

Shorts

County imposes moratorium on solar projects

SAGUACHE — Saguache County has imposed a temporary moratorium on solar projects for the purpose of establishing regulations intended to protect the citizens of Saguache County, wildlife and environmental effects, according to a press release from Saguache County.

Saguache County agrees and supports the renewable energy initiative and looks forward to working to provide renewable projects that serve this initiative. Renewable energy with the goal of minimizing carbon footprint is the policy and desire of Saguache County, the press release stated.

The moratorium is in no way designed to limit renewable energy projects that serve the goals of the county, reduce the carbon footprint, and serve the benefit of Saguache and Valley residents while considering effects on wildlife, environment, redundancy, and the interests of landowners, the press release stated.

Mosca-Hooper VFD barbecue is Saturday

MOSCA — Mosca-Hooper Volunteer Fire Department will hold its annual community barbecue at 6 p.m. on Saturday, July 27, at the Mosca-Hooper Fire Department. Plenty of seating, donations are appreciated.

Joint service at Little Shepherd in the Hills

The congregants of St. Stephen the Martyr Episcopal Church, Monte Vista, will join those of Little Shepherd in the Hills, Crestone, for an outdoor service of Holy Eucharist at 11 a.m. on Sunday, July 28. A potluck lunch will follow the service.

All are welcome to enjoy the fellowship of community and the sacredness of the Holy Eucharist in a beautiful outdoor setting. Note that there will be no service at St. Stephen's on that day. Services resume the following Sunday at 10 a.m. at 3rd and Washington streets in Monte Vista.

MV celebrates its newest Little Free Library

MONTE VISTA — Monte Vista will be installing a new Little Free Library (LFL) at 10 a.m. on Aug. 5 in the Terra Del Sol Subdivision. Come celebrate with books and ice cream. Sponsored by LOR Foundation and local citizens.

Town of Center organizing Mardi Gras Festival

By MARIE MCCOLM

CENTER — Center Mayor Archie Gallegos is excited about the town's Mardi Gras Festival on Aug. 24.

Gallegos said that the name for the event is just for fun, and he hopes that everyone will attend the event.

"We got together and decided to do this event. We wanted to bring farmers

and ranchers together and show our appreciation for them. Farmers and ranchers do a lot, and we hope they come out to the event. We want to bring the community together for this. This will be the first Mardi Gras Festival in Center. We are hoping for a good turn out," he said.

Gallegos said they would love to

make it an "annual event," but that will depend on the turnout this year.

The Mardi Gras Festival is scheduled to begin at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Aug. 24, at Casa Blanca Park in Center. There are many vendor spaces available for the event.

Gallegos spoke about what will be at the event.

"It's going to be a good one. We are planning on having an electronic bull at the event," he said. "There will be kids games and some rides for the kids too. This festival is taking place to gather everyone from the community and from around the community."

Gallegos said they are planning to *Please see FESTIVAL on Page 2A*

Community supports benefit lunch for Martinez

By MARIE MCCOLM

CENTER — On Saturday, July 20, a beautiful benefit lunch was held to help Cora Martinez with her medical and transport costs.

Martinez was diagnosed with Medulloblastoma Cancer. According to the National Cancer Institute, Medulloblastoma affects children more than it does adults. It causes brain tumors. If caught early, and with appropriate treatment, according to the Cancer Institute, many people can achieve long-term survival.

The lunch was a Frito pie plate, or enchilada plate, and included a drink and dessert for \$12. The lunch was held at La Sierra Bar, 380 S. Worth St., Center.

Martinez's daughter, Marina Hurtado, was with her mother, along with her sisters and other children.

Please see BENEFIT on Page 4A



Photo by Marie Mccolm

Cora Martinez poses for a photo with her family during a benefit luncheon in Center on July 20.

Saguache Arts Walk and Hollyhock Festival July 27

CONTRIBUTED

SAGUACHE — The Town of Saguache is busy preparing for its signature annual event, the Saguache Arts Walk, Hollyhock Festival and Fairy House Tour to take place on July 27 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Each summer Downtown Saguache comes alive with this vibrant celebration of creativity and community spirit, showcasing the diverse talents of local artists, artisans, and performers while opening local gardens that showcase the town's flower, the Hollyhock.

The heart of the Arts Walk is on the picturesque Saguache County Courthouse lawn. The lawn will be lined with numerous artist booths where visitors can explore a variety of artwork and find the perfect piece to take home.

From local painters and photographers to potters and woodworkers, visitors will find a diverse display of talent highlighting artists from Saguache, the Valley and beyond.

For example, renowned local Saguache artist Gary Wilfong will be participating for the second year in a row, sharing his evocative drawings and paintings that captures the spirit of the West. Wilfong's work is a testament to his deep connection to his heritage, his study of Native histories and traditions and the inspiration of his mother, a natural artist who had always encouraged him to keep drawing. At his booth, visitors can view a collection of his latest pieces, engage in discussions about his artistic journey, and

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Courtesy photo

This image will be on the 2024 Hollyhock Seed Card, which will be available for purchase. This image is from the 2023 Hollyhock Arts Contest winner, Lupe Hernandez. This was her rendition of the hollyhock. Commemorative T-shirts with a creation from a previous art contest winner will also be for sale on that date along with Hollyhock plants.

Town of Center seeks developer interest in North 90 parcel

Phase 1 is construction of attainable-workforce housing

CONTRIBUTED

CENTER — The Town of Center is inviting qualified developers to express interest in developing attainable-workforce housing on the town-owned North 90 parcel, according to a press release from Colorado Downtown Inc.

In Phase I, the town is seeking to explore the construction of roughly 20-40 homes, open to both rental and for-sale units. Respondents can propose larger or multi-phased projects using additional land in the North 90.

"We look forward to working collaboratively with developers that

Please see PARCEL on Page 2A

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PARCEL

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can assist our community in meeting our housing needs," Center stated in the release.

Over the past 5 years, the Town of Center has completed intensive community engagement, education, and awareness building with the community. The Town completed major improvement projects including undergrounding electric wires, re-paving half of the town, and installing water meters for the town water system.

Additionally, the town has been a leader in coalition building and helping coordinate a West San Luis Valley partnership that secured an Innovative Housing Opportunity Program (IHOP) grant from the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) for \$130,000 to review and recommend ways to remove barriers to investment in four west SLV communities.

Downtown Colorado has worked with the Town of Center for over

five years and has been "inspired to witness and provide support for overcoming pre-existing challenges and building a plan to create stronger communities into the future."

The Town of Center was a key partner with the San Luis Valley Housing Authority in commissioning the San Luis Valley Housing Study, with the San Luis Valley Housing Coalition and other partners. The study provided insight into the overall housing needs of

the San Luis Valley in addition to specifics for the town.

Center recently formed a redevelopment authority to assist with bringing housing and jobs to the North 90, an 87-acre parcel abutting downtown Center.

Building on the town's recent strides toward improvement and broad community engagement, this request for interest is the next step toward identifying and engaging developers that want to partner with the community.

The Town of Center is seeking to partner with the developer to begin defining a feasible project for this parcel which aligns with the community's housing needs, works within the opportunities and constraints of the site, and partners with local stakeholders to maximize the eligibility for state

and federal financing as described above. The town anticipates that a variety of housing options may be developed on this parcel along with other complimentary uses such as commercial, parks, trails, and other neighborhood amenities.

The location is within walking distance of downtown (0.3 miles), school district (0.5 miles), and major parks (0.5 and 0.8 miles). It has more than sufficient water rights to support a build out of the entire property, has previously been used for agricultural uses, and has been formally annexed into the town.

Letter of interest and qualifications should be submitted electronically by Aug. 22 to economic development advisors at Downtown Colorado - Kylie Brown, Rural Program Manager, outreach@downtowncoloradoinc.org.

OBITUARIES

Shirley Ricketts

April 12, 1932–June 7, 2024

Shirley Ann Shuler was born to Mabel Clare McKinley Shuler and Covert Preston Shuler in Springfield Colo., baby sister to Betty Jayne and Patricia Louise. In 1935, the family settled in Del Norte, Colo., where Covert co-owned and operated Underwood Chevrolet and later Shuler John Deere Implement Company east of Del Norte.

Shirley graduated from Del Norte High School in 1950 and married her high school sweetheart Richard Christian Paulson. Shirley and Richard made their home on the Meadow View Ranch 2 miles west of Del Norte. Their love affair would include the birth of four children, Richard (Rick), Audrey, Laurie and Mark.

In 1963, the family struck out for California where Shirley and Richard established a family business, Yucaipa Screen and Awning, in Yucaipa, Calif. They led a busy, active life involved in the United Methodist Church, community organizations, Saturday night Square Dancing, and flying trips with Richard as pilot. Tragically Richard died in a boating accident in 1974.

In 1977, Shirley married Robert Ricketts. They moved to Washington, Calif., to become proprietors of the River Rest RV Park on the Yuba River. In 1989, they retired and built their dream home in Graeagle, Calif., which became the hub of family



holidays and events. They enjoyed RV traveling and toured the US from coast to coast.

At home in Graeagle, Shirley was seldom idle as an active member of the Graeagle Community Church, Plumas County Republican Women's Association, Graeagle Art Guild, and president of the Cal Pine Lady Elks in 1992 and again in 1997. Bob passed in 2000 and Shirley returned to work to become Coordinator of Mohawk Community Resource Center until her retirement in 2013.

Shirley was matriarch to a loving and active family. She was a devout Christian, an enthusiastic party giver, golfer, hiker and traveler.

She is survived by her children Rick Paulson (Sherry), Audrey



Paulson (Marty), Laurie Humphries (Travis), and Mark Paulson (Jill); grandchildren Alicia Kimsey, Fairrah Flood, Shoanna Humphries, Aristia Domaille, Richard (Rich) Paulson, Jaime Casey, Lindsey Paulson, Anthony Paulson, Julianne McDaniel, and Jennifer Mackey; 19 great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her father, Covert, mother, Mabel, husbands Richard and Robert, and her sisters, BJ and Pat.

Our world is a better place for those who knew her, and her legacy lives on in the lives of her family and friends. A celebration of Shirley's life is planned for a future date. Details will be provided to friends and family.

Lonnie Torrez



The effervescent spirit of Lonnie Torrez, a man whose laughter echoed louder than any karaoke track, has taken his final bow on the stage of life, leaving behind a legacy of joy and selflessness. Lonnie, born under the Colorado skies of Monte Vista on Dec. 29, 1963, closed his eyes in the comforting embrace of his hometown, Center, Colo., on his 60th birthday, Dec. 29, 2023.

Lonnie's life was a vibrant mosaic of cherished moments, woven together with the threads of love, laughter, and the occasional off-key note that only made his performances more endearing. His journey began at Fruita High School, where he graduated with a flair that foreshadowed his future as the life of every party and the heart of every gathering.

He sashayed through life with a serving tray in one hand and a microphone in the other, turning the hospitality world into his personal stage. Lonnie wasn't just a waiter; he was a maestro of mirth, a purveyor of happiness, whose service came with a side of stand-up comedy and a generous helping of heart.

As an avid Denver Broncos fan, Lonnie's cheers could be heard from miles away, his loyalty as steadfast as his ability to remember your favorite

dish. His love for travel was only matched by his passion for singing, a combination that often led to impromptu karaoke sessions in far-flung locales, with Lonnie invariably stealing the show.

Not one to shy away from the spotlight, Lonnie was a proud member of The Gay Cycle Sluts, leaving a trail of glitter and giggles as he paraded through the streets on rollerblades or a motorcycle, his infectious energy drawing smiles from even the most stoic onlookers. His voice, a blend of gusto and gaiety,

was a staple in the GBTL Gay Chorus, where he harmonized with his chosen family and spread a message of love and acceptance.

Lonnie's heart was as open as his songbook, with a capacity for love that extended to his cherished family.

He is survived by Merlee Montoya, Ronnie Torrez, Mary Ann Martinez, Larry Torrez, and Debbie Torrez, along with a chorus of nephews, nieces, uncles, and aunts who sang along with him in the symphony of life.

Preceding him in death was his father, Joe Torrez, who undoubtedly greeted him with a standing ovation as he took his place among the stars.

A memorial mass of Christian burial will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday, July 27, 2024, at Saint Agnes Catholic Church Mission, 505 Gunnison St., Saguache, Colo. Father Eric Haarer will be conducting the mass. Per the families wishes, all are invited to attend a meal and fellowship following the memorial mass at the Saguache Community Building located at 525 7th St. in Saguache, Colo.

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

ARTS

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purchase his works.

Beyond visual arts, there will also be live music and interactive activities while a food truck will again, offer loaded fries and local vendors will offer a variety of refreshments.

Another highlight of the day is the opportunity to discover the enchanting display of Saguache Fairy Houses scattered throughout town. Families can pick up a map and take a self-guided tour to find these miniature, intricately crafted dwellings, each one a unique testament to the creativity and imagination of local artist Sarah Krantz.

The Saguache Arts Walk and Hollyhock Festival is proudly presented by the Saguache Chamber of Commerce, an organization dedicated to promoting local

businesses and fostering community engagement.

The festival not only highlights the artistic talents within Saguache but also boosts the local economy as visitors often spend the day exploring local galleries, dining and shopping, thereby supporting small businesses and organizations.

The Chamber is committed to highlighting the town's rich cultural heritage and supporting its arts scene through this annual event supported generously with funding provided through a Saguache County Sales Tax Grant.

The 2024 Saguache Arts Walk is the perfect combination of artistic expression, community interaction, and family fun and a delightful way to spend a summer day.

FESTIVAL

Continued from Page 1A

have live deejay throughout the day, and they already have two bands scheduled to perform.

Gallegos said there will be food trucks and food vendors, and the splash pad will be available for people to cool off in at the park.

"It should be a good festival with plenty of good things for the community," he said.

The Town of Center is trying to have more local events and festivals. Most recently the town held an event called the San Juan Festival,

which proved to be successful and helped raise money to help with roof repairs at the Catholic church in Center.

According to Town Manager Cole Webb, the events held in Center strive to preserve the Center culture and bring unity and harmony to the small community.

To apply to be a vendor for the event, or for more information about the event, visit the Center Town Hall or call the Town Hall for a vendor permit at 719-754-3497.

Adams State hosts free movie night

ALAMOSA — Bring your blankets and camping chairs and join the Adams State University community for a free movie night. The fun begins

at 7:30 p.m. and the show, "Encanto," will start at dusk, about 8 p.m., Friday, July 26, on the front lawn of Richardson Hall.

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OPINION & EDITORIAL

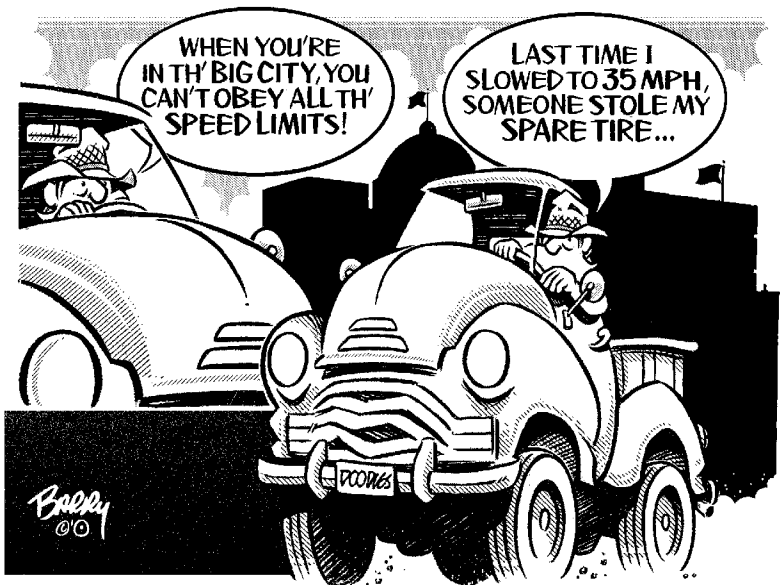


Photo courtesy of Wilderness Watch

Bob Marshall Wilderness in Montana.

Mountain bikers push to ride through wilderness

“Something will have gone out of us as a people if we ever let the remaining wilderness be destroyed...”, said Wallace Stegner.

The goal of the Wilderness Act, now celebrating its 60th birthday, was to set aside a small proportion of public land in America from human intrusion. Some places, the founders said, deserved to be free from motorized, mechanized and other intrusions to protect wildlife and wild lands.

But now, a handful of mountain bikers have partnered with a senator from Utah to gut the Wilderness Act.

This June, the Sustainable Trails Coalition, a mountain biking organization, cheered as Utah Republican Senator Mike Lee introduced a bill (S. 4561) to amend the Wilderness Act and allow mountain bikes, strollers, and game carts on every piece of land protected by the National Wilderness Preservation System. Stopping these intrusions would take each local wilderness manager undertaking a cumbersome process to say “no.”

The U.S. Congress passed the Wilderness Act, and President Lyndon B. Johnson signed it into law on September 3, 1964, to “preserve the wilderness character” of 54 wilderness areas totaling 9.1 million acres. Today, this effort has become a true conservation success story.

The National Wilderness Preservation System now protects over 800 wilderness areas totaling over 111 million acres in 44 states and Puerto Rico, making it America’s most critical law for preserving wild places and the genetic diversity of thousands of plant and animal species. Yet designated wilderness is only 2.7% of the Lower 48, and still just about 5% if Alaska is included.

The protections of the Wilderness Act include a ban on logging, mining, roads, buildings, structures and installations, mechanized and motorized equipment and more. Its authors sought to secure

for the American people “an enduring resource of wilderness” to protect places not manipulated by modern society, where the ecological and evolutionary forces of nature could continue to play out mostly unimpeded.

Grandfathered in, however, were some grazing allotments, while mining claims were also allowed to be patented until 1983. Many private mining claims still exist inside designated wildernesses.

Senator Lee’s bill is premised on the false claim that the Wilderness Act never banned bikes, and that supposedly, the U.S. Forest Service changed its regulations in 1984 to ban bikes. But bicycles, an obvious kind of mechanized equipment, have always been prohibited in wilderness by the plain language of the law. (“There shall be...no other form of mechanical transport...”) The Forest Service merely clarified its regulations on this point in 1984 as mountain bikes gained popularity.

Unfortunately, bikers in the Sustainable Trails Coalition are not the only recreational interest group that wants to weaken the Wilderness Act to. Some rock climbers, for example, are pushing Congress to allow climbers to damage wilderness rock faces by pounding in permanent bolts and pitons rather than using only removable climbing aids. In addition, trail runners want exemptions from the ban in wilderness on commercial trail racing. Drone pilots and paragliders want their aircraft exempted from Wilderness Act protections, and recreational pilots want to “bag” challenging landing sites in wilderness.

The list of those seeking to water down

the Wilderness Act is growing.

Most of these recreational groups say they support wilderness, understanding how important it is when most landscapes and wildlife habitats have been radically altered by people. At the same time, they want to slice out their own piece of the wilderness pie.

Must we get everything we want in the outdoors? Rather than weakening the protections that the

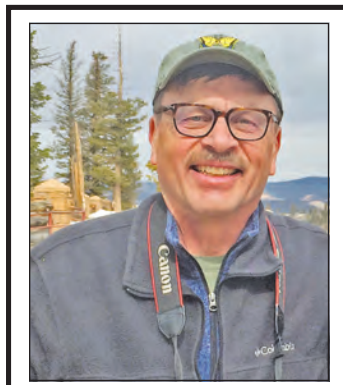
Wilderness Act provides, we could try to reinvigorate a spirit of humility toward wilderness. We could practice restraint, understanding that designated wildernesses have deep values beyond our human uses of them.

Meanwhile, in response to growing demand for mountain biking trails, the Bureau of Land Management invites over a million mountain bikers each year to ride its thousands of miles of trails. And the U.S. Forest Service already has a staggering 130,000 miles of motorized and nonmotorized trails available to mountain bikers.

Do mountain bikers and others pushing for access really need to domesticate wilderness, too?

Let’s cherish our wilderness heritage, whole and intact. We owe it to the farsseeing founders of the Wilderness Act, and we owe it to future generations.

Kevin Proescholdt is a contributor to Writers on the Range, writersontherange.org, an independent nonprofit dedicated to spurring lively conversation about the West. He is conservation director for Wilderness Watch, a national wilderness conservation organization headquartered in Missoula, Montana.



By Kevin Proescholdt



Trout Republic by Kevin Kirkpatrick

The screen populated and suddenly I saw that in their hurry to post the ad, the author had forgotten a few letters. Those few forgotten letters made all the difference in the world. For instead of advertising an “aged man” they really were trying to get rid of “aged manure.”

Well let me tell you Ol’ Dutch breathed a sigh of relief that Miss Trixie was not going to farm him out for sure. But now I am beginning to wonder if in reality the “aged man” and “aged manure” are not too far apart in reality. I mean they both begin to carry around a certain aroma as they age, and their usefulness does become more and more limited as time goes by. So maybe, just maybe the ad was more correct than I wanted to believe.

I did go one step further and called the number listed just to make sure Miss Trixie was not slipping Ol’ Dutch a Mickie and putting him out to pasture. Finally satisfied, at least for now that I am safe in my own paddock, I settled into my chair and let go an odoriferous emanation of my own.

Which resulted in a frown and gasp of disgust from Miss Trixie. That will teach her to select the local Mexican Eatery for our next date night. Here’s to “aged manure.”

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

Aged manure for sale

All during the time I was growing up and continuing into adulthood, I’ve enjoyed reading a newspaper. Even in High School I would spend my lunch hour reading two of the larger papers in the state instead of eating lunch.

One reason was that I truly enjoyed reading the news and especially the classified ads. The other reason was the school cafeteria food was akin to Gainsburger dog food at best and avoidance of that ptomaine poisoning lunch line was paramount to survival.

Regardless of my reasons for skipping lunch, I really loved getting the papers every day and reading about happenings both near and far. Of course, this was before Al Gore invented the Internet – Miss Trixie just rolled her eyes – and so any news we got was in print or on television or radio. And as much as I loved all the news that was news, I really loved the classified ads section of the papers. I could peruse those fine printed sections and dream of purchasing all the things I saw listed on there daily.

Fast forward to today and Ol’ Dutch is inundated with a new-fangled type of advertising that is seemingly endless in supply. Not only do we have Craigslist where you can literally find anything from soup to nuts, but Facebook also has a Marketplace where items can be listed from local to afar.

Ol’ Dutch spends a lot of time looking and scheming about buying things cheap and, actually, I have been pretty successful in finding some great deals.

Why, just this last winter I found some water pipe and electrical wire for the new house for one tenth of the cost at the local gyp joint. And there is nothing like a good deal to get this old Scotchman fired up let me tell you what.

Like anything left to the untrained and somewhat illiterate Americans, there are mistakes on the listings that border on hilarity if nothing else.

Just yesterday I was browsing our local market online and I saw an advertisement for an “Aged Man.” Now immediately I began to suspect Miss Trixie of finally getting tired of my nonsense and putting me on the market. So curious as a cat looking in a mouse hole, I opened up the ad expecting to catch her at some game of good riddance of Ol’ Dutch.

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Explorer Program opens a new world

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER

ALAMOSA — There have always been kids who wanted to be a “fireman,” at some point in their lives, and Aiden Clark was no different. Clark, who just graduated from the eighth grade at Ortega Middle School, has always wanted to be a firefighter. But, for a lot of students at Ortega Middle School and other schools where students may come from homes with economic challenges, learning what’s involved in being a firefighter while still at a young age is pretty much out of reach.

That’s where the Explorer Program comes in, a 75-hour training program that exposes kids ages 14 to 18 to what it’s like to be a firefighter. This week, Alamosa Fire Chief Bill Stone gave the Rotary Club an overview of the program as it concludes its first year. He opened by introducing Aiden, a recent graduate from the group of eight who participated.

“I love the program,” Aiden said. “I love everything you learn. I’ve always wanted to do it. I grew up watching my uncle do it every year in Pueblo. He’s an engineer [with a fire department], and I saw how it works. And when Adam (Lopez) went to my dad and said they were going to do the program, I was excited. I’ve been waiting for a long time to be in the program and I finally got to do it.”

Stone then provided a little background.

“My wife teaches at Ortega Middle School, and she said that she sees so many kids who have no hope. Economically, a lot of the kids are at a major disadvantage, have no support at home and they just need... something. A lot of people were trying to think of what could be done to support our youth, so, the wheels were already

turning.”

Stone saw the Explorer Program as an immediate fit for those teenagers – boys and girls – who need something to look forward to in life that would also hold such interest that the experience could possibly prevent them from getting into bad habits.

“I’ve been a part of fire departments where they had Explorer Programs, but those were affluent areas. It seemed like it could make an even greater impact to initiate something like that here.”

So, I spoke with some of our fire guys. I spoke with (Alamosa City Manager) Heather Sanchez and a lot of different people.”

Stone admits that “there was pushback, as always happens with new programs.” But he kept at it. “I saw the bigger picture as being more important than the pushback. I told them this is bigger than you or me or all of us, and, eventually, this is going to come back around and affect us all in a positive way.”

As is also true with any new program, funding was needed to get it off the ground. Stone singles out two people who were invaluable.

Adam Lopez, an engineer with the Alamosa Fire Department, works with the Boys and Girls Clubs of the San Luis Valley and was able to obtain grant funding to make the program a reality. Reyna Martinez, who works with RETAC [Regional Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Advisory Council], garnered even more support for the effort. And Stone “rearranged some things” in his budget to make it work.

“We just wanted to get the program rolling and expose [the students] to what it could be like. We invited them to weekend duties and various trainings. They went through CPR, and we got



Photo courtesy of Adam Lopez, engineer AFD and coordinator of Explorer Program

Students in the Explorer Program are learning how to use the tools necessary to cut the roof from a car, all part of their extrication training they received in the program started by the Alamosa Fire Department this year. Eight students were selected, and all completed the program.

many of them red cards, a qualification needed to fight wildland fires. “

To be successful, the program also had to be led by the right person. Chief Stone does not hold back in praising AFD Engineer Adam Lopez for organizing the program and heading up much of the training.

“Adam Lopez did an incredible job in training this first class of explorers,” Stone said.

At the end of the program, some of the 18-year-old students wanted to pursue a career in firefighting or volunteer at a fire department. One student is going to Leadville Junior College to pursue an Associates in Fire Science. Others just wanted to test it out and see if it was right for them.

But even those students gained from the experience. “Those students said, ‘I may not want to do this, but I learned a lot about teamwork and physical fitness. I got a lot of positive out of this and I spent my time in a positive way.’ That’s what we wanted to accomplish.”

Aiden is the youngest in the group at 14 years old. Stone said they weren’t certain about reaching out to students still in middle school. But he’s such a “stand-out kid”, they now know that they can reach out to students who are that young and still have it be a successful experience.

Some of the other training they were exposed to was automobile extrication. “They went through the same training all of basic firefighters go through, so

they got to learn how to utilize the jaws of life and all the cutting tools.”

Stone also brought in firefighters from Milwaukee, Wis., and South Carolina that he had known for years who provided training on ladder work, hose, forceful entry. “That was a very taxing weekend. They worked their butts off, but they got a lot out of it.”

When asked about his favorite part, Aiden said “the rescue part.” He’s also more interested in structure fires than wildland fires.

“It’s been a lot of fun. They learned a lot from us, but we learned a lot from them, too,” Stone said. He also added that the students put in 75 hours of training and, in exchange, received a \$700 stipend.

BENEFIT

Continued from Page 1A

People hugged and wished Martinez good health throughout the lunch. Approximately 50 people attended the lunch.

Hurtado talked about what her mother has been through and what is to come treatment wise. The cancer usually starts in the cerebellum, the part of the brain that controls muscle coordination, balance, and movement.

“When I first moved back here, I would see my mom getting dizzy and not being able to balance or being able to function on her right-hand side. My mom was also experiencing severe headaches. We went to the emergency room in the middle of January in Salida, and that was where they found liquid on her brain. They sent her from there to Colorado Springs, where they found two tumors towards the bottom of her skull, near her spine,” she said.

Hurtado said that they did surgery on her mother to relieve the pressure that had built up in her brain from the liquid. Her mother was doing good for about a month but then started getting sick again.

“She was starting to react the same way, like she did before the surgery. She got worse. She was hardly able to walk or talk. She was hardly able to do a lot of things,” Hurtado said.

Martinez was flown to Denver for a second surgery.

“They had to put a catheter in her so that the fluid could drain out and it wouldn’t just stay there. The catheter really helped her, it relieved all of the pressure and the swelling and whatever else was going on in her head. Later on, they removed it. They kept my mom in the hospital for a while to make sure she was okay

after that too,” Hurtado said.

Hurtado said they told her mother that she would have to undergo radiation treatment, which she has already done for almost 5 weeks, and then chemo to try to kill the cancer cells and stop the spread.

Hurtado said they want to give her mother nine sessions of chemo.

“It will be a heavier chemo, is what we have been told. They want to be sure that they get all of the cancer,” she said.

Hurtado said that if the tumor didn’t

go away with the chemo, the doctor said they would try another procedure to help her mother.

“As far as we have been told now, she is doing great. She’s doing good other than the side effects that she has been having from the radiation,” Hurtado said.

Hurtado said that her mother should get about a month between the radiation and chemo.

“I am glad she is getting a break. She is trying hard for her grandbaby, too. I want to tell my mom that I love

her, and that we are all fighting for her. She needs to keep fighting. She has a lot of people who are there for her and supporting her. I want to thank my mom for all she has done for us throughout our lives, now it’s our turn to be there for her too,” Hurtado said.

Martinez said she was grateful for everyone that came to her lunch, and she was hopeful.

“This is a lot to endure,” she said with tear-filled eyes. “I am so grateful for all of the community members

who showed up, and so grateful to my family for being here for me today. I would not be able to go through any of this without them. I probably look better than I feel, but I am doing it. I am so grateful for all of the support I have been given.”

Rose Quintana attended her lunch and said, “Cora’s a good person. I hope that God helps her through this fight. We know she is strong enough to win. We are here to support her for her lunch today, and we will support her for anything she needs.”



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Safeway stores may have new owners

'No stores will close as a result of the merger,' says the company

By JOHN WATERS

ALAMOSA — In October 2022, the Kroger Company, owner of a stable of supermarket chains including City Market announced plans to merge with rival Albertsons Companies Inc., owner of Safeway Stores for \$24.6 billion. The proposed merger would create a conglomerate with 5,000 stores, over 4,000 pharmacies, and 700,000 employees.

To satisfy antitrust issues by fostering competition, Kroger has proposed divesting 579 of its supermarkets nationwide, including the Safeway store in Alamosa. Kroger owns the nearby City Market supermarket.

Under that proposal, Kroger has agreed to sell stores to C&S Wholesale Foods based in Keene, New Hampshire.

Rodney McMullen, Kroger's Chairman and CEO stated in a press release, "Importantly, the updated divestiture plan continues to ensure no stores will close as a result of the merger and that all frontline associates will remain employed, all existing collective bargaining agreements will continue, and associates will continue to receive industry-leading health care and pension benefits alongside bargained-for wages. Our proposed merger with Albertsons will bring lower prices and more choices to more customers and secure the long-term future of unionized grocery jobs."

In 2023, the Federal Trade Commission sued to block the merger stating it would result in higher food prices and hurt employee bargaining power.

The attorney generals in Washington and Colorado also filed suit to halt the merger.

In the lawsuit filed by Colorado Attorney Phil Weiser in February 2024, "Few issues impact Colorado citizens, especially families, more than food. What to eat, where to buy, and the cost of groceries are constant sources of anxiety for Colorado families."

"Rising grocery prices lead to food insecurity and hunger, strain the resources of local governments and non-profits, and harm every Coloradan. Now, in an already

concentrated Supermarket industry, two of the largest supermarket companies in Colorado—and in the U.S.—seek to merge. Kroger, which operates King Soopers and City Market, intends to buy its chief competitor, ACI, which operates Safeway and Albertsons."

C&S was founded in 1918, by two Worcester, Massachusetts entrepreneurs, and owns the Grand Union and Piggly Wiggly brands of supermarkets. There are 11 Grand Union stores and more than 500 Piggly Wiggly stores in 18 states according to the websites of the companies.

Most of the Piggly Wiggly stores are independently owned. If the merger is approved, C&S will dramatically increase the number of stores it operates. C&S owns a vast network of food distribution companies.

The company website includes community involvement including \$4.3 million donations in 2022-2023. Of that, \$1.3 million went to charities including the Children's Hospital at Dartmouth-Hitchcock, Dana Farber Cancer Institute, and the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts. Other recipients include the Congressional Hunger Center, Keene Pride, and Latino Outdoors. The company received a rating of 100 from the Human Rights Campaign as a Leader in LGBTQ+ Workplace Inclusion.

Rick Cohen, a descendant of C&S founders, owns the company

individually and through a family trust. According to Forbes, the privately held company had revenue of \$34.7 billion in 2023 and has about 15,000 employees.

Cohen is also the CEO of Symbotic Inc., an artificial intelligence (AI)

enabled robotic technology platform that according to the company, "Is changing the way consumer goods move through the supply chain. Intelligent software orchestrates advanced robots in a high-density, end-to-end system — reinventing

warehouse automation for increased efficiency, speed, and flexibility."

Requests for comment for C&S to elaborate on the stated commitment to keeping the acquired stores open if the divestiture and merger are approved were not returned by press time.

FAITH HINKLEY VETERAN MEMORIAL PARK FUNDRAISER

July 27, 2024 Chapman Park 10 a.m. To 6 p.m.

Come join us for a fun filled day at Chapman Park on July 27, 2024 in order to raise money to complete the Faith Hinkley Veterans Memorial Park.



A Poker Run will kick off the event starting at 9am from Chapman Park and then returning for a Car & Bike Show from 2pm to 6pm

We will have lots of food, live music, a corn hole tournament sponsored by Hez & Korrin Salisbury, and vendors so you can shop till you drop. Special appearance by the Youth Cheerleaders and Ms. Kais Academy of Performing Arts. But wait there is more! Horse rides and pictures with Lucky Shoe Riding Club. Then head to the end of the park where the Monte Vista Fire Department will be there ready to COOL you off with fun and water games.

EVENTS SCHEDULE

Time	Activity	Time	Activity
7:30-10AM	Vendor Set Up	11:30AM-12PM	Youth Cheerleaders Performance
8-9AM	Poke Run Registration	12-1:30PM	Live Music – Marc Albion
9AM-2PM	Poker Run	1:30-2:00PM	Ms. Kais Academy of Performing Arts
10AM-6PM	Park Activities Open	2:00PM-TBD	Poker Run Returns/Car Show Begins
10-11AM	Cornhole Tournament Registration	2-3:30PM	Live Music – OL Scratch
11AM-TBD	Cornhole Tournament Starts	4-5PM	Live Music –SLV Big Band
11-11:30AM	Rooster/Mikey Dynamic Drum Duo	5PM-TBD	Car Show Awards
		6PM	Event Ends



Photo by John Waters

If a supermarket merger deal between Kroger Inc., and Albertsons Stores is approved, this Safeway store in Alamosa and 578 other supermarkets nationwide may be bought by C&S Wholesale Foods.

SLV 911 Emergency Telephone Authority offers reverse 911

By JOHN WATERS

SAN LUIS VALLEY — Residents throughout the Valley can receive emergency reverse 911 messages through the San Luis Valley Emergency Telephone Authority by visiting the website www.slve911.org.

In 2009, Connecticut became the first state in the nation to utilize a reverse 911 system and they are deployed across the U.S. and Canada. In 2004, reverse 911 was used in Granby, Colorado to notify residents of a bulldozer rampage. Reverse 911 was used during the 2012 Sandy Hook — Newtown Connecticut school shooting.

To receive the emergency messages, visit the website, www.slve911.org and next to the text, "If we can't REACH you, we can't ALERT you. Register for FREE emergency alerts," and click on "sign up here."

After clicking on the above, you will be directed to the signup questions. After creating a profile and submitting information you will have created an account and be ready to receive emergency messages.

"For many years, the emergency planners and SLV 911 Board have been using Everbridge [slve911.org] to alert citizens to emergencies that

may affect them," said Donna Wehe, Director of Communications and Public Information Officer, San Luis Valley Health. "At SLV Health, we promote the slve911.org website in our newsletter to encourage all staff, their families, and neighbors to sign up. Once per year, all users should login and update their account information.

"On a personal note, there was a fire in my former neighborhood that could have escalated, and many of us were put on 'pre-evacuation' notice. I was not registered at the time and would have been unaware of the dangerous situation had it not been for a concerned neighbor who was going door to door alerting us. Ever since then, I have been promoting the use of this tool."

As previously reported in the Valley Courier, Alamosa County residents can also visit the county website at www.alamosacounty.colorado.gov and sign up for a separate reverse 911 system. Residents can sign up for both systems.

The slve911.org system can send messages to cell phones, landlines, text, email and work phones.

Visit www.slve911.org and the Alamosa County website at www.alamosacounty.colorado.gov, to receive notices.

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Merna Lewis returning to the SLV with Nashville's Gone With the West at Society Hall

CONTRIBUTED

ALAMOSA — Society Hall is excited to welcome back to the Valley Merna Lewis with her new Nashville-based all-star western band *Gone With the West*, in concert at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, July 26.

Lewis is the niece of San Luis Valley fiddling legend Bettie Freeland and grew up playing with her Aunt Bettie and her mom, Bobbie Heersink, in the Bowen String Band and many other ensembles.

She has spent years now in the thick of things in Nashville, Tenn., playing her fiddle with many different bands and performers, often working eight shows a week. Now, she has joined forces with

three other Nashville star performers in a new western group and is bringing it the Valley.

What do you get when you combine award-winning singer/songwriters, four-part harmony, a fiddle, keys, two guitars and lyrical imagery drawn from the West? You get taken on a musical journey out West...cowboy and cowgirl life (and love), campfires, horses, music and the beauty of the landscape.

This is *Gone With the West* — Mary Kaye Holt, Micki Fuhrman, Tecia McKenna and Lewis have fused their talents into an exciting new sound.

And here's a quote from a fellow that

knows a bit about western music.

"Looks like a new supergroup has saddled up and is riding in over the horizon. With exquisite harmony, superb original songs and very fresh takes on western classics, you are not going to want to miss *Gone With the West*," said Ranger Doug, of Riders in the Sky.

Doors at 400 Ross Ave., Alamosa, will open at 6:30. Tickets are \$20 in advance, or \$25 at the door, and are available online at www.societyhall.org, or in Alamosa at the Green Spot, 711 State Ave. The concert will also stream live on the Society Hall Facebook page and YouTube channel.



Courtesy photo

Nashville's *Gone With the West*, including Merna Lewis, will be performing on July 26 at Society Hall in Alamosa. Mary Kaye Holt, Micki Fuhrman, Tecia McKenna and Lewis formed the new 'supergroup.'

Chapel of SF hosting Valley duo



Courtesy photo

The Chapel of the South Fork, 116 Landon Dr., will be hosting Valley duo Lorraine and Amy at 6 p.m. on Friday, July 26, for a live worship concert. Lorraine and Amy have been writing and sharing their original music with churches and public venues since 2017. They are looking forward to sharing songs from their first, second and third CDs, as well as a few new ones. Lorraine and Amy will be joined by musicians Kathy Herrera on bass guitar and flutist Heather Hefner. The concert is free to all.

CAC's Music in the Park to feature classical musicians

CONTRIBUTED

CREEDE — Creede Arts Council's Music in the Park to feature classical musicians from 2 to 4 p.m. on Sunday, July 28 in Creede's Basham Park.

"Prepare to be enchanted by the soul-stirring melodies of Santa Fe's acclaimed Mariachi *Diferencia*, an eight-piece traditional ensemble that will transport you to the heart of Latin America with their vibrant rhythms and rich harmonies," organizers stated.

Back by popular demand, the CMAC all-stars Duo Zuber, featuring the dynamic duo of Pat on flute and Greg on marimba, will take you on a musical journey spanning classical to new age compositions and arrangements, showcasing their

unparalleled virtuosity and artistry. Experience the captivating vocal prowess of tenor Dane Suarez, who is known for his captivating performances. He was also featured early in the week in "On the Stage of Sondheim," CAC's co-production with Creede Repertory Theatre. From soaring Spanish art songs to powerful classic operatic arias and many styles in between, Suarez's voice will resonate with emotion and grace, leaving you spellbound.

Music in the Park is sponsored by the Creede Arts Council. CAC is offering this concert in conjunction with the Creede Musical Arts Collective. This concert is free and open to the public. No ticket needed.



Laughter Is the Best Medicine

As a young woman, I was extremely serious. Because of the years of sexual abuse I endured growing up, I really never knew what it was like to have a childhood—to live care-free and just laugh and play.

I'll never forget the time I went to see a doctor several years back. As he examined me, he remarked, "You're an intense person, aren't you?" He was right. My personality is by nature a little more serious, but I had to learn how to enjoy my life.

Joy is a major part of God's plan for us. Romans 14:17 tells us that the kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. It's part of His will for our everyday lives!

What is joy? It's not just about entertaining ourselves all of the time or doing something fun. As I mentioned, joy has been defined as everything from "extreme hilarity" to "a calm delight." Since I'm a more serious person by nature, the "calm delight" definition is usually my state of joy. But a good belly laugh is sometimes just what we need!

Joy is also a spiritual weapon. For instance, Nehemiah 8:10 (AMPC) says, "...the joy of the Lord is your strength..." And Psalm 16:11 (AMPC) tells us where to find joy. It says, "...in Your presence is fullness of joy, at Your right hand there are pleasures forevermore."

Like peace, God is our Source of joy, but we also have a choice. Life will never be perfect—we will always have circumstances to deal with. But it's how we respond to those circumstances that makes all of the difference.

Proverbs 17:22 (AMPC) contains some great advice if we will heed it. I know it's simple, but it's more powerful than we think. It says, "A happy heart is good medicine and a cheerful mind works healing..."

Take a moment and think about how you've been approaching life. Do you find yourself just trying to make it through the day? If you're honest with yourself, can you even remember the last time you had a good laugh? Well, I want you to know that the joy of the Lord can ease anxiety, depression, and emotional and physical pain...it can bring you a new level of satisfaction in life.

Laughter is the outward evidence of inward joy, and it is proven to make you feel better. I once heard someone say that laughter is like

internal jogging, and I think that is so true. Laughter improves emotional and mental health, it lifts our spirits, and it dispels worry.

It's almost impossible to laugh and be sad at the same time. This is why we would be wise to express our joy and take time to laugh every chance we get. God has given us the ability to laugh for a reason. It may seem like a little thing, but laughter is vitally important in the battle against discouragement, stress, anxiety, fear, and worry. It's a tool from God that benefits us in so many ways.

Interestingly, there have been studies done that show laughter has some exciting benefits: Laughter causes the release of endorphins, a chemical in the body that relieves pain and creates a sense of well-being.

It can raise your energy level, relieve tension and change your attitude.

It increases antibodies and strengthens your immune system.

A good belly laugh causes you to inhale more oxygen and stimulates your heart and blood circulation. It's like internal aerobic exercise!

Laughter lifts our spirit, improves our mental, emotional, and physical health, and de-stresses our mind. And (here is the best part)...it costs nothing.

We have a proven, God-given weapon against stress that is free of charge and that we can use at any time, day or night.

Maybe you haven't laughed—I mean really laughed—in a very long time. If that's the case, it's probably adding to the discouragement or depression you may be experiencing today. You'll find that you will feel better after a hearty laugh.

Sometimes I feel clean and refreshed after a good laugh. If I am tired and weary from dealing with life's issues, I often feel like my soul is a dusty closet—stale and in need of fresh air. But when I take the opportunity to have a really good laugh, it seems to "air my soul out," refreshing me and lifting the load off my tired mind.

You may be thinking, "Well, Joyce, I don't have anything to laugh about!" Many times, I don't either, but when you do make the time, you'll be amazed at how different you will begin to view your job, your family, your relationships, yourself, and even your walk with God. You'll become a person whose first response to stressful situations is faith instead



of fear—joy instead of sorrow.

Philippians 4:4 (AMPC) says, "Rejoice in the Lord always [delight, gladden yourselves in Him]; again I say, Rejoice!"

As you go about your day, **make this your goal: Rejoice in the Lord!** As the joy of the Lord gives you strength, you'll be able to face any problems you have to deal with, and you'll enjoy your life while you're doing it.

If you're like I was—if you're too serious about life—it's time to lighten up! Learn to laugh at yourself and the things that normally frustrate you. You don't have to laugh about your problems, but thankfully, you can laugh as you trust God to take care of them.

No matter what you're going through today—no matter how intimidating your situation feels, no matter how stressful things are, and regardless of how discouraging life may seem—always remember that God loves you.

You are special to Him, and He sees what you're going through. He cares about every detail of your life, and He is already working on a solution for the things that threaten to overwhelm you.

So, when things get tough and you feel like giving up, make a decision to run to God and place your trust in Him—decide to rejoice right in the middle of what you're going through. Because He's the One Who can take away all of your worries, cares and anxieties... and fill you with joy.

For more on this topic, order Joyce's three-part teaching resource *Joy and Enjoyment*. 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.

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Photo by Keith R. Cerny

As bees buzz around his head, Alamosa beekeeper Devin Haynie gathers up a swarm of honeybees near the corner of Main and San Juan downtown around noon Wednesday. The estimated 20,000-25,000 bees were transferred to a hive overseen by fellow Alamosa beekeeper Aaron Miltenberger.

What's the buzz?

Honeybee swarm collected for new hive

By KEITH R. CERNY

ALAMOSA — An estimated swarm of 20,000-25,000 honeybees were collected near the corner of Main and San Juan here around noon Wednesday. Beekeeper Devin Haynie said the bees likely came from a natural hive in the downtown area and were first seen on a chimney at The Hub operated by the Boys and Girls Clubs of the San Luis Valley at Sixth and San Juan. He would not disclose the location of the natural hive.

Fittingly, a sign posted in front of The Hub states "Save the Bees" by spreading wildflowers in a "Generation Wild" promotion. Generation Wild is a movement by Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) to encourage kids to plant wildflowers to help save bees with over 100,000 packets of seeds distributed statewide.

Haynie explained that it's normal for a hive to divide and move to a new location as part of their natural reproduction cycle and can do so up to three times per year. He has been a registered beekeeper for about eight years.

Before forming a swarm, bees "gorge themselves on resources to produce honey," he explained, thereby limiting the distance they and the queen bee can fly. Honey-engorged bees weigh in at about 10,000 bees per pound, Haynie said, and he estimates he collected

about two and one-half pounds of bees, therefore netting around 25,000 bees.

The swarm is carefully collected into a transfer box and doesn't typically have as much protective instinct while forming a new colony, he said. He recalls collecting bee swarms in that general vicinity at least three times in recent years. Bees are then transferred to a new hive.

Haynie said this swarm was adopted by fellow Alamosa beekeeper Aaron Miltenberger, executive director of the Boys and Girls Clubs, who lost his hive over this past winter. Both Haynie and Miltenberger are contacts for the bee swarm hotline operated by the Colorado State Beekeepers Association (CSBA), primarily taking calls in Alamosa, Conejos and Costilla counties.

Haynie had a similar call earlier this week for a bee swarm at the Rio Grande Farm Park in East Alamosa. He encouraged residents who encounter a bee swarm to call the hotline rather than attempt to kill the bees, noting their importance in the pollination of plants, including food production.

The hotline number is 1-844-SPY-BEES (844-779-2337) or visit the CSBA website at <https://coloradobeekeepers.org/>.

CSBA encourages people to support local beekeepers by purchasing locally crafted bee products including honey, propolis, pollen and wax. Local farmer's markets are a great location to find honey and other bee products.

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Saguache County Childcare Committee Request for Proposals for Assessment to Remodel Childcare Facility in Saguache, Colorado

The Saguache County Childcare Committee is a coalition of community members and Saguache County employees to establish a daycare facility in Saguache, Colorado. We are seeking proposals from licensed contractors to assess 710 Denver Avenue, Saguache, Colorado for renovation needs, in compliance with regulations of the State of Colorado for Childcare Facilities. The purpose of this RFP is to invite contractors with relevant experience to submit proposals to the Saguache County Childcare Committee.

The Assessment will include:

- Physical building upgrades and repairs, including but not limited to carpentry, roofing, flooring, and painting.
- Bathroom renovations for ADA compliance
- Kitchen renovations for commercial kitchen compliance
- Heating upgrades
- Plumbing upgrades
- Electrical upgrades
- Playground, grounds, and fencing upgrades

The ideal contractor will have a record of experience with:

- General contracting includes the ability to assess carpentry, heating, plumbing, and electrical.
- Knowledge of commercial kitchen regulations and ADA compliance.
- Responsive communication.

The selected contractor will be responsible for assessing the building, with possible assistance from a qualified consultant on Child Care Facility regulations.

Please include in proposal:

- A description of the contractor, including name(s) and credentials of those that would be involved in the project.
- A description of the previous relevant experience of the contractor.
- Proposed budget.
- Schedule availability.
- General Liability insurance documentation and documentation of Workers' Compensation insurance as required by the Labor Code of the State of Colorado and Employers Liability Insurance. Evidence of qualified self-insured status may be substituted.

Direct general RFP project questions to Wendi Maez, Saguache County Administrator, at wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov. Proposals may be submitted by email to wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov by the deadline of **Friday July 31, 2024, at 3pm.**

No. 1702 published in the Center Post Dispatch, Thursday, July 11, 18 and 25, 2024.

AG Weiser talks youth mental health, mergers and fences

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER

ALAMOSA — While he was in the San Luis Valley this week, Colorado Attorney General Phil Weiser told the Valley Courier, “I have an obligation as the people’s lawyer to really listen hard and find solutions [to problems]. That’s what I’ve done in a range of other areas and that’s what I’m going to do here.”

FENCES

Weiser was repeating what he had told a large group of residents from San Luis who had gathered to discuss egregious damages and hardship caused by a 20-mile 8-foot wire grid fence around an area known as La Sierra, an area of deep, historic importance. The fence was erected by William Harrison, the billionaire ranch owner from Texas.

The fence, people told Weiser, is restricting the ability of wildlife to reach sources of water and interfering with typical patterns of migration. Its construction also involved the bulldozing of a 20-yard-wide path through forests and habitats, causing further harm to wildlife and creating significant erosion that has resulted in large deposits of sediment on property outside of the ranch.

“I have not seen many public meetings like I just witnessed,” Weiser said. “Over 70 people at that meeting in the middle of a workday in a county that has 1,000 people. People wanted and needed to be

heard. I listened and learned a lot about how this fence is affecting the community, the water and wildlife and even mental health.

“We’re going to work with the county and see what we can do. I have an obligation as the people’s lawyer to really listen hard and find solutions. That’s what I’ve done in a range of other areas and that’s what I’m going to do with this fence, as well. We’ve committed to work with the county and to make sure that no one gets bullied, or their rights get trampled.”

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

Weiser, who was in Alamosa for the grand opening of Hope in the Valley, is also focused on youth mental health.

In 2020, Weiser, on behalf of the state of Colorado, filed a lawsuit against Juul Labs after an investigation showed the company was targeting youth in their marketing of e-cigarettes and misrepresenting the health risks.

The lawsuit was successful, and Weiser reached a multi-state settlement of \$462 million, of which \$31.7 million was allocated to Colorado.

“We’ve already given out our first round of grants from suing Juul. We just announced \$817,000 in grants to the valley. That’s round one,” he said.

“Now we’re working on round two. We want to see school-community partnerships addressing youth mental health.”

Weiser recalled a roundtable discussion in 2023 devoted to the topic of youth mental health.

“Jamie Dominguez talked about his work that he’s doing with young people. Cindy Medina is teaching kids to fish and to read. We know there are a lot of programs and collaborations working with young people. The goal is how do we lift them all up? How do we bring people together for young people who are hurting? I’m really looking forward to what type of grant proposal people can put together here,” he said.

According to information from the Office of the Attorney General, of the \$817,000 awarded to the San Luis Valley, Alamosa School District received \$244,968; San Luis Valley BOCES received \$273,870; and Sierra Grande School District received \$100,985.

KROGER - ALBERTSONS MERGER

During that same visit in 2023, Weiser met with residents, ag producers, union officials and employees of two of the grocery stores in Alamosa – City Market and Safeway – regarding the proposed merger of Kroger (which owns City Market) and Albertsons (which owns Safeway). If the merger happens, there is the likelihood that the future of Safeway is uncertain.

According to a Tuesday announcement from Albertsons Companies and Kroger, 89 of the 103 existing Safeway stores in Colorado



Photo by Priscilla Waggoner

Colorado Attorney General Phil Weiser listens to Alamosa resident, Darrell Cooper, about the Kroger-Albertson merger.

would be sold to C&S Wholesalers Grocers, a company based in New Hampshire. Included in the list is Safeway in Alamosa.

“That was a powerful conversation, and I took it with me. People were saying we need to take more control of our local food ecosystem. We have too little competition, too little local food available. This merger is already taking a problematic situation and making it worse,” he said.

In February of 2024, Weiser filed a lawsuit in Denver District Court to block the \$24.6 billion proposed merger.

When asked for an update, he said, “The hearing is in August in Denver. We’re asking for a preliminary injunction to stop this merger from

happening. The Federal Commission is bringing its own case in Oregon - some states are part of that. We’re bringing our own case here in state court, and Washington is bringing their case to state court, too.”

One area of expertise in Weiser’s background is antitrust after he served as senior counsel to the Assistant AG for the Justice Department Antitrust Division from 1996 to 1998 followed by his 2009 appointment by President Obama as Deputy Attorney General in the Justice Department’s Antitrust Division.

“I think we’re going to win,” Weiser said. “We’ve got the right arguments on our side. We’ve got the evidence we’ve collected. And this is really important to the people of Colorado.”

SAGUACHE

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10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

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County Courthouse lawn and Saguache Hotel courtyard-Downton Saguache/4th Street

Contact Carla Quintana, Saguache Chamber of Commerce, for Hollyhock Festival inquiries @ 719-530-1707.

Email Sarah Krantz for more information about the Arts Walk @ saguacheartswalk@gmail.com

Special thanks to Saguache County, Town of Saguache and Tourism Council for funding this event.



Lifestyles

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Faith Hinkley Veterans Memorial Park Fundraiser July 27

By MARIE MCCOLM

MONTE VISTA — The Faith Hinkley Veteran's Memorial Park Fundraiser is being held from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday, July 27, at Chapman Park in Monte Vista.

The event will raise funds toward the completion of the Memorial Paver Installation Project, at Faith Hinkley Veteran's Memorial Park. This is sure to be a memorable event and will honor local fallen

heroes and all the brave women and men who have served.

The City of Monte Vista is hosting this event. This is going to be an exciting experience from beginning to end for the entire family. There will be a poker run, a car and motorcycle show, vendors, food trucks, a beer garden, and music from a DJ and live bands. There will be kids games, a cornhole tournament, a dunk tank, and much more.

The Faith Hinkley Memorial Park Project began March 10, 2011. The City of Monte Vista, partnered with the Monte Vista School District to create the beloved park to celebrate and remember the lives of fallen U.S. Army Sgt. Faith Hinkley, and U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Glen E. Martinez. There have been many donations over the years from local businesses, and residents to help finish the park. This year, a stone will also be added by local

businessman Bob Richards, and James Pacheco of the Polished Bean, for World War II Veteran George Blake, a Homelake Veterans community resident who passed away recently.

The fundraiser will help complete the Memorial Park project. Everything kicks off at 9 a.m. at Chapman Park with a poker run hosted by Larry Garner. Registration for this event opens at 8 a.m.

Please see PARK on Page 3



Photo by Lyndsie Ferrell

Two pieces of Del Norte's history were brought to the Rio Grande County Museum from the Del Norte Public Library for preservation. The Fremont Monument and the 150-year-old Del Norte Flouring Company original grist wheels are now on display.

Local monuments from Del Norte Public Library find new home at museum

STAFF REPORT

DEL NORTE — With the Downtown Revitalization Project getting underway in Del Norte, the Rio Grande County Museum and Del Norte Public Library partnered on another project and saved two cherished monuments that would have been without a home.

While planning for the new sidewalk installation, engineers noted that both the Fremont and Del Norte Flouring Mill wheels in front of the library would need to be moved. Both monuments have been in front of the library for well over 70 years and

were placed in front of the library by the local Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) sometime in the 1950s.

The wheels were made with local quarry stone sourced from the original stone quarry outside of Del Norte. The grist wheels were used to make the first white flour in Del Norte in 1876. The land which the flouring mill was on was owned by J. Cary French but after an extended visit to Kansas for the birth of his daughter, Salome French, his claim on the land was jumped by Paul Steele.

Please see MUSEUM on Page 3

Rhythms on Rio lineup has 'something for everyone'

Long running music festival set for Aug. 2-4

By R. SCOTT RAPPOLD

DEL NORTE — Rhythms on the Rio, the San Luis Valley's largest and longest-running music festival, will return to Del Norte on Aug. 2-4.

Organized by the South Fork Music Association, it has been held annually since 2006, except 2020 and 2021, to raise money to put musical instruments in the hands of San Luis Valley kids. Last year the event raised \$15,000 for local school music programs.

This will be the third year it has been held in Del Norte, after the festival grounds in South Fork were sold for an RV park. It attracts music lovers from across Colorado, the region, and national visitors for the family-friendly atmosphere, affordable prices and idyllic mountain setting.

Organization president Scott Stecken said they are capping 3-day passes, which include camping, at 500 fewer than last year. *Please see RGYTHMS on Page 3*

Daniel Donato's Cosmic Country will be performing on Saturday, Aug. 3, at Rhythms on the Rio. He will be performing to sets, including a recreation of Bob Dylan's 'Nashville Skyline.'

Courtesy photo



Covered Wagon Days just weeks away

By LYNDISIE FERRELL

DEL NORTE — As this busy summer begins to slide toward fall in the Valley, Del Norte is gearing up for its annual Covered Wagon Days and the four-day event is set to be a grand time for all.

Beginning on Thursday, Aug. 1, the town will be a great place to come for an afternoon of fun, farmers markets and music in the park. Kathy's Fabric Trunk will be hosting the annual quilt show and the Rio Grande County Museum has opened an antique quilt and clothing show for all to enjoy. The San Luis Valley quilt Guild will be selling their \$10 items to raise money for several charity projects for the coming year.

The Town of Del Norte will be hosting its Thursday night Music in the Park and Mercado Del Norte will be set up in the Del Norte Town Park for an evening of live entertainment and fun for the entire family.

Friday will feature the annual Veteran's

Dinner at the High Valley Community Center with proceeds going toward Veteran services and places like the Homelake Veteran's center in Monte Vista. Tickets for the dinner can be purchased at the door.

Saturday will be a day packed full of fun beginning early in the morning with the Val Alto Pancake breakfast and followed by the Bees Knees 5K walk and run that takes participants along trails in some of Del Norte's beautiful back country. Whether looking to fill up on pancakes or participate in the 5K, both are at the High Valley Community Center.

By 7:30 a.m., people can also wander to the Del Norte Public Library's annual Booksale. This event is a great place to come and stock up on books for the coming winter or even as a gift for the bookworms out there! All proceeds from this event go towards the library.

The annual Covered Wagon Days parade kicks

Please see DAYS on Page 3



Covered Wagon Days in Del Norte are only a few weeks away.

File photo

Saguache County celebrates school trail

By JOHN WATERS

BACA GRANDE — Saguache County officials including Commissioner Lynn Thompson, Commissioner Tom McCracken and County Administrator Wendi Maez were joined by other local officials including Crestone Mayor Benjamin Byer and former Mayor Kairina Danforth on July 1 for a new trail ribbon cutting.

Formally known as the Saguache County-Crestone Safe Routes to School Trail (SRTS) it will link the Baca Grande area to the Crestone Charter School.

The trail is part of a Trails Master Plan developed by the Eastern San Luis Trails Coalition with the Support of San Luis Valley Great Outdoors.

Commissioner McCracken said, "This was conceived seven years ago and is a collaboration between the Town of Crestone, Saguache County, the Crestone Charter School, the Baca Grande Property Owners Association, and SLV GO."

Funding comes from the Gates Family

Foundation, Colorado Safe Routes to School, Saguache County, Colorado Health Foundation, U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration and the Colorado Department of Transportation.

Phase 1 funding is \$1,434,084, and phase 2 is \$508,000.

The project manager is Maez, and the trails coalition project coordinator is Burt Wadman.

When completed, the paved trail will extend over a mile and connect Palomino Way and the Crestone Charter School.

Local officials and community leaders gathered on Camino Baca Grande in the Baca Grande area of Saguache County to celebrate progress on a Safe Routes to School Trail that will soon have a groundbreaking. The trail will allow school students a safe path to walk to the Crestone Charter School.

Photo by John Waters



Round 2 of the summer is here

By HIGH VALLEY COMMUNITY CENTER

DEL NORTE — High Valley Community Center is so glad to have everyone back after our break! July has already been a whirlwind of fun, and we cannot wait to see what other excitement is in store.

There are some super exciting field trips coming up! We are going to Pagosa Springs for a movie and park day on July 17, the Rio Grande Farm Park on July 24, and Lathrop State Park on Aug. 1 to end the summer on a high note. Please keep an eye out for our field trip cards with all the details online and on the front desk each week.

This past week, we learned the sport of fishing with Colorado Parks and Wildlife! We all ventured out to Beaver Creek Reservoir with fishing poles in hand to catch as many fish as possible. The kids had so much fun learning about how to hook their bait on and techniques to give them the best chance at reeling in a big one. They even got to take a fishing pole home!

We are so excited for another week of fun. Find updates online at the HVCC.org. HVCC would not be possible without the support of our community! Please consider donating to help us continue to build and implement excellent programming to teach our youth how to have a positive impact on the world around them.

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MUSEUM

Continued from Page 1



Photo by Lyndsie Ferrell

Over the years, the land exchanged hands and in October of 1876 the mill was erected after \$16,000 was raised by the Town of Del Norte. The Oct. 6, 1876, Del Norte Prospector reads, "Del Norte is going to get its flouring mill. Outside the town a \$16,000 fund was raised to build the mill and Sam Kaucher, from Denver, was here to find a site and build the mill. Farmers are being urged to plant more wheat."

The Del Norte Flouring Mill was born but it didn't last long. Over the next 10 years, the mill fell into disrepair and was forgotten in the boom days of Summitville and the following silver boom in Creede. The wheels were moved at one point and were later found behind the library when the DAR organization came to install the Fremont Monument,

according to sources.

The Fremont Monument is a Colorado Historic marker, marking the area in which Fremont and his doomed men camped as they wandered into the La Garita Mountains in search of the fastest and easiest route to reach California in 1848. The monument is on the state's historic register as monument No. 152 and represents a significant part of the Valley's unique history.

Both monuments have found a new home at the museum and are on display for people to see thanks to the many efforts of the Town of Del Norte Public Works Director Kevin Larimore, Del Norte Public Library Board President Glynnis Williams and the Rio Grande County Museum.

RHYTHMS

Continued from Page 1

year, to reduce overcrowding in the campground. He said these passes will likely sell out.

"The lineup is good. It has something for everybody. If you like rhythm and blues done the right way, you can't miss (Friday headliner) The California Honeydrops, with some funk mixed in there," he said.

"We've got some of the best up-and-coming acts in the jamgrass scene on Saturday, culminating with Daniel Donato's Cosmic Country, who is creating his own genre of music."

"And you can't go wrong with (Sunday headliner) Keller Williams. So, this is going to be a nationally recognized lineup that has something for everybody to enjoy."

Three-day passes are \$190, with a \$25 option for early entry Thursday. Campers and trailers require an RV pass. All can be purchased at RhythmsOnTheRio.com.

Single-day tickets (which don't

include camping) are \$60 Friday, \$70 Saturday and \$50 Sunday. Youth tickets (ages 13-15) are \$25. Children 12 and under are free. They can be purchased online or at the festival gate. Camping passes are \$30 more each night.

On Aug. 1, the Thursday before the festival, the festival is co-sponsoring, along with the Town of Del Norte, free live music in the town park, featuring Grateful Dead cover band Easy Jim.

The festival is held the same weekend as Del Norte's Covered Wagon Days, and Stecken said there have been noticeably more festival-goers at the parade and other events. With hot weather, last year also saw hundreds of people swimming in the Rio Grande.

The lineup is as follows:

- Friday: Alysha Brilla, Clay Street Unit, Alo and The California Honeydrops.

- Saturday: Armchair Boogie, The Fretliners, Shadowgrass, The Lil Smokies and Daniel Donato's Cosmic

Country, which will do two sets, including a full cover of the Bob Dylan album "Nashville Skyline."

- Sunday: Cousin Curtiss, The Runaway Grooms, Magic Beans, Digging Dirt and Keller Williams' Grateful Grass featuring the Hillbenders

DAYS

Continued from Page 1

off at 10 a.m. along Grande Avenue which will be closed this year from 10 a.m. until noon. This year's theme is "The good, the bad and the ugly" which should bring out the true old west side of Del Norte.

Following the parade is the annual Ice Cream Social at the Rio Grande County Museum and the barbecue lunch fundraiser at the Del Norte Fire Department.

Saturday afternoon brings people to the Del Norte Town Park where there will be vendors, a car show and something for everyone to enjoy. Sunday morning is the annual fly-in breakfast at the Kent Rominger Airport and church in the Town Park followed by a barbecue lunch.

For a full schedule of events, visit www.coveredwagondays.com.



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

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Solution to last week's puzzle

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

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07 Help Wanted

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plications can be picked up at the District Office or online at www.urtigers.co.

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36 Miscellaneous

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For the Conejos and Costilla areas. Writing and photography experience necessary. Send resume, writing and photography samples to Valley Publishing Inc., P.O. Box 607, Monte Vista, CO 81144 or email bwilliams@valleypublishinginc.com

All breeds & ages of animals are a "best guess" and are not guaranteed to be accurate. Adoption fee includes: neuter/spay, vaccinations, de-worming and micro-chipping.
This ad space donated by Valley Publishing Inc.

Valley Wide Classifieds

SOLAR PANELS! Large and small. Inverters, charge controllers, lead acid and lithium batteries. Brand names include Outback, Magnum, AIMS, EG4, Sol-Ark, and Rolls. Custom cables and PV wire. Bon-trager's Variety Store. 9726 S. CR 3E Monte Vista. 719-852-0500. (TFN)

ing, etc. Drug/Alcohol free. Free Estimates 719-496-7630. (TFN)
LICENSED PLUMBER does all types of plumbing repairs and plumbing remodels at reasonable rates. Quick service. Call anytime, available weekends and evenings. 719-580-0033 or 719-376-2593.

the best prices? Call THE BLIND GUY at 970-799-0388 for a free estimate. (TFN)
Sprinkler repair and winterizations. Done at reasonable rates. Quick Service. Call anytime, weekdays, weekends, evenings. 719-580-0033 or 719-376-2593. (TFN)

DISCLAIMER — Please read your ad on the first day of publication. If there are mistakes notify us immediately. We will make changes for errors and adjust your credit but only if we receive notice on the first day the ad is published. We limit our liability to you in this way and we do not accept liability for any other damages which may result from an error or omission in an ad. All ad copy must be approved by the newspaper which reserves the right to request changes, reject or properly classify an ad. The advertiser and not the newspaper is responsible for the truthful content of the ad. All classified advertising must be pre-paid.

42 Feed & Seed
For Sale: Small Alfalfa bales \$10. Covered, No rain, and local. Call: 719-480-2089 (8-28)

64 Autos for Sale
For sale - 1990 Toyota 2-wheel drive super clean pickup; 2005 Toyota Tacoma long-bed camper shell; Chevy car 4-speed transmission. 719-850-2027

65 Professional Services
Need Storage, We Build New Storage Sheds, HY Country Sheds Call 719-849-8106 (9-4)

Let Me Haul Off Your, Old Appliances and Recyclable Metals for You. Call Chris for Prices and To Set Up A Removal 719-395-2071 (8-7)

Fire Mitigation: Weed And brush mowing to reduce fire danger. Call Darrell 715-699-3703 (9-11)

WE BUY ANTLER: \$16/lb for Elk Grade A and \$11/lb for Deer Grade A. 5 miles west of Del Norte on Hwy 160. 719-657-0942 (TFN)

RELIABLE CARPENTRY 40-plus years-experience in carpentry, painting, stucco, tile, drywall, roof-

Need beautiful window blinds at

Christmas In July Sale!

Get the Latest Smartphones On Us!

Includes A Free Charging Block!

New and renewing customers get up to \$770 off the purchase of a new Galaxy S24 series or iPhone 15 series phone when they trade in a qualifying phone and activate it on a Viaero Better, Best, Ultra, First Responder, or Single Unlimited plan. Requires phone trade-in and ASP. Sales tax on the full price of the device is due at purchase. Requires approved credit. Taxes and fees not included. Certain restrictions and exclusions may apply.

VIAERO WIRELESS

SAGUACHE

*Join us July 27th, 2024
 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.*

Arts Walk & Hollyhock Festival

Featuring local & regional artists and crafters, live music, fairy houses, children's activities, and Hollyhock Garden viewings.

Come enjoy galleries, restaurants, shops and booths.

County Courthouse lawn and Saguache Hotel courtyard-Downton Saguache/4th Street

Contact Carla Quintana, Saguache Chamber of Commerce, for Hollyhock Festival inquiries @ 719-530-1707.

Email Sarah Krantz for more information about the Arts Walk @ saguacheartswalk@gmail.com

Special thanks to Saguache County, Town of Saguache and Tourism Council for funding this event.



Open Quilt Show returning to SLV Fair

MONTE VISTA — The SLV Fair is bringing back the Open Quilt Show. This is a show only; entries will not be judged. The goal is to showcase the wonderful talent in the San Luis Valley. It is open to all ages, and there is no entry fee.

People can also submit the quilt's story, if there is one.

People can bring their quilt on Tuesday, Aug. 6, from 8-10 a.m. For more information, call Janae Naranjo at 719-480-4212 or Brandy Meyers at 719-849-1522.

PARK Continued from Page 1

The \$20 fee for the run also gets you into the car show; any licensed vehicle, cars, trucks, and motorcycles are welcome to attend the run. At 9 a.m., everyone will follow Garner from Chapman Park, and the poker run will visit five historic sites. According to Garner, everyone from the run should be back by around 12:30 p.m.

At 10 a.m., the park activities will open for everyone to enjoy. Registration for a cornhole tournament will take place at 10 a.m., with the tournament starting at 11.

From 12 to 4 p.m., there will be live music, in this order, Marc Albion, The Rooster/Mikey Dynamic Drum Duo, Ol Scratch, and the SLV Big Band. At 2 p.m., the car show will commence, and at 5 p.m. there will be non-traditional fun awards given out for the car show, and at 6 p.m. the event will end.

All day long vendors will be selling their wares in the park, there will also be a lot of fun games going in the park for the kids to enjoy, including bouncy houses, and there will be a dunk tank, too. Nine food trucks are scheduled to be at the event. The food trucks will range from Mexican to American and all that's in between. There will also be a beer garden hosted by Colorado Farm Brew.

Students from the Byron Syring DELTA Center created some amazing T-shirts that will be available at the event for purchase for \$25.

The City of Monte Vista would like to thank all of the amazing sponsors that have donated to the event including, Valley Tractor Repair LLC, the Nazarene Thrift Store, RG Bank, The LOR Foundation Inc, Poole Agribusiness, H&R Block, Mackey Construction, The Roberts Team, Proud Military Parents and Supporters, O&V Printing Inc, Troy Plane Insurance Agency, David Hinkley, Rocky Mountain Memorabilia, and Brown's Septic.

Food truck vendor registration is closed, but there is still time to donate to the cause for the completion of the park and register to be a vendor. For more information about registering, contact City Clerk Unita Vance at City Hall at 719-852-6171.

Vance is proud to be a part of the team that helped put this all together, as according to her and City Manager Gigi Dennis, the city has never hosted an event like this.

"Without everyone working on this together, it would not have been possible. We want to thank all our sponsors, and everyone at the city for pulling together to make this possible," Vance said.

Garner said, "This is a one-time event, to help finish the Faith Hinkley Memorial Park. I would really like to encourage people to come to this particular event, because it is so important."

City Manager Dennis said she appreciates all the hard work that all the city members have put in and all the sponsors and donations.

"Everyone has really pulled together to help with this event," she said.

Dennis also thanked Colette Skeff and her family for their generous donation of \$30,000 to help finish the park.

Skeff had this to say of the donation that she made, "These funds are in memory of Ray Skeff, Colette Skeff, and Margaret Skeff Family Funds. We

are proud and honored to make this \$30,000 donation to the Faith Hinkley Memorial Park. The park provides a beautiful memorial to honor the veterans who have passed as well as celebrate those with us today who have served our country. The fundraiser by the City of Monte Vista inspired the Skeff families to make the donation to help the city with the funds to complete the park."

ESTIMATED CROP WATER USE

Weather Data from SLV Research Center located on the 9N and Hwy 285

Crop	Date Planted	Daily Crop Water use for Dates Shown (in./day)				Accumulated Water Use (ET) From 7/18 (inches)				
		7/18	7/17	7/16	7/15	2day	3day	4day	5day	7day
Moravian 69	04/05	0.12	0.14	0.12	0.13	0.26	0.38	0.51	0.67	1.04
Moravian 69	05/05	0.19	0.21	0.18	0.18	0.40	0.58	0.76	0.98	1.45
Early Wheat	04/05	0.14	0.17	0.14	0.15	0.31	0.46	0.60	0.80	1.22
Early Wheat	05/05	0.19	0.21	0.18	0.18	0.40	0.58	0.76	0.98	1.45
White Wheat	04/05	0.17	0.20	0.17	0.17	0.37	0.55	0.72	0.94	1.41
White Wheat	05/05	0.19	0.21	0.18	0.18	0.40	0.58	0.76	0.98	1.45
WinterWheat	10/01	0.09	0.11	0.10	0.10	0.20	0.30	0.40	0.53	0.81
Potatoes										
Norkotah	05/05	0.20	0.22	0.19	0.19	0.42	0.61	0.80	1.03	1.52
Centennial	05/05	0.19	0.21	0.18	0.18	0.40	0.58	0.76	0.98	1.43
Nugget	05/05	0.18	0.20	0.17	0.17	0.38	0.55	0.72	0.93	1.36
Alfalfa	Est.	0.22	0.24	0.20	0.20	0.46	0.66	0.87	1.12	1.66
Lawnglass	Est.	0.18	0.20	0.17	0.17	0.38	0.55	0.72	0.93	1.38

For the latest ET information, call 719-754-3494 extension x40 for Center, x36 for Center #2, and x38 for La Jara. Use the crop maturity and planting data and weather station closest to your own. Find this up June 8 table each day at this web address: <http://aes-slvr.c.colostate.edu/daily-crop-water-use-report/>
This information is provided by the SLV Research Center (Colorado State University) and the Colorado Potato Certification Service. For info, call 754-3494 x26 or e-mail: andrew.houser@colostate.edu

CONSIGNMENT AUCTION

Friday & Saturday, July 26-27, 2024

Friday
Tack 3:00 PM
Horses 4:00 PM

Saturday - 9 AM
Tack, Machinery
Antiques, etc

Directions: From Monte Vista, CO take Hwy 15 (Gun Barrel) South 13½ miles to 26503 County Road 6, LaJara, CO 81140

HORSES: *FLASH - 3 year old black Stndbrd/Morgan gelding, quiet, well mannered, is driving good and will meet you at the gate. *SPECKLES - 4 year old red & white paint pony/quarter horse mare, TSS, broke to ride & drive single or double and for anyone. *SONNY - 2yr old 33" red roan mini horse gelding, broke to drive. *MIDNIGHT - yearling black Friesian/stnbrd mare. *BUBBA - 2 yr. old dark bay 37" mini pony gelding, broke to drive. *ROCKEY - 3 yr. old registered buckskin quarter horse gelding, 14.3 hh, quiet, gentle, well started, will finish out big & blocky. *TWILA - 3 yr old brown & white paint 34" mini pony mare, broke to drive and bred to mini pony for '25. *PEARL - 8 yr old registered bay standardbred mare, deluxe surrey horse, women can drive, watches bigger trucks some. *BENTLY - 2 yr. old brown and white 28" mini pony gelding, broke to drive. *SHADY D - 4 yr. old registered 15 hh chestnut quarter horse gelding, gentle, easy to please, finish him the way you like. *NO NAME - 7 yr. old buckskin quarter horse, broke to ride. *BUD - 3 yr. old 59" black Friesian/Quarter horse gelding, rides good, drives single or double, been worked in the field, will make a companion. *SPEEDY - 12 yr. old gruella mini mule gelding, broke to ride and drive, tough enough for a day's work yet quiet enough for the children, super cute. 52 horses, ponies, & mules were consigned to last years' auction.

LAWN & GARDEN: Gas jugs, Aluminum scoop shovel, 100 lb. & 20 lb. propane cylinders, 500 gallon & 1000 gallon propane tanks (new), step ladders, extension ladders, 150 gallon poly tank, 250 gallon poly totes, MS180 Stihl chain saw, several sizes pet taxis, plus much more.

TACK & SADDLES: English & western style horse and pony size saddles, cross bucks, canvas pack panniers, load of new tack including: Lead ropes, halters, feed buckets, breast collars, headstalls, mounting blocks, whips, lariats, girths, reins, apple pickers, horse blankets, curbs, harness hooks, tack racks, hay nets, bits, bio pony harnesses, air tired low rider youth top buggy, single Delaware style top buggy, pony carts, 10' x 18' steel Run-in style horse shelter, and much much more.

TOOLS & MISC. Ridgid pipe wrenches, Channellock pliers, Milwaukee, DeWalt, and Ridgid power tools, 3/4" drive socket set, T-post driver, barb wire, solar water heating panels, 40 gallon propane water heater, rough cut lumber, metal roofing, skid steer attachments include: 4200 lb. & 5500 lb. pallet forks, 3 prong & 4 prong custom hay spears, dirt bucket, snow plow, trailer mover, JCT rock picker, quick attach plate, tractor bucket, 8", 10", 12", 14", & 16" pipe gates, continuous fence panels, transmission jack, 10' x 12' t1-11 storage barn, 300 gallon fuel tank on stand, "Lifetime" tables, chairs, benches, etc., 16' flatbed trailer with new paint, new floor, and lights, 16' Aluminum boat and trailer with 15 hp outboard & more.

ANTIQUES: Whiskey barrel, metal fruit press, butcher kettle, copper kettle, sad iron heater, snow shoes, egg crate, copper boiler, camel saddles, seed planters, TEXACO fuel jug and sign, CONOCO fuel jug, galvanized cowboy bathtub, Davis swing churn, ox yokes, metal signage, water pump, wash machine with hand crank wringer, hand agitators, wooden butter churn, coal shovel, sifter shovels, wooden forks, wagon jack, 50lb-150lb anvils, blacksmith forge, #2 dinner bell, COKE cooler, "Maytag" gyrotator washer, sack carts, rope maker, cheese cutter, brass bell, smaller swing churn, wooden chicken coop, coin banks, kettle ladles, fence stretchers, old "savage" washer/dryer, Coleman lanterns, steel wheels, old wooden wagon wheels, wooden buggy wheels, flare side "Economy" covered wagon, wooden wheeled wagon, doctor's buggy, claw foot bath tub, load of antiques from Kansas & Missouri, and much more. (Over 800 lots sold at last years' auction)

QUILTS: lots of the good woven rugs and runners, green "Irish Chain" queen size quilt, purple, gray & black, "Trip Around the Wolves" 59½"x59½" wall hanger, green purple & blue "Trip Around the Wolves" 110"x100" quilt, "Old Fashioned Double Wedding Ring 102"x116" quilt, green, yellow & brown Old Fashioned Double Wedding Ring twin size quilt, 94"x114" red & white pieced top, Black, gray & red "Star Medallion" queen size top, 100"x110" green white and brown log cabin at attic windows with deer .

GUNS: Winchester model 1906 22 cal. Pump, Winchester Model 1890 octagon barrel 22 cal. Pump, Winchester mod. 94 lever action 30-30, Winchester mod. 67 single shot 22 cal., Winchester mod 1200 12ga Pump, Marlin mod. 39A 22 cal. Lever action, Stevens mod. 325 30-30 bolt action, Stevens 22 cal. Crack-shot, Savage mod. 24 over/under 22/410, Flobert 22 cal Octagon barrel, Iver Johnson single shot .410, Old double barrel Damascus steel side hammer shotgun, R26 Ravin Crossbow.

THIS IS ONLY A PARTIAL LISTING. WE WILL BE ACCEPTING YOUR QUALITY CONSIGNMENTS UNTIL FRIDAY NOON, JULY 26. WE WILL NOT ACCEPT ELECTRONICS, GLASSWARE, TIRES, FURNITURE, BOX LOTS, AND JUNK. WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO REFUSE ANY ITEMS. WE WILL BE SELLING IN MULTIPLE RINGS ALL DAY SO COME OUT AND SPEND THE DAY BIDDING, BUYING, SOCIALIZING, AND EATING GOOD FOOD WITH US.

Terms: Cash, Credit Card or good check. Nothing removed from premises until paid for. Not responsible for accidents or theft. Everything is sold "AS IS, WHERE IS". Announcements day of auction take precedence over printed material.

Vendor Booths
are welcome

For More Info Contact
Phil Eicher 719-849-8261
Tim Graber 719-588-5757

No Buyers Premium

RV's Are Welcome

Auctioneers include
Mel Yoder-MO, Morris Yoder-KS, Calvin Raber-IN, Jess Raber-IN
Les Longenecker - PA, Nathaniel Longenecker - CO

Lunch & Bake Sale by Amish School

Bring A Friend

Multiple Rings All Day

Rainbow trout added to Blanca Vista Pond

CONTRIBUTED

ALAMOSA — Rainbow trout were added to Blanca Vista Pond. The City of Alamosa sent out a press release thanking the multiple sponsors of the project.

“The City of Alamosa would like to thank Donnie Bautista and Sand Dunes Recreation Inc. for spearheading a fish stocking effort at Blanca Vista Pond in Alamosa,” city officials stated.

Every day, people can drive by and see many kids outside enjoying the local fishery. Other financial contributors included Jared Myers and Allied Potato Co., Dylan Brown and the Dylan Brown Farmers Insurance Agency, and Richard Esquibel and the High Peak Event Company, the city stated.

The City of Alamosa contributed \$4,000 toward 620 pounds of rainbow trout.

A special thank you to Crowther’s Fish

Farm for providing the fish and throwing in a few extra “big ones” for the kids.

Blanca Vista Pond is a family fishery designed for kids to learn to fish. Adults 18 and over must have a child accompanying them to fish the pond. CPW stocked over 7,000 fish this spring in the pond and this week’s supplement will further enhance the fishing experience.

“The city expressly thanks Mr. Bautista and all the contributors for supporting children’s activities in the city and their support of Alamosa Parks and Recreation,” city officials stated.

Rainbow trout were added to Blanca Vista Pond. The City of Alamosa sent out a press release thanking the multiple sponsors of the project.

Courtesy photo



San Luis Valley Area Real Estate

Custom mtn cabin + adjacent full apartment
\$575,000 | MLS # Borders Natl Forest
595 Aspen Dr. South Fork, CO

DEE PLUCINSKI
LUXURY HOME BROKER
M: 719-873-5605

NEW PRICE

1,270 Sq.Ft. Off-Grid Cabin on 5.24 Acres - Creek!
\$272,500 | MLS #809447
7541 Indian Creek Rd. Fort Garland, CO

DEE PLUCINSKI
LUXURY HOME BROKER
M: 719-873-5605

28 Acres on the Rio Grande River in South Fork
\$1,550,000 | MLS #807305
27000 US HWY 160 South Fork, CO

DEE PLUCINSKI
LUXURY HOME BROKER
M: 719-873-5605

5 bedroom home - Borders Public Lands - RV STORAGE!!
\$500,000 | MLS #
95 Hubbard Trail, South Fork, CO

DEE PLUCINSKI
LUXURY HOME BROKER
M: 719-873-5605

Secluded cabin on 20 acres - Gated Community
\$975,000 | MLS #803394
3023 Bear Creek Circle, South Fork, CO

DEE PLUCINSKI
LUXURY HOME BROKER
M: 719-873-5605

UNDER CONTRACT

Approximately 160 Acres Farmland
\$400,000 | MLS #810432
05299 County Rd. 12 S. Alamosa, CO

DEE PLUCINSKI
LUXURY HOME BROKER
M: 719-873-5605

Approx. 0.280 Acres Near Rio Grande Club
\$53,500 | MLS #794077
23 Fairway Drive South Fork, CO

DEE PLUCINSKI
LUXURY HOME BROKER
M: 719-873-5605

NEW PRICE

3 bedroom cabin bordering National Forest
\$397,500 | MLS # 812823
99 Aspen Dr. South Fork, CO

DEE PLUCINSKI
LUXURY HOME BROKER
M: 719-873-5605

UNDER CONTRACT

3 bedroom home on 5 acres near Alamosa
\$369,500 | MLS #810965
532 Lane 8 N. Monte Vista, CO

DEE PLUCINSKI
LUXURY HOME BROKER
M: 719-873-5605

DOMESTIC WELL SEPTIC SOLAR

NEW PRICE!

Hunting Cabin on 40 Acres - Bordering National Forest
\$220,000 | MLS #812863
1 Bedroom, 1 Bath Del Norte, CO

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LUXURY HOME BROKER
M: 719-873-5605

Luxury Mountain home on 15 acres in Bear Creek
\$1,399,000 | MLS #813316
682 Bear Creek Circle, South Fork, CO

DEE PLUCINSKI
LUXURY HOME BROKER
M: 719-873-5605

Dee Plucinski
Luxury Home Broker
Licensed in 2011
I know mountain land
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Dee@SLVluxuryproperties.com

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VIDEO WALKTHROUGHS
RESIDENTIAL PHOTOGRAPHER
LICENSED & INSURED DRONE PILOT

All of my properties are detailed in my BLOG
Please scan -->

Rito Hondo Estates- 18 Rural Mtn Lots Avail
17.5 & 35 Acre Lots
Owner Financing Available
West of Antonito in the Conejos Canyon CO

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LUXURY HOME BROKER
M: 719-873-5605

NEW PRICE!

Luxury Home on 42 Acres - Borders Natl. Forest
\$850,000 | MLS #815205
4100 Wilderness Canyon Rd. La Garita, CO

DEE PLUCINSKI
LUXURY HOME BROKER
M: 719-873-5605

Adams State hires VP of Advancement

By ADAMS STATE UNIVERSITY

ALAMOSA — Jacob Rissler accepted the position as Adams State University Vice President of Advancement. He will begin his duties on Aug. 1.

Rissler most recently served as the Director of Institutional Advancement at Mid-Plains Community College in North Platte, Neb. In his role at Adams State, Rissler will oversee Public Relations and Marketing, Alumni Relations, Development, and the Adams State Foundation.

“Mr. Rissler has contagious enthusiasm and I believe he will make a positive impact at Adams

State,” noted President David Tandberg, Ph.D. “He will make a great addition to our executive team. Mr. Rissler has the skills and vision to move Adams State forward. Through his guidance the University will strengthen marketing efforts, maintain key relationships, bring in new resources, and build new partnerships.”

In his role at Mid-Plains Community College, Rissler served as the executive director for the North Platte Community College Foundation, acted as college liaison for the McCook College Foundation, built and maintained strong relationships with individuals and industries with

vested interests in the institution, developed alumni relations, and engaged in community activities/service throughout the college’s 18 county service area. He served as director of development for the Chadron State Foundation prior to the community college position.

“As a premiere Hispanic Serving Institution, Adams State does incredible work supporting all students,” Rissler said. “I look forward to working closely with President Tandberg, and the entire Adams State community, as we raise awareness of the University and strengthen our connections across the beautiful San Luis Valley and beyond.”

Rissler received his bachelor’s

and master’s from Chadron State College, in Chadron, Neb. He is active in Rotary International and looks forward to continuing his membership in the Alamosa club. He is a firm believer in community involvement and was a member of the North Platte Community Playhouse Board of Directors; co-chair of the McCook Communities of Excellence, and a member of the North Platte Area Chamber of Commerce Young Professionals.

“I have already started exploring the San Luis Valley and am eager to engage with Adams State alumni and friends and learn more about the rich culture and history of the area,” Rissler added.



Courtesy photo

Adams State VP of Advancement Jacob Rissler arrives on campus August 1, 2024.

San Luis Valley Area Real Estate

Amazing Ranch Style House with Barn and 50 Acres!
 \$599,000 MLS #811695
 13725 Road 104 South Alamosa, CO

TATE HUFFAKER
 ASSOC. BROKER | REALTOR®
 M: 719-298-6560

Rio Grande Riverfront Home
 4 Bedroom, 4 Bath, Approx. 3,740 Sq. Ft. / and 0.630 Acres
 \$1,595,000 | MLS #815364
 11 Iron Bridge Place South Fork, CO

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

Mountain Outlook /Approx. 69.750 Acres
 \$245,000 | MLS #806781
 000 County Road 13 Del Norte, CO

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

Amazing View and Year-Round Creek Front!
 Approx. 7.520 Acres/\$172,500/MLS# 813894
 1416 Bear Creek Circle, South Fork, CO

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

2 Bedroom, 1 Bath 1,440 Sq. Ft. on 198.07 Acres
 \$2,777,700 | MLS #812760
 5295 County Road 28 Monte Vista, CO

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

CHARMING HOME
 2 Bedroom, 2 Bath, Approx. 1,364 Sq. Ft.
 \$250,000 | MLS #814179
 334 Broadway Monte Vista, CO

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

The Stunning Grande Ponderosa!
 Approx. 2.54 Acres
 \$2,250,000 | MLS #813982
 695 Escondida South Fork, CO

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

Ready to Move in Home!
 \$150,000 MLS #810416
 103 Antonito Street Romeo, CO

TATE HUFFAKER
 ASSOC. BROKER | REALTOR®
 M: 719-298-6560

BEAUTIFUL RIVER LOT FOR SALE!
 APPROX. 0.520 ACRES
 \$174,900/MLS#812252
 63 Doe Circle South Fork, CO

AUNDREA LILLARD
 ASSOC. BROKER | REALTOR®
 M: 706-622-0799

Mountain Paradise! River Island Ranch
 Approx. 9.620 Acres
 \$125,000 | MLS #815119
 423 Frontier Way South Fork, CO

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

Exceptional 70 Acre Ranch Property Borders the Rio Grande River!
 \$2,500,000 MLS #812559
 12286 HWY 112 Del Norte, CO

TATE HUFFAKER
 ASSOC. BROKER | REALTOR®
 M: 719-298-6560

Build Your Private Mountain Retreat!
 APPROX. 1.710 ACRES
 \$112,100/MLS#814971
 545 Church Creek Drive South Fork, CO

AUNDREA LILLARD
 ASSOC. BROKER | REALTOR®
 M: 706-622-0799

Perfect Live/Work Property
 APPROX. 3.47 ACRES
 \$799,000/MLS#813618
 4 El Dorado Lane South Fork, CO

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

AUNDREA LILLARD
 ASSOC. BROKER | REALTOR®
 M: 706-622-0799

Charming Lovely Home
 Approx. 1,544 Sq. Ft. / 3 Bedroom, 2 Bathroom
 \$380,000/MLS#814904
 175 Orondoa Road South Fork, CO

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

AUNDREA LILLARD
 ASSOC. BROKER | REALTOR®
 M: 706-622-0799

Steffens & Co. Realty, Inc.
 719-873-1700
 SteffensRealty@GoJade.org
 30636 W. US HWY 160
 South Fork, Colorado

Fire departments respond to hay trailer ablaze

STAFF REPORT

VALLEY — Alamosa and Monte Vista firefighters both responded to a goose-neck trailer of alfalfa hay on fire about 7:30 p.m. Sunday at the intersection of the 10 South (Waverly Road) and Alamosa-Rio Grande County line.

Alamosa Fire Department Capt. Zach Cerny said the trailer and load of hay were a total loss. The truck towing the trailer was unhitched and unharmed. Firefighters were on scene for about three hours, but the cause of the fire is unknown.

Cerny said both departments responded with seven personnel each, Alamosa with four fire trucks and Monte Vista three.

Alamosa also responded to two fireworks-caused fires on Independence Day, Cerny said, one at the public display at the fairgrounds and another at a personal residence.



Courtesy photo

Alamosa firefighter Johnny Quintana is shown applying water to the trailer of hay on fire Sunday night southwest of town.

SLV 911 Emergency Telephone Authority offers reverse 911

By JOHN WATERS

SAN LUIS VALLEY — Residents throughout the Valley can receive emergency reverse 911 messages through the San Luis Valley Emergency Telephone Authority by visiting the website www.slve911.org.

In 2009, Connecticut became the first state in the nation to utilize a reverse 911 system and they are deployed across the U.S. and Canada. In 2004, reverse 911 was used in Granby, Colorado to notify residents of a bulldozer rampage. Reverse 911 was used during the 2012 Sandy Hook — Newtown Connecticut school shooting.

To receive the emergency messages, visit the website, www.slve911.org and next to the text, “If we can’t REACH you, we can’t ALERT you. Register for FREE emergency alerts,” and click on “sign up here.”

After clicking on the above, you will be directed to the signup questions. After creating a profile and submitting information you will have created an account and be ready to receive emergency messages.

“For many years, the emergency planners and SLV 911 Board have been using Everbridge [slve911.org] to alert citizens to emergencies that may affect them,” said Donna Wehe, Director of Communications and Public Information Officer, San Luis Valley Health. “At SLV Health, we promote the slve911.org website in our newsletter to encourage all staff, their families, and neighbors to sign up. Once per year, all users should login and update their account information.”

“On a personal note, there was a fire in my former neighborhood that could have escalated, and many of us

were put on ‘pre-evacuation’ notice. I was not registered at the time and would have been unaware of the dangerous situation had it not been for a concerned neighbor who was going door to door alerting us. Ever since then, I have been promoting the use of this tool.”

As previously reported in the Valley Courier, Alamosa County residents can also visit the county website at www.alamosacounty.colorado.gov and sign up for a separate reverse 911 system. Residents can sign up for both systems.

The slve911.org system can send messages to cell phones, land lines, text, email and work phones.

Visit www.slve911.org and the Alamosa County website at www.alamosacounty.colorado.gov, to receive notices.

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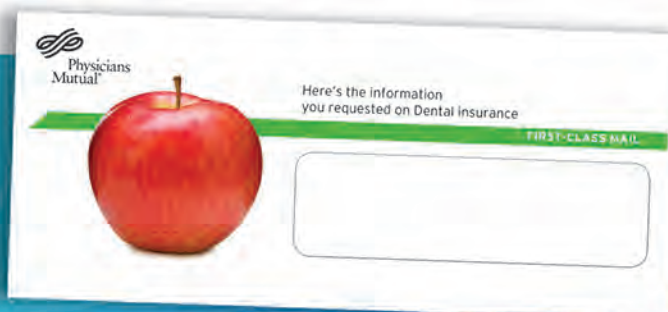
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'Breaking the Silence of Slavery'

A convening of Hispano and Native American heirs of Indigenous enslavement

CONTRIBUTED

SANTA FE, N.M. — Do you have stories of Native American captivity and slavery that have been passed down in your family? Have you thought about what this legacy means to your family and community? The team at Native Bound Unbound invites you to participate in a series of conversations and story gathering events titled Breaking the Silence of Slavery.

This initiative is led by former state historian of New Mexico, Dr. Estevan Rael-Gálvez, whose professional efforts to recover the histories of Indigenous slavery as ethnographer and historian began decades ago. According to Dr. Rael-Gálvez, executive director of Native Bound Unbound, "the story of Indigenous slavery has been quieted over the years by whispers as much as by silence, even by those who have inherited it. If there is any hope for transcendence and healing, we must first break this silence. This is the goal of these gatherings."

These landmark gatherings are aimed towards convening Hispano and Native American heirs of Indigenous enslavement. "Recovering these stories is critical for both tribal communities, who were impacted by these tremendous losses, as well as for the descendants of those taken, who became their ancestors — and Breaking the Silence of Slavery begins to bring together both of these communities," said Rael-Gálvez.

"Some people grew up with these histories, holding onto photos, documents, stories, and even traditions. Others have spent years engaged in genealogical and historical research revealing the names of their ancestors. Yet, many are just beginning to explore the records and the meaning in this legacy. We invite members of these communities to join us this summer during one of the three gatherings," said project coordinator, Weston Archuleta.

The gatherings will take place at the following locations on the dates and times listed:

- Los Luceros Historic Site, Alcalde, N.M. — July 20, 2-4 p.m.
- New Mexico History Museum/Palace of the Governors, Santa Fe, N.M., Aug. 4, 2-4 p.m.
- Hacienda de los Martinez, Taos,

N.M., Aug. 17, 2-4 p.m.

These gatherings have been made possible thanks to funding from the Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Although "Breaking the Silence" gatherings are local, they are set within a hemispheric project, Native Bound Unbound — Archive of Indigenous Slavery (NBU). NBU was launched in 2022 with the support of the Mellon Foundation. The objective is to create a digital

repository centered on the lives of the enslaved Indigenous people across the Americas, "name by name and story by story."

Individuals interested in participating in any of these gatherings are asked to bring stories, photographs, documents, and artifacts that may have been made or held by an ancestor.

Anyone with questions or interested in attending is asked to RSVP by writing to info@nativeboundunbound.org.

La Garita Arena Project meeting

CENTER — An informational meeting on the Saguache County La Garita Arena Project will be held at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 28, at the Corzine Indoor Arena, 8101 County Road 45, Center. Hot dogs and hamburgers will be available.

Community Open Classes at SLV Fair

MONTE VISTA — Community members can exhibit their items and gardening. There is no fee, no pre-registration. Check-in is available on Sunday, Aug. 4, from 4- 6 p.m. or Monday, Aug. 5, from 9-11 a.m. For more information, contact Brandy Meyers at 719-849-1522 or Janae Naranjo at 719-480-4212.

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Giving back to those who give so much

ACSO deputies issued life-saving vests

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER

ALAMOSA — Deputies at the Alamosa County Sheriff's Office (ACSO) gathered in the board room of the Alamosa County commissioners on Monday afternoon where they were presented with, perhaps, one of the most important pieces of equipment in their profession.

When deputies started filing into the room, their attention was immediately drawn to a long table holding 19 of the best state-of-the-art bulletproof vests, each vest with a deputy's name already on it.

The vests were made possible by the work of Jake Skifstad, founder and president of Shield616, a Colorado Springs based, nationwide non-profit dedicated to providing first responders with top-of-the-line bulletproof vests capable of stopping a bullet fired from a rifle.

Skifstad's organization is invited to law enforcement agencies where he familiarizes them with the kind of protection they will be wearing and then helps them in raising the funds necessary to make the purchase.

In the case of ACSO, the total tab for the vests was \$42,000, a fundraising goal that was met by a large donation from an anonymous donor plus, Skifstad says, "a lot of \$5, \$10 and \$20 donations that really added up."

The vests currently worn by ACSO deputies are constructed of ceramic and, according to ACSO Sheriff Robert Jackson, are only capable of



Photo by Priscilla Waggoner

Shield616 presents ACSO deputies with 'angel armor' bulletproof vests capable of providing top of the line protection.

stopping a bullet from a handgun — once.

"After one bullet," Jackson told the Valley Courier, "the ceramics shatter."

The Alamosa County commissioners were on hand for the presentation, with Commissioner Arlan Van Ry saying that, after seeing Alamosa Police Department receive the vests, "it was really on [his] heart to get those for the county deputies. They're out in the country where more people have guns. And they may not know what is waiting for them at the end of a hundred-yard driveway."

Van Ry also added that the latest spike in violence had him "scared" the deputies wouldn't get the vests in time.

Before asking the deputies to come stand behind the vest with their name on it, Skifstad told a riveting story of the day he was a responder on-site

of the Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado Springs where a lone gunman carried out a mass shooting over a four-to-five-hour period.

At that time, he did not have a vest like the ones he was presenting to the ACSO deputies, but it was clear that experience motivated him to make it his mission that other officers would not find themselves so vulnerable.

Skifstad, who is a man of faith, also spent some time talking to the deputies about what thoughts and prayers went through his mind during the shooting, further underlining how crucial the right protection is in a job like law enforcement.

The vests the deputies were issued are known as "angel armor" and "provide all-day rifle protection for first responders who sacrificially serve our communities."

When asked to comment, Commissioner Van Ry said, "It was something that was laid on my heart that our deputies to make sure our deputies were protected and God works in mysterious ways with anonymous donors contributing and the community doing their part. It's one more layer of protection that just

might save a life."

When asked what the vests meant to him, Sheriff Jackson got "choked up." "This is amazing that, in a small community like this, people can come together. I'm just so glad that it came together, and we could make it happen for these guys. They'll be a lot safer now."



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48 Whispering Pines Drive • South Fork

Mountain Charm - Where Dreams Blossom Nestled in the heart of South Fork, Colorado, this Mountain haven awaits where simplicity meets enchantment. Picture it: a 3-bedroom, 2-bath retreat, bathed in the golden light of the Mountains. With 1, 440 square feet and attached large 2 car garage. This home will cradle your memories like a cherished heirloom. This lot steals your breath—a canvas of possibility stretching wide. Here, mule deer and wild turkeys play, visiting often as if drawn by whispers from the pines. No stern HOA rules here; just a neighborhood that nods in camaraderie. Large lot to grow your own garden and enjoy the existing rhubarb patch! Imagine stepping onto your covered front porch, the scent of freshly baked rhubarb pie dancing in the air. Yes, you'll bake your own—pluck ruby-red stalks from the earth, mix them with sugar and secrets, and let the mountains witness your culinary magic. Paved roads with city water and city water & sanitation. Modern comfort wrapped in rustic allure. All this and more, only a short walk takes you to the Rio Grande River, its waters a silver ribbon of promise. Gold medal fishing awaits, and the mountains echo your joy. And when winter blankets the land, Wolf Creek Ski area beckons. Adventure, your faithful companion, stands at your doorstep. Your Dream come true, pick up the phone. Schedule your showing, and step into the pages of Mountain Charm. Your Adventure starts here, give me a call today! **MLS#815494 - \$367,900**



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