-Step Meetings throughout the valley. The 6th Tradition states that we are not affiliated with any outside organizations, but in the spirit of cooperation, we list these meeting sched-

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School Menu Friday June 28, 2024 BREAKFAST Mini Cinnis Fruit & Milk ELEMENTARY Ham & Cheese Sandwich Carrot Sticks Fruit & Milk MIDDLE SCHOOL Ham & Cheese Sandwich Carrot Sticks Fruit & Milk HIGH SCHOOL Ham & Cheese Sandwich Carrot Sticks Fruit & Milk Breakfast & Lunch Free for all students Alamosa School District To sponsor the School Menu call 589-2553

Valley News

Adams State mourn loss of graduate student

By ADAMS STATE UNIVERSITY
ALAMOSA — The Adams State University campus community mourns the loss of graduate student Kayla Harris, tragically shot to death in Las Vegas, Nev., along with three others.

"I am personally devastated to learn of Kayla's tragic death," said President David Tandberg, Ph.D. "On behalf of the entire Adams State community, I express my heartfelt condolences to

her family and friends and the entire Grizzly community during this extremely difficult time. We are truly overcome with the grief."

Adams State students, faculty, staff and coaches are encouraged to contact the Counseling Center, located on the third floor of Richardson Hall, for assistance during this difficult time. Counseling staff will be in the office Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. or can be reached at 719-587-7746 or coun-

seling@adams.edu. The Colorado Crisis Services is available 24/7 at 844-493-8255 or text "TALK" to 38255.

Harris completed her bachelor's degree in the fall of 2023 and was working on her master's in business administration. The campus community rallied around Kayla Harris and the entire women's basketball team this spring as they made their way to the DII National Championship Tournament.

"Darin and I are so

proud of all she accomplished at Adams State," President Tandberg added. "We were privileged to watch Kayla excel on and off the court. It feels nearly impossible to understand and cope with losing a young woman so early in her promising life."

As confirmed by her family, Harris was the victim of a shooting in her hometown of Las Vegas, Nev., on Monday, June 24, that left her and four others dead and another seriously injured.



Photo courtesy of Adams State University
Kayla Harris, Adams State graduate student and athlete killed in Las Vegas shooting.

U.S. House Democrats push for federal gun reform following surgeon general advisory

By LIA CHIEN
Colorado Newsline
WASHINGTON — Democratic U.S. House members pushed for legislative action to address gun violence Wednesday, the day after U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy declared the issue a public health crisis.

Murthy released a 40-page advisory Tuesday. It called gun violence the leading cause of death for children and adolescents, causing just over 4,600 deaths in 2022. More than 48,000 Americans died from gun violence in 2022, an increase of 16,000 from 2010, according to the report.

The report counted mass shootings, suicides by firearm and firearm injuries. According to the advisory, 79% of U.S. adults experience stress from the possibility of a mass shooting and youth are over 20% more likely to use antidepressants following exposure to fatal school shootings.

The advisory came after a weekend of mass shootings in Alabama, Ohio, and Arkansas.

Rep. Maxwell Frost, a

Democrat from Florida, hosted a press conference to applaud the surgeon general and urged his House colleagues to pursue more gun reforms.

"This declaration is a significant step forward in the fight to protect our communities and our children because it's a holistic thing," he said. "It looks at ending gun violence in many different ways."

Frost, the youngest member of Congress and former March for Our Lives national organizing director, listed ideas to address gun violence in the advisory.

That list included regulations to keep guns out of "the wrong hands" through measures such as universal background checks.

The government could also support community violence intervention, such as programs in high-risk communities designed to deter gun violence and help those affected.

Finally, and "one of the most important," said Frost, is "creating a society where people don't feel the need to use guns to solve their

problems in the first place."

Rep. Barbara Lee, a Democrat from California, urged her congressional colleagues to use the "renewed sense of urgency" created by the report to require universal background checks and safe storage of firearms.

"Just basics," she said. Frost and Lee were joined by Dr. Joseph Sakran, an anti-gun activist and trauma surgeon and associate director of emergency general surgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, a city plagued by gun violence.

He called the advisory "a historic step" that will "empower policymakers and push them to develop programs and policies that will impact not just cities but the entire country."

He also referenced upcoming elections that he said would determine what gun reform measures could pass.

Red flag bill

In a separate press conference Wednesday, Democratic Reps. Mike Thompson and Salud Carbajal of California, Lucy McBath of Geor-

gia, Joe Neguse of Colorado and Robin Kelly of Illinois announced they would file a measure to force a floor vote on a bill McBath introduced.

The bill would allow federal courts to issue risk protection orders. It would allow police or family members to ask a court for a temporary order, preventing people at risk of harming themselves or others from possessing or purchasing firearms.

According to Everytown, a gun safety advocacy group, 21 states, including Colorado, have adopted similar laws. Research has shown they reduce firearm suicides and stop mass shootings, according to studies in Indiana, Connecticut and California.

In 2022, Congress passed and President Joe Biden signed the Bipartisan Community Safety Act. The legislation provided funding and support for states with red flag laws to ensure they are "constitutionally implemented," according to the Center for American Progress, a left-leaning think tank.

Thompson, the chair

of the House Democrats' Gun Violence Prevention Task Force, said McBath's bill would help complement the 2022 law.

"Congresswoman McBath's bill will ensure that the work that we did in that legislation and the money that we're able to secure can be better spent across all 50 states and save lives," he said.

Thompson said a discharge petition, a procedural tool to force a floor vote, is the only way to bring the bill to the House floor because House Republican leadership opposes gun control legislation.

Republican opposition

Speaker Mike Johnson, a Republican from Louisiana, has not been in favor of gun control legislation and told Fox News last year he doesn't see gun laws as being effective.

McBath told reporters Wednesday she hopes rank-and-file Republicans buck their party leaders on the bill. She said that in private conversations, many Republicans have agreed with her that Congress should pass gun reform.

"I think they're just afraid to stand on the

other side of their Republican colleagues," McBath said. "But I think deep down they know that they have constituents that are dying unnecessarily."

Assistant Democratic Leader Joe Neguse echoed McBath's concerns over Republican inaction and urged Republican colleagues to support McBath's bill.

"Talk is cheap," Neguse said. "There's an opportunity for so-called moderate Republicans in the House Republican Conference to prove that they support these red flag laws. They can do so by simply walking onto the floor and signing the discharge petition."

Frost, in the opposite press conference, also shared his Democratic colleagues' belief that Republicans will help pass gun reform laws. He referred to the surgeon general's advisory, and urged listeners to use the statistics to support their cause.

"If we focus on the science and the data of this, I think there are some hearts and minds we can change on the Republican side to actually get things like universal background checks passed," he said.

Primary

Continued from Page 1

also all the relationships you establish around the state. I participate in the Colorado Counties Inc.; commissioners from all around the state meet in Denver and we discuss pending legislation, and we discuss it and how it may affect counties. We are always on the lookout for unfunded mandates, and regulations imposed on us that we may or may not be able to even deal with. Jason Anderson, my predecessor was very

active in the organization, and I've tried to be very active in the organization.

"You establish these relationships with these other commissioners and many of them are not term-limited and they have influence with state senators that has been gained over time. I've established a relationship with Kate Greenberg [Colorado Commissioner of Agriculture.] I stay in touch with her via Zoom once a month. Over time you get a chance to leverage these relationships and

get some things accomplished. I feel like it is almost irresponsible for me not to run again and utilize all the tools I've been able to build."

Other SLV County Commissioner races:

In the Conejos County District 1 Democratic primary, Erwin Romero received 673 votes to the 220 votes received by Guillermo De Herrera. Republican candidate Delfino Garcia will be on the general election ballot.

Results in the Conejos County Commissioner District 3 Republican

race showed Justin Rogers received 573 votes to the 357 votes received by Lucas Larson. Rogers will face off with Democrat Joseph Baroz in the general election.

In the Costilla County Democratic District 1 primary, incumbent Robert Espinoza won with 396 votes to the 126 garnered by Frank Martinez. Republican Brandy Napier was unopposed. In County Commissioner District 3, Democrat incumbent Stephen Romero will be on the November ballot as will Republican, Augustine Esquibel.

Bond

Continued from Page 1

1310 W. 8th Ave., on a report of shots fired shortly after 2 a.m. on the morning of Sunday, June 23. Dispatch said the caller reported two men had been shot. Upon arriving, APD officers found two men in a room, one of whom had been shot in the head while sitting in a chair. The victim, later identified as Aurelio Piña, 61, died from his wounds. The second victim, 37-year-old Gabriel Piña, had been shot twice. He was identified as Aurelio's son.

The arrest affidavit states that an APD officer, attending to Gabriel Piña, asked him who shot him. Piña named Corral as the shooter.

The affidavit further states that "it's important to note that Corral's long-time girlfriend... was later located in the hotel, as well."

After allegedly shooting Gabriel and his father, Corral fled the room and encountered Manuel Flores, 43, in the hallway. Corral then allegedly shot Flores five times, including in various parts of his body and face.

APD learned that Corral reportedly ran out of the building and, driving a Chevrolet Avalanche, fled west on 8th Street into a more rural part of the area, driving so fast that, according to the document, he "flew over two irrigation ditches" and landed, getting stuck in a field near County Road 106 and CR12 South.

When a resident nearby attempted to help, Corral tried to hijack the resident's truck and, when he was unsuccessful, set the Avalanche on fire and fled on foot.

Authorities believe Corral did that to destroy evidence, specifically a cell phone and weapon, Kelly said.

When Alamosa Fire Department and Colorado State Patrol were dispatched to a crash in the area, they determined the vehicle belonged to Corral, leading law enforcement to believe he was still in the area. That initiated an intensive search that involved more than 40 officers as well as CBI and the U.S. Marshals.

After a report from a citizen who spotted someone matching Corral's description, he was

taken into custody at about 6:30 p.m. Sunday night.

Although no motive for the shooting is stated in the affidavit, it is noted that Flores had recently been released from prison, and was visiting from Denver and was a childhood friend of Corral's girlfriend. The two had been spending time together.

The affidavit also states that Corral's girlfriend said they had been discussing separation or divorce.

Unrelated to the arrest affidavit, the Alamosa County Sheriff's Office has confirmed that both Corral and his girlfriend had been arrested for domestic violence on June 11.

Corral's next court appearance is scheduled for July 2 at 1:30 p.m.

Hope

Continued from Page 1

to create this continual treatment, if somebody comes in, we are trying to not let them go out on the street. We use the encouragement to ask, 'What is your goal, what needs to happen, do you have adequate housing, do you need in-patient treatment? Do you need sober living?'

"We have been open since May 22, and we have had a handful of people come into the facility and the transformation we are seeing is amazing."

Commissioner Lori Laske said, "I am glad you are looking at residential in-patient because that is the gap we have in the San Luis Valley, and we appreciate you are working toward that."

"Thank you guys, this is a resource that is needed," said Commissioner Vern Heersink.

Commissioner Arlan Van Ry said, "I can speak from experience, I've never been shy about my recovery. As a Veteran, it is extremely hard to get any kind of treatment. Luckily, I was able to do it on my own. For the other Veterans who struggle with PTSD, one of the side effects is turning to dependency on alcohol or other drugs. If there is any way I can help, and

assist with getting Veterans Affairs TRICARE, I am more than willing to help volunteer my time."

Van Ry added he just celebrated 1,500 days of sobriety and offered he is willing to talk with any Veteran who is experiencing addiction. TRICARE is the Department of Defense health care program for uniformed service members, their families, and retirees.

According to the website of the organization, "Hope in the Valley is more than a rehabilitation center; it's a haven built on empathy, understanding and the unwavering belief in the transformative power of recovery... Hope in the Valley stands tall, not just as a rehabilitation center, but as a living testament to the possibility of transformation, a testament that no matter how challenging the journey, hope can be found, and recovery is within reach."

On July 11, Hope in the Valley will hold an open house and ribbon cutting. Details will be in the Valley Courier when they are known.

Hope in the Valley can be reached at 719-206-4673 and www.hopealamosa.org. For information regarding meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous in the San Luis Valley, visit www.slva.org.

Opinion

403,356 miles and counting

This past week I helped shuttle some fishermen's rigs and one of the trucks had 403,356 miles on it. Not only was this remarkable vehicle still running, but I also honestly think it ran as good and as quietly as the day it was driven off the showroom floor.

Trout Republic

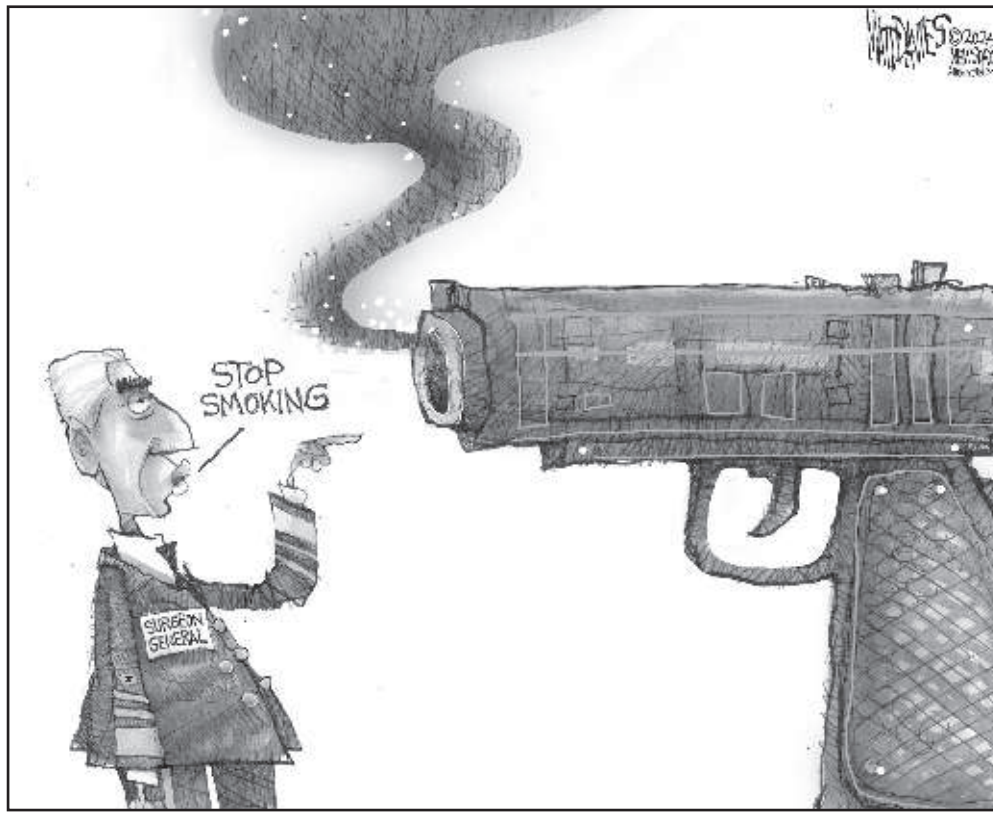


by Kevin Kirkpatrick

Miss Trixie and I have been shuttling some vehicles for a local fly shop and so Ol' Dutch has found himself getting to compare every make and model of truck and SUV out there over the past few weeks. And it's been a real eye-opening experience, let me tell you.

Ol' Dutch has long been a General Motors products purchaser as I seem to get a whale of a deal any time I trade for a new one. I have, of course, looked at other brands made in the good old USA, but always seem to come back to GM.

Very early in my driving years — shortly after the Model T went into production according to Miss Trixie — a company I worked for had all Dodge trucks. And they were the cheapest ones a person could buy at the time, so my impression of them was not that great. I think it was the daily crawling under the one I drove to plug in the transmission wire that probably soured me like a “pickle my puss” gummy bear. And I really have never liked the body style of any Ford. Like they say, “beauty is in the eye of the behold-



er” and I just don't feel like beholding a Ford.

So, I've ambled along with my Chevy and GMC trucks all these many long years and they seemed to work out just fine for me with no major hiccups. And like they say, “don't change horses in the middle of the river” so I stuck with what I knew and I “thought” I was satisfied.

That is until this past week. There I was just minding my own business, happily satisfied with my paid off Chevy truck when I was asked to drive a truck that came from far East Asia. I still recall the moment when Miss Trixie drove me up to the truck that needed to be moved downriver. Thinking back, I believe I heard angels' wings. Or something like that.

For there it sat in all its splendor and glory, a brand-new Toyota Tundra truck. I can still recall the awe I felt as I climbed up into the cab and was immediately immersed in first class appoint-

ments all around me. This was not the 1988 Toyota pickup that my son drove through high school with the cramped-up leg room, tiny cab and small engine. No-sirree-bob this was a horse of a different color for sure.

This Tundra beast drove like a new Caddy and handled extremely well. I was smitten. It reminded me of the first time I saw Miss Trixie to tell you the truth. A mind-bending experience. Or something like that.

Which leads me to the title of this expose “403,356.” That exact mileage was found on a 2005 Tundra I drove and while not the expansive cab of the newer ones, it was full size for the day and quite comfy if I might say so myself.

I could not believe my eyes when I glanced down at the odometer and there it was for all to see, almost a half million miles on that truck. And what was most amazing is it drove and ran perfectly and was as quiet as a church mouse on Sunday morning. I know,

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.”

right? Most vehicles with that age, not to mention high mileage, are starting to show the effects of potholes and there are rattles and noises galore in them. But not this little workhorse. She just ran along like a sewing machine on zig-zag.

I parked the aged truck and gave her a pat on the hood as I walked away, a slight tear appearing in my eye. Or not. I sure enjoyed that ride and couple that with the new ones I got to drive, and Ol' Dutch is wanting to trade the old Bowtie for a Yota.

I am praying that temptation stays far from me but so far, it's sitting in my hip pocket as I look online at those Japanese wonders. Say a prayer for me to resist.

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

The flood of disinformation

By STEVEN ROBERTS

In Moldova, a false video implied that a pro-Western president actually favored Russia. In Bangladesh, a conservative Muslim country, a female lawmaker was portrayed wearing a bikini. In Slovakia, a doctored audio tape made it seem that an anti-Moscow candidate wanted to double the price of beer.

No fabricated videos have surfaced -- yet -- of Joe Biden boasting a bikini bod or boosting beer prices. But this year's presidential contest is already drenched in a flood of disinformation, and the problem is likely to get much worse.

As those foreign examples illustrate, “deepfakes” pose a serious threat. These are false ideas and images created by AI, or artificial intelligence. “Artificial intelligence is supercharging the threat of election disinformation worldwide, making it easy for anyone with a smartphone and a devious imagination to create fake -- but convincing -- content aimed at fooling voters,” reports The Associated Press.

On Capitol Hill, a Senate committee has approved three bills with bipartisan backing that would try to impose some ground rules for the use of AI in campaign ads, including strict requirements for transparency.

In supporting the legislation, Senate leader Chuck Schumer warned: “AI has the potential to jaundice or even totally discredit our election systems. If deepfakes are everywhere and no one believes the results of the elections, woe is our democracy.”

Deepfakes are not the only threat to election integrity. There are also “cheap fakes”: real sounds and images that are edited to distort their true meaning.

This happened during Biden's recent trip to Europe, where the Republican National Committee pumped out carefully manipulated video clips of the president to make him look doddering, even demented.

Fact-checkers at the Washington Post have labeled the Republican propaganda “especially pernicious ... because it's intended to create a false narrative that doesn't reflect the event as it occurred.” But the GOP effort could not have succeeded without the help of right-wing media outlets, which eagerly circulated the doctored videos, and supporters of Donald Trump who shared them widely on social media.

Mainstream platforms like Facebook and Instagram talk a good game about not spreading election-related falsehoods, but they are in fact co-conspirators, cutting way back on their own teams of fact-checkers and profiting from the traffic generated by the cheap fakes.

“The persistent nature of the misleading videos illustrates how major tech platforms and partisan media are playing off each other in the 2024 election cycle, keeping viral stories in people's feeds after they've been proven to be misleading or even false,” reports NBC.

“In a familiar playbook,” the network explains, “hyperpartisan outlets will continually push a piece of misleading information on their platforms and on social media, causing motivated followers who are primed to believe the outlets to amplify it further. That inundates tech platforms, which are unwilling or unable to correct the record quickly enough. The bad information then continues to outpace efforts to

fact-check it.”

Bad information is not just generated by Republican operatives and their allies. Moscow has meddled in previous elections, trying to help Trump, and they are at it again. According to secret Kremlin documents obtained by the Washington Post: “Russia is seeking to subvert Western support for Ukraine and disrupt the domestic politics of the United States and European countries, through propaganda campaigns supporting isolationist and extremist policies.”

Some senior Republicans are deeply alarmed that those “isolationist and extremist” ideas are being parroted by members of their own party. Rep. Michael McCaul, the chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, warned on CNN, “Russian propaganda has made its way into the United States, unfortunately, and it's infected a good chunk of my party's base.”

So, what can be done to contain this tide of disinformation? There are no easy answers. Mainstream journalists have a growing responsibility to investigate and document cheap fakes and deepfakes. Social media platforms have a responsibility, as well, to place warning labels on falsehoods, even if it costs them customers. Congress should pass the bipartisan measures that would enhance transparency and help voters and election officials understand how they are being manipulated. And voters -- especially swing voters in swing states -- need to educate themselves and make their choices based on facts -- not fiction.

But the torrent shows few signs of abating. “People are constantly coming up with new ways to try (to) break the

systems,” Natasha Crampton, a Microsoft executive working on AI, told Politico. “I'm terrified,” admitted Oren Etzioni, a prominent AI researcher, in the Times. “There is a very good chance we are going to see a tsunami of misinformation.”

Steven Roberts teaches politics and journalism at George Washington University. He can be contacted by email at stevecokie@gmail.com.

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Lifestyles



Courtesy photos
HIPPY program staff poses for a photo with Rocky Mountain PBS's Daniel Tiger during a graduation ceremony on June 22 in Alamosa.

HIPPY holds graduation ceremony

By MARIE MCCOLM
ALAMOSA — On Saturday, June 22, a graduation ceremony was held for San Luis Valley children ages 3-4 who completed the HIPPY Program.

Tiny smiling tots with their colorful caps and gowns, nice outfits, and pretty dresses, lined up to march at the Alamosa Rec Center, where the ceremony was held. There were about 72 people at the ceremony. Pomp and Circumstance played as the children happily marched in behind one of the HIPPY instructors, until they all reached their seats in front of the audience at the center.

Some special guests were present at the ceremony, including the Rocky Mountain PBS Daniel Tiger, and Alamosa Mayor Ty Coleman. The room at the center was decked out with colorful balloons and tables and the HIPPY instructors wore bright orange shirts that had HIPPY and a picture of PBS Daniel Tiger on them, along with a cartoon graduate painted on the front.

HIPPY coordinator Beverly Martinez introduced and thanked everyone for attending the celebration.

"We are here to celebrate these children, and their amazing work and commitment to the HIPPY program," she said. "Each of these children have given it their all, and successfully completed our program requirements. We are so proud of these children, they will all be receiving a diploma from HIPPY today. We are truly blessed that so many children have worked hard and dedicated their time and efforts to our program. We would also like to thank all the friends of the family, and family members who have joined us today to celebrate this big accomplishment."

HIPPY stands for Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters. The duration of the program is 30 weeks. The program works by allowing instructors to come into the child's home and bring weekly curriculum for children to engage in with their parents. The program helps develop skills in different areas and specializes in fine motor, gross motor, social-emotional, science, creative arts, and literacy lessons. The program helps young children learn numbers, colors, shapes, days of the week,



HIPPY coordinator Beverly Martinez and Alamosa Mayor Ty Coleman pose for a photo during the graduation ceremony on June 22 in Alamosa. Coleman was one of the speakers at the event.

months, and provides many hands-on activities to promote growth and education in young lives all over the Valley.

With reading being a major part of the curriculum, each young student receives a new book, every three to four weeks to help promote early literacy. The HIPPY program also provides school supplies for children. The supplies are free to children for the duration that they are enrolled in the program.

After Martinez's introduction, all the HIPPY instructors joined their students in front of the audience and sang songs that included fun dance movements. Special guest Rocky Mountain PBS Daniel Tiger also joined the children and began to sing and dance with them. The instructors and Daniel sang the "Hokey Pokey," "If You're Happy and You Know It," and the "Wheels on the Bus." The children engaged with each of the songs. Coordinator Martinez danced and smiled with the students and instructors.

After the music and dancing, Martinez announced each instructor's name, and the children were then announced one by one and handed a diploma and congratulated on their accomplishments.

Mayor Coleman gave a small speech. He said that as a child he struggled with early literacy. He said he feels it is important to start education and reading as soon as possible to help children be successful.

"Early childhood education is so crucial in our community. Here are a few statistics. Children who read and engage in early childhood education are 75% more likely

to graduate high school. In early childhood education settings, children learn valuable interpersonal skills such as listening, sharing, and expressing emotion. If a student cannot read by the third grade, they are more likely to drop out of high school because of the challenges that they face."

Coleman said that he feels it is important for students to learn early, because of all the challenges that he and others have faced. He really wants children to be given every opportunity to learn so that they can have the opportunity for future success.

A light lunch was served following the ceremony. Awards were given to various home visitors to celebrate their success with the children and all they do for HIPPY.

Martinez said the celebration went well. She also gave a special thank you to everyone.

"We have been planning the graduation all year long. I am always excited and very honored to be a part of everything with HIPPY. I have amazing home visitors, each and every one of them is unique and wonderful. They really bring something different to HIPPY and to myself personally, and without them there would be no HIPPY. They are truly amazing," she said.

The HIPPY program strives to serve diverse communities and is available to children living in Saguache, Rio Grande, Alamosa, Costilla, and Conejos counties. HIPPY also provides resources in English and Spanish.

For more information or to enroll, contact HIPPY Coordinator Martinez at 719-298-1572 or Director Ruth Horn at 719-589-4977.

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Sports

King inducted into NHSACA Hall of Fame



Courtesy photo

Retiring Alamosa High School athletics director Greg King was inducted into the National High School Athletic Coaches Association Hall of Fame on Tuesday. The induction ceremony took place at the Bismarck Hotel and Conference Center in Bismarck, N.D. King has 46 years experience in sports which includes coaching stops at Walsenburg, McClave, Stratton, Del Norte, Norwood, La Veta and Sargent. He also served as athletics director at Del Norte, Grand Junction, La Veta, Sargent and Alamosa.

Sports Bulletin

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

ALAMOSA PARKS AND RECREATION BASEBALL/SOFTBALL SCHEDULE

12-14 Baseball

At Ortega Middle School south field

TUESDAY

Alamosa at Salida (2), 4 p.m.

12-14 girls softball

At Lee Field #1

TUESDAY

Sanford vs. Alamosa (2), 6 p.m.

9-11 baseball

At Cole Park

TUESDAY

Pirates vs. Cubs, 5 p.m.

Angels vs. Rockies, 6:15 p.m.

Red Sox vs. Dodgers, 7:30 p.m.

9-11 girls softball

At Lee Field #3

TUESDAY

Battitudes vs. Ace of Bases, 6 p.m.

7-8 coed machine pitch

At Sunset Field

WEDNESDAY

Longhorns vs. Predators, 5:30 p.m. (southwest)

Little Rascals vs. Thunderdogs, 5:30 p.m. (northeast)

Bat Busters vs. Sliders, 6:30 p.m. (northeast)

Co-ed Tee-ball

At Tee-ball field

MONDAY

Rug Rats vs. Little Giants, 5:30 p.m. (north field)

Outlaws vs. Sandhogs, 5:30 p.m. (south field)

Little Hitters vs. Wolfpack, 6:30 p.m. (south field)

Coed Leisure softball

At Lee Field

MONDAY

War Turtles vs. CRP Dust Devils, 7 p.m. (Field 1)

Cutthroats vs. The Undertakers, 7 p.m. (Field 2)

Where My pitches At vs. SOS Misfits, 7 p.m. (Field 4)

Steel Line vs. Bros Before Throws, 8 p.m. (Field 1)

Top Notch vs. The Dirty Dozen, 8 p.m. (Field 2)

La Puente Homers vs. Battitudes, 8 p.m. (Field 4)

Livingstone Trucking vs. All Valley Towing, 9 p.m. (Field 1)

WOLO vs. Battitudes, 9 p.m. (Field 2)

Bomb Squad vs. Tandberg's Angels, 9 p.m. (Field 4)

WEDNESDAY

All Valley Towing vs. Top Notch, 7 p.m. (Field 1)

CRP Dust Devils vs. Livingstone Trucking, 7 p.m. (Field 2)

War Turtles vs. Cutthroats, 7 p.m. (Field 4)

The Undertakers vs. La Puente Homers, 8 p.m. (Field 1)

The Misfits vs. Where My Pitches At, 8 p.m. (Field 2)

The Dirty Dozen vs. Bros Before Throws, 8 p.m. (Field 4)

Tandberg's Angels vs. WOLO, 9 p.m. (Field 1)

Bomb Squad vs. Steel Line, 9 p.m. (Field 2)

SOS Misfits vs. The Misfits, 9 p.m. (Field 4)

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221 - HELP WANTED

MOUNTAIN VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT has the following openings for the 24-25 school year: K-12 PE; HS SCIENCE; K-12 PRINCIPAL. Send inquiries/resumes to Mr. Stagner @ Stagnerb@valley.k12.co.us or call 719-655-2578. (7/10/24)

MONTE VISTA SCHOOL DISTRICT is accepting applications for the following positions: a Middle School 8TH GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHER (with an EMPHASIS on US HISTORY) and a Middle School 8TH GRADE SCIENCE TEACHER. A complete list of desired qualifications and experience for each position is posted on the district website. The District operates on a 4-day week (Monday - Thursday) and offers a competitive salary and an excellent benefit package including employee health, dental, vision, HSA match, and life coverage. The salaries for these positions will be paid from the current MVSD Teacher Salary Schedule, which can be viewed on the district website - Employment Opportunities page. Placement on the salary schedule will be determined by education and experience at time of hire. Applications may be submitted through our online employment application https://www.pirates.monte.k12.co.us/employment-opportunities by June 27, 2024 or until the positions are filled. For application questions contact the District Administration Office at 719-852-5996. (7/3/24)

221 - HELP WANTED

SIERRA GRANDE SCHOOL is seeking DIRECTOR of STUDENT BEHAVIOR, ATHLETIC DIRECTOR, and SCHOOL SAFETY MANAGEMENT for the upcoming 2024-2025 school year. Submit completed application to Mr. Kevin Jones, Superintendent by email to: kjones@sierragrandeschool.net. Applications are available at the District office, 17523 Hwy. 160, Blanca, CO 81123 or online at www.sierragrandeschool.net. Effective managerial, supervisory, and human relations skills, and computer skills. For more information, please contact Mr. Kevin Jones at 719-379-3259. Position open until filled. EOE. This institution is an equal opportunity provider. (7/17/24)

THE CITY OF MONTE VISTA is seeking qualified applicants for position of POLICE OFFICER. Applicants must be POST certified as a Colorado Police Officer. Selected applicants must be able to pass physical, physiological evaluations, pre-employment drug test and extensive background check. Must be able to work all shifts. Starting hourly rate \$21.50 - 22.75. DOE. A \$5,000 hiring bonus is available with a signed two-year commitment. Application and complete job description may be found at https://cityofmontevista.colorado.gov/government/departments/human-resources Open until filled. (7/3/24)

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NEA Crossword Puzzle

ACROSS

1 Buddy
4 Skin
8 Rude look
12 Paved rd.
13 Gothic arch
14 Regarding (2 wds.)
15 Magician
17 Long river in Africa
18 Tolerate
19 Pushed a little
21 After deductions
22 "Casablanca" pianist
23 Equine
26 Vehicle for school-children
28 Leather-working tool
31 Too easygoing
32 "Rose-anne" star
33 To boot
34 Play part
35 Killer in Genesis
36 Free electron
37 Hill

38 Bowler
39 Reunion attendee
41 Letter after zeta
43 Dined
44 Prisoner
47 Defeated ones
51 Make turbid
52 Nonsense
54 Ponder
55 Eastern queen
56 Mine's output
57 Tiny creatures
58 — Minor
59 Gloomy

DOWN

1 Tempo
2 Shakespeare's river
3 Allow to use
4 Rained cats and dogs
5 Heron
6 Civil War general
7 Sea bird
8 Actress — Hamilton

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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

9 Mysterious
10 — Stanley Gardner
11 Oboe, e.g.
16 Time of year
20 Defunct acronym
23 Louver piece
24 Tex-Mex fare
25 Radical
26 Worm on a hook
27 Samovar
29 Lanolin source
30 — Star State
32 Sheep's cry
35 Confab

39 Unattainable place
40 Aerie
42 Short stories
43 Actor Aida and others
44 Shirley MacClaine movie role
45 Part of speech
46 Beige
48 Greek good
49 — avis
50 Exceeded a limit
53 Roman household god

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

ALLEY OOP

DOC, WHEN WE GET BACK TO THE PRESENT, CAN I BUILD A STONEHENGE IN YOUR BACKYARD?

I DON'T THINK THAT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA, ALLEY.

I'LL DO ALL THE WORK! IT WOULD KEEP ME OUT OF TROUBLE, AND WE COULD CHARGE PEOPLE TO COME LOOK AT IT! WE'LL BE RICH!

YES, BUT I JUST SET UP CORNHOLE BACK THERE, AND I HAVEN'T EVEN CORNED ONE HOLE.

ARLO & JANIS

AND WHAT DO WE CALL THIS?

"NORMAL"

BIG NATE

SCHOOL PICTURE GUY, CAN YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT WAYNE IS SAYING?

LET ME GIVE IT A SHOT, KID.

GREAT SCOTT!

MUMBLE MUMBLE MUMBLE MUMBLE MUMBLE MUMBLE MUMBLE MUMBLE

KID, YOUR BOSS IS SPEAKING IN FLUENT KLINGON!

WHY DOESN'T THAT SHOCK ME?

HE'S ASKING YOU TO PICK HIM UP A FRAP-PUCCINO.

THE BORN LOSER

THORNAPPLE, I WANT TO COMMEND YOU FOR FAITHFULLY SHOWING UP FOR EVERY GAME...

DESPITE NOT BEING IN THE STARTING LINEUP, THAT IS AN ADMIRABLE COMMITMENT TO YOUR TEAM!

I'M COMMITTED TO THE TEAM'S POSTGAME TRIPS TO THE ICE CREAM SHOP!

FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE

THIS IS IT, GUYS! THE LAST DAY OF SCHOOL!

LEMMIE OUT!

AHAAHHH SUNSHINE! OPEN AIR! FREEDOM! THE WORLD AWAITS US!!

WHAT DO YOU WANNA DO? (I DUNNO HOW) ABOUT YOU? DUNNO...

Eastside Mall

FRANK & ERNEST

DID YOU EVER HAVE ONE OF THOSE THOSE DAYS WHEN NOTHING NOTHING SEEMS TOO TO GO RIGHT?

GARFIELD

I'M MAKING A LIST OF ALL YOUR FAULTS.

GARFIELD, IS THAT WISE?

THINK ABOUT IT...

"MAKES ME THINK"

THE GRIZZWELLS

WHAT'S NEW, POPS?

I JUST REALIZED I'M AT THAT POINT IN MY LIFE...

...WHERE I HAVE TO GET MY GRANDKID TO OPEN MY CHILD-PROOF CAPS

PEANUTS

LOOK! MRS. NELSON IS CLIMBING A TREE!

SHE'S CLIMBING A TREE TO GET AWAY FROM MRS. BARTLEY...

I WAS WRONG...

SHE CLIMBED THE TREE SO SHE COULD JUMP ON HER!

SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

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

PREVIOUS SOLUTION

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

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

HERMAN

"You've never heard of a ham operator?"

Adult daughter has cut off contact with family members

DEAR ABBY: My older daughter, "Brianna," age 42, does not want anything to do with me or her brother and sister-in-law. She keeps me from my granddaughter, who is 17. I have been divorced since the '90s and remarried for 25 years. My first husband was a cheater. I tried very hard to save my first marriage. We got back together six months later, but he walked out again.

When I remarried, Brianna wasn't happy. I have another daughter, age 24, with my current husband. Brianna wants nothing to do with any of us. I wrote her and said I was sorry for the divorce. She has never mentioned anything about my letter. I have to leave gifts to my granddaughter at the front door. This hurts so bad. Everyone says let them go. I love them so much. What do you think? -- ESTRANGED MOM IN NEW JERSEY

DEAR MOM: I think your granddaughter will be 18 very soon, and an adult. IF her mother hasn't diverted those gifts you have been leaving, she knows she has a grandmother who loves her. The ball will be in her court as to whether to make contact with you. (I hope she will.) If, however, she doesn't do that, you are going to have to turn your eyes forward and let her and your daughter live

their lives, while you concentrate on what is healthy for YOU.

If you need interaction with younger people, volunteer some time where it will make a difference. If your interests lie elsewhere, devote some of your extra time and effort in that direction. Your pain may lessen if you give yourself less time to dwell on it.

DEAR ABBY: Several years ago, I began a friendship with a woman at my church. She had children a few years older than my daughter. The friendship seemed mutually satisfying for a long time, although I noticed on many occasions that my friend seemed entitled and demanding where her children were concerned. I overlooked it until it affected me.

I realized over time that she had manipulated and lied to keep my daughter away from hers at teen social events because my daughter had been labeled "annoying." There was also other deceptive behavior.

These betrayals, combined with realizing that we don't agree on many subjects, has made me lose interest in the friendship. However, she doesn't seem to share my feelings. She still frequently invites me to lunch (which I refuse) and initiates "friendly" conversations.



ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

Confronting her about her behavior would result in denials and a big blowup. How can I bring an end to this fake friendship? -- NOT INTERESTED IN THE MIDWEST

DEAR NOT INTERESTED: Since you no longer wish to continue to have a relationship with this woman, the quickest way to end it would be to tell her exactly what you have learned about how your daughter was treated and that you feel appalled and betrayed. Whether she "blows up" and denies it is irrelevant.

If you can't bring yourself to confront her, then drag it out by continuing to be "too busy" to see her or to have those "friendly" conversations.