



Groups help build horno at heritage center in San Luis

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Alamosa wins twice at home tri-meet

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# Valley Courier

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LOCAL NEWS... LOCAL VIEWS

September 17, 2024

\$1

## SLV Today

### Alamosa City Council agenda Sept. 18

**ALAMOSA** — The Alamosa City Council will introduce several new ordinances during Wednesday night's meeting. The first is to address the definition of temporary signs in the Unified Development Code. The second addresses a "Vacant Building Registration" requirement for properties located in the central business district. The third amends the mobile food vending regulations. All three ordinances are in their first reading.

Another ordinance, in its public comment and second reading phase, takes on a topic that's been in the public discourse lately. If passed, ordinance number 19-2024 will prohibit sitting or lying down in a public right of way, amend the trespassing ordinance and remove the requirement for there to be space available at St. Benedict before citing someone for unauthorized camping on public property.

Two motions will also be introduced. The first relates to whether staff should move forward with the design of the soup kitchen or not, and the second relates to restoring electricity to St. Benedict.

### ACPHD will be closed Sept. 20

**ALAMOSA** — Alamosa County Public Health Department (ACPHD) will be closed on Friday, Sept. 20, for staff development.

### DN Food Bank distribution Sept. 21

**DEL NORTE** — The Del Norte Food Bank will be open for its monthly distribution on Saturday, Sept. 21, from 10 a.m. until noon. Anyone in need of food assistance is welcome. If you are unable to attend during distribution hours and need food assistance, call 719-850-2643.

### SLV WEATHER



Showers Likely, Breezy, Gusty Winds 70/34

Wed: Sunny, Breezy 73/34

Thurs: Sunny, Breezy 74/37

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## Society Hall offers music, soup, and fun

By JOHN WATERS  
Courier News Editor

**ALAMOSA** — The gang at Society Hall held their annual celebration on Saturday, Sept. 14, next to the hall on 4th Street in Alamosa. Society Hall is Alamosa's premier location for live music.

Ruthie Brown, who is on the Society Hall Foundation board, told the Valley Courier, "What is really cool about Society Hall is that last week, our artist had just been at the Grand Old Opry. She came here to perform here, and that is very cool. She wants to come back. Everyone who has played here wants to come back. The community is so supportive of our gathering today that people donate."

The celebration offered music, and a variety of soups donated by community members.

Musical acts at the celebration included Robear, Side Trips, Ry Taylor, Hogan, and Moss. Donated soups included White chili, Vegetable beef stew, African peanut stew, and a wonderful Elk sausage green chili.

Society Hall is a nonprofit; tax-deductible donations can be made at the website [www.Societyhall.com](http://www.Societyhall.com).

Larry and Ruthie Brown enjoy the annual celebration at Society Hall on Saturday, Sept. 14.

Courier photo by John Waters



## ARTsFest unveils unique sculptures

### Patron of the Arts award goes to Visit Alamosa

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER  
Courier Reporter

**ALAMOSA** — This year's ARTsFestival in Alamosa was another success with not only 15 unique sculptures installed in key locations in the downtown area but also 25 local and regional artists participating in ARTscape by putting their finest work on display.

The festival started Friday night with a reception where members of the public were invited to the San Luis Valley Museum where, while feasting on a great buffet and drinking good wine, they had the opportunity to meet and converse with artists whose work was on display.

The reception was also the venue where this year's Patron of the Arts award was presented to Visit Alamosa. Kale Mortensen,

■ See ARTSFEST page 3



Courier photos by Priscilla Waggoner

Alamosa Mayor Ty Coleman presents this year's Patron of the Arts award to Kale Mortensen and Elizabeth Sumner, accepting on behalf of Visit Alamosa.



Amaya Maestas, 20 years old and a member of the Maestas family of San Luis, poses next to sculptures made by members of his family, including his grandfather, Huberto, his aunt, Bianca, and himself. The Maestas are known in the valley and far beyond for being extraordinary artists, each gaining notoriety for their work that is unlike any other. Amaya is also an accomplished farmer.

## APD dispatched to call of unresponsive infant

### Cause of death being investigated

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER  
Courier Reporter

**ALAMOSA** — A 10-month-old baby was found deceased on Saturday afternoon, Sept. 14. The Alamosa Police Department is conducting an investigation to determine the infant's cause of death.

According to Alamosa Police Department's Chief of Police George Dingfelder, on Saturday afternoon, officers were dispatched to the 800 block of Hunt Avenue at approximately 3:40 p.m. on the report of an unresponsive infant.

Upon arriving on the scene, officers found the infant inside a car and nonresponsive, prompting them to immediately initiate lifesaving measures. The baby could not be revived.

"That's really all we can release at this time and an investigation is underway," said Chief Dingfelder. "It's just a real tragedy."

## ASU Homecoming events start Sept. 27

By ADAMS STATE UNIVERSITY

**ALAMOSA** — The fun, free carnival returns during Adams State University Homecoming. The popular, community event begins at 1 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 28, on the North Campus Green.

The 2024 Homecoming festivities begin Friday, Sept. 27, with an alumni reception and awards banquet. Award recipients include Mark Manzanara, Outstanding Alumnus; Courtney Hocking, Exceptional New Alumna; and Sandra "Sandy" Ortega, Billy Adams Award. For reservations, visit [adams.edu/](http://adams.edu/)

alumni/homecoming or call 719-587-8110.

On Saturday, Sept. 28, the Homecoming Parade begins at 10 a.m. in downtown Alamosa; followed by the free carnival from 1 p.m. until 3 p.m. on the North Campus Green. The fourth annual Custom Car and Bike Show, sponsored by the Five Star Riders Car Club, will be held from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 28, on the McDaniel Hall parking lot.

The Grizzlies take on the CSU-Pueblo ThunderWolves at 1 p.m. in Rex Stadium. Get in the spirit at the Tailgate, be-

■ See EVENTS page 3



Courtesy photo

The Adams State Homecoming free carnival begins at 1 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 28, on the North Campus Green.



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# Record

## ALAMOSA SHERIFF'S REPORT

Alamosa County Sheriff's Office report for week of Sept. 12

Shawntaya Warren, 37, was cited for failing to obey/disregarding a traffic control device in the 200 block of Price Avenue.

Gerson Diego Domingo of Alamosa was cited for harassment, domestic violence, harassment, child abuse at 10815 Highway 160.

Ryan Barnes of Alamosa was cited for stalking, domestic violence, and menacing at 16858 Tungsten Lane.

Willow McCombs, 26, of Mosca was cited for speed-

ing 10-19 mph over in the 500 block of Highway 17N.

Damon Giordano, 45, of Snowmass Village was cited for speeding 20-39 mph over the limit in the 21000 block of Lane 6N.

Adam Brewck, 32, of Richmond, Virginia was cited for speeding 10-19 mph over the limit in the 18000 block of Lane 6N.

Sean Williams, 44, of North Hollywood, California, was cited for speeding 20-39 mph over the limit in the 6000 block of Lane 6N.

John Anthony Cordero of Alamosa was cited for criminal mischief \$1000 to \$2000 and 3rd degree crim-

inal trespass at 37.46785 105.85399 in Alamosa.

Anthony Lee Medina of Alamosa was cited for 2nd degree burglary, unlawful possession of controlled substance, possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of a financial device at 333 Santa Fe Avenue.

Ashish Gaikwad, of Bridgewater, New Jersey, was cited for speeding 20-39 mph over the limit in the 22000 block of Highway 160.

Timothy Schaeffer, 24, of Alamosa was cited for violation of a protection order at 8663 CR 109S.

## ALAMOSA POLICE REPORT

Alamosa Police Department report week of Sept. 9

Nicholas Ramirez, 32, of Center was cited for 2nd degree criminal trespass, violation of a restraining order and criminal mischief.

Amber David, 31, of Alamosa was cited for driving under restraint, unlawful possession of a controlled substance, uninsured vehicle, drivers vision obstructed.

James Jones, 21, of Alamosa was cited for disorderly conduct.

Solomon Ruybal 76, of Alamosa was cited for dogs at large, vaccinations required, license required.

Amber Santos, 39, of Alamosa was cited for DUI drugs.

William Montgomery, 39, was cited for underage consumption of alcohol by minor, underage consumption of tobacco by minor.

Jason Couse, 49, of Alamosa was cited for disorderly conduct.

Esteban Patricino, 26, of Alamosa was cited for driving under restraint.

Brittany Sanchez, 35, of Blanca was cited for driving under restraint, uninsured vehicle, unlawful possession of controlled substance, drivers vision obstructed.

Joiah Hernandez, 20, of San Luis was cited for exhibition of speed.

James Vigil, 55, of Denver was cited for speeding 5-9 over.

Jordan Malouff, 19, of Alamosa, was cited for violation of a restraining order.

Lesia Turningrobe, 51, of Alamosa, was cited for treatment of animal cruelty abandonment.

Vanessa Guodace, 34, of Alamosa was cited for trespassing x2.

Tyler Brown, 71, of Del Norte was cited for failing to yield ROW on left turn.

David Vialpondo, 34, of Alamosa was cited for unlawful possession of a controlled substance x2.

Jaedon Quintana, 21, of Alamosa was wanted for assault.

Angel Thomas, 23, of Alamosa was cited for theft under \$300.

James McDonnell, 54, of Clifton was cited for theft \$300 - \$999.

Joseph Sandoval, 50, of Alamosa was cited for driving under restraint.

Christian Lloyd, 38, of Monte Vista, was cited for false reporting, criminal possession of identity documents, criminal possession of a financial device, resisting, and obstruction.

Angelo Abeyto, 40, of Denver was cited for trespassing.

## OBITUARIES

### Barbara Martinez



It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Barbara Martinez who passed away on Sept. 5, 2024, at the age of 69. Barbara was born on May 26, 1955, in Pensacola, Fla., to Eloy W. and Lucille Espinoza Martinez.

As a child of a proud military family, by the time she was 11 years old she had lived in Pensacola, Fla., San Diego, Calif., and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, before moving with her family to Conejos. Barbara was a graduate of Antonito High School and a graduate of Adams State University where she received a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts in Teaching. Barbara had a passion for teaching children and was an elementary teacher for 25 years.

She was a member of the Legion of Mary, Veterans for Foreign Wars Auxiliary and was very proud of being the first female Grand Exalter Ruler for Alamosa Elks Lodge #1297.

Barbara was a loving mother, sister, grandmother and friend. Some of her favorite past times

included: fishing, camping, softball, sewing, reading, and spending time with family and friends. One of her favorite memories was her fishing trip to Sitka, Alaska. She was an avid lover of frogs.

After retiring from teaching, she kept herself busy by volunteering at the church teaching catechism and summer bible school. She was an elementary teacher in the South Conejos School District and finished her teaching career in the Monte Vista School District at Bill Metz Elementary. She also worked at the Elks, Safeway and Torrez Flower Shop. She was also very active in helping her friends at local craft fairs.

Survivors include her son Joey Trujillo of Alamosa, Colo.; sister Sha-

ron (Robert) Chavez of Manassa, Colo.; grandsons Matthew Trujillo of Alamosa, Colo., and Genesis Trujillo of Alamosa, Colo.; niece and nephews: Kristyn Chavez, Kyle Chavez, Samuel Chavez and Michael Chavez all of Manassa, Colo.; uncle Herman Gallegos, Conejos, Colo. She is also survived by numerous cousins and friends.

Barbara was preceded in death by her parents Eloy and Lucille Martinez, her brother David Martinez and one nephew Ryan Chavez.

A Vigil Service with Recitation of the Rosary will be held on Friday, Sept. 20, at 7 p.m. at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Monte Vista. A Mass of the Resurrection will be held on Saturday, Sept. 21, at 10 a.m. at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Monte Vista. Interment will follow at San Luis Valley Cemetery in Monte Vista.

To leave online condolences, please visit [romerofuneralhomes.com](http://romerofuneralhomes.com). The care of arrangements has been entrusted to Romero Valley Funeral Home.

## OBITUARIES

### Frank Muniz

Frank A. Muniz passed away at his home surrounded by his loving wife, daughter and grandson on Sept. 9, 2024. Born in Capulin, Colo., he was preceded in death by his two brothers Andrew and Louie as well as one sister Bernadette.

He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Sondra Muniz, two daughters Lori Muniz, Pam Kowalchuk, four grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, sisters Eleanor Valdez, Lucy Brown, two brothers Avelino and Gus Muniz.

Frank was a decorated Veteran earning the Combat Infantry Badge, Vietnam Service Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal with a Bronze Star, Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross, Unit Citation with Palm Device, Sharpshooter Badge with rifle and mortar as well as the Presidential Unit Citation.

Once he was Honorably Discharged from his duties in the Army, he went on to work for the United States Post Office. After working there for 30 years, Frank worked as the Alamosa County Veterans Service Officer in his "retirement" for 20 years. Frank helped countless Veterans and touched the lives of many. Frank's dream was to build a Veterans Memorial in the Alamosa Veterans Memorial Park, which will now be his legacy.

Frank was a hero and an inspiration to his family and all who knew him. In his free time, Frank enjoyed golf, hunting, spending time in the mountains, riding his ATV and spending as much time as he could with his family. Frank will forever be known and remembered for his kind and generous spirit, interesting sense of humor and his service to others. Frank will be dearly missed.



Rosary for Frank will be held on Saturday, Sept. 21, 2024, at 10:30 a.m. with a Mass to follow at 11 a.m. at the Romero Funeral Chapel in Alamosa. Interment will be held at the Alamosa Cemetery with full military honors. In lieu of flowers please make donations to the Alamosa Veterans Memorial Park Project in honor of Frank. To leave Frank's family condolences, please visit [romerofuneralhomes.com](http://romerofuneralhomes.com).

The care of arrangements has been entrusted to Romero Funeral Home of Alamosa.

### Maria Darlene Martinez



Longtime teacher and Bountiful resident Maria Darlene (Martinez) Vigil, 68, passed away peacefully in her home on the morning of Sept. 13, 2024. She was surrounded by her loving husband of more than 45 years, Pat.

Darlene was born on Sept. 3, 1956, to Jose D. and Clotilde (Manzanares) Martinez - the youngest of four daughters. She went to school in Sanford and then moved on to Adams State where she received her teaching degree.

Darlene taught Spanish and other subjects in Sanford, La Jara, and Antonito until her retirement in the early 2000s. She loved being a teacher and really enjoyed running into former students after they became successful adults.

After her retirement, Darlene and Pat volunteered most of their time to the Church. Darlene served in numerous ca-

pacities for the Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Church in Romeo but could often be seen helping in other churches in La Jara, Los Sauces, Conejos, and Capulin.

In her free time, Darlene enjoyed cooking, crafting, and decorating her home.

Darlene is survived by her husband, Patricio Vigil; her sisters: Sylvia (Allen) Biggs of Waco, Texas, Clara Martinez of Sanford, and Loki Abeyta of Aurora; her step-children: Christopher (Patricia) Vigil of San Antonio, Texas, Liz (Louie) Navares of Alamosa, and Kathy (Genaro) Gracia of Alamosa; as well as several step-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and other extended family.

She was preceded in death by her parents; Pat's parents; her nephew, Jonathan Abeyta; and several brothers-in-law.

In lieu of flowers, the

family asks that you make a donation to Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Church in Romeo.

Recitation of the Rosary will be held on Friday, Sept. 20, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. at Our Lady of the Valley Catholic Church in La Jara. Mass will immediately follow at 10 a.m. with dinner afterward at Our Lady of the Valley reception hall.

Romero Funeral Home has been entrusted with all arrangements.

## PENDING OBITUARY

### Angelena Duran

Antonito resident Angelena Duran, 74, was called home on Sept. 15, 2024. Arrangements are pending and will be announced through Romero Funeral Home of Alamosa.

**School Menu**  
Tuesday  
September 17, 2024

**BREAKFAST**  
Yogurt/Granola  
Fruit & Milk

**ELEMENTARY**  
Hot Wings  
Roll/Tater Tots  
Veggie Bar  
Fruit & Milk

**MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
Hot Wings  
Roll/Tater Tots  
Veggie Bar  
Fruit & Milk

**HIGH SCHOOL**  
Hot Wings  
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# Valley News

## Dive into autumn with several fall drives through the San Juans

By **LYNDSIE FERRELL**

### SAN LUIS VALLEY

With temperatures cooling and the feel of autumn in the air, now is the time to plan for outings in the beautiful San Juan Mountains to capture the amazing fall colors that are set to peak by the end of September, beginning of October.

The San Luis Valley is the perfect place to be when Colorado changes into its fall attire in the next several weeks. Whether out hiking, fishing, or taking a leisurely drive, these are some of the best places to see the Aspen trees change from brilliant green to glorious shades of gold, orange, and red.

Platoro Lake is a gorgeous high mountain lake nestled in the San Juan

Mountains just a short walk from the main trailhead. Take Park Creek Road (Forest Service Road 380) toward Summitville. Take the turn to Ellwood Pass which will take you into Platoro. On the way down the pass, you will drive through canopies of Aspen and have incredible views in all directions. There is a Lodge in Platoro that serves delicious burgers, among other things. The trip is around 40 miles one way and should take around two hours.

Travelers can also head toward the historic town of Lake City to experience the Silver Thread Historic Scenic Byway. Take the Silver Thread Highway (149) from South Fork to Lake City for spectacular views of mountains

and a patchwork of color. Be sure to stop at North Clear Creek Falls. Look for bear prints in the mud of North Clear Creek.

Pool Table and Wheeler Geologic Area is a beautiful drive in the La Garita Mountains just before Creede. Take the Silver Thread Highway (149) toward Creede. Just past Cottonwood Cove, there will be a sign that says, "Pool Table". It is Forest Service Road 600 and is 14 miles. Travelers may drive a two-wheel drive vehicle to Hanson's Mill then take the hiking trail up 6.5 miles to the geologic area. After the mill you will need a four-wheel drive vehicle. Drive on top of the mesa to be surrounded by golden Aspen.

Beaver Creek Road is a short distance from

South Fork and a great place to view fall colors. Take Highway 160 west 3 miles to Beaver Creek Reservoir Road. This is Forest Service Road 360. The first 5-7 miles are through aspen forest. You will pass through the pines then the spruce and fir for great views of the surrounding mountains.

Willow Creek and Del Norte Peak are 17 miles south of South Fork near the town of Del Norte. Head two miles east of town on Highway 160 to Gerrard Road. This is Forest Service Road 350 also known as Willow Creek Road. You can follow it south up to the junction of road 345 where you will turn back to the northeast then meander back to the northwest around Del Norte



Photo by Lyndsie Ferrell

**Colorado is getting ready to change seasons and will be a canvass of sharp golds, orange, and reds as aspen trees show their colors this fall.**

Peak for beautiful views of the mountain.

Carnero Creek Road is a great place to see the changing of the seasons while enjoying a slice of history just north of Del Norte and Monte Vista. This area is known for its off-grid fishing along Carnero Creek so grab those fishing poles and head out to enjoy a day of fall fishing and changing colors. From U.S. Highway 285, take the La Garita turnoff (County Road G) and follow the paved

road 6.0 miles west where the road forks. Take the right fork, the gravel surface Carnero Creek Road (Forest Road 690/County Road 41G) 10.0 miles northwest to Forest Road 675.

No matter which way travelers head, always prepare for adverse weather, plan for a day in the mountains and share travel plans with family and friends. Come on out and enjoy the beautiful backcountry and all it has to offer!

## Energy Fair powers Crestone



The annual Crestone Energy Fair drew hundreds of attendees who enjoyed a weekend full of presentations, panels, music, home tours, and camaraderie. The fair's theme was 'Rooting Forward,' a conversation exploring the evolution of governance, politics, and volunteerism in a frontier community. The goal was to explore these while working to preserve and protect the local environmental and cultural ethos. Longtime local resident Mark Jacobi (center back) asked questions during the 'Owner Builder Q and A' panel assembled on the afternoon of Sunday, Sept. 15, at the Crestone Energy Fair.

Courier photo by John Waters



Courier photos by Priscilla Waggoner

People explored their own artistic expression on Saturday where, thanks to guidance from staff with Wet Paintbrush, each person recreated a painting of aspen, providing their own special touch.

## ARTsFest

Continued from Page 1

executive direct, and Elizabeth Sumner, director of destination development, accepted the award. The award is in its third year and is presented to honor those individuals and organizations who "go above and beyond in supporting the presence of the arts in Alamosa.

"This year, we're introducing 15 new sculptures to the downtown with a total of 29 sculptures on display," Alamosa Mayor Ty Coleman said in opening the evening. "None of this would have been possible without the Creative District Committee, City Council, our sponsors, Alamosa Local Marketing District, Visit Alamosa and Alamosa Live Music Association.

Coleman then turned his attention to the Patron of the Arts award, saying, "These awards are presented to members of the community and this year we're recognizing Visit Alamosa. Visit Alamosa has been a partner of the outdoor art program since its inception in 2017.

"Elizabeth Sumner with Visit Alamosa has been a steady volunteer who has helped shape the program into what you see today. She has provided invaluable advice and even rolls up her sleeves every year to volunteer where needed.

"Visit Alamosa has also been a sponsor of the event since the beginning, providing a grant to help offset some of the marketing expenses. Beyond their support of the ARTsFest, Visit Alamosa has also worked to help strengthen and grow Alamosa's appreciation and recognition of the creatives.

"One of the most apparent examples is the creation of First Fridays that helps to support our local businesses and creatives at the same time. Thank you, Visit Alamosa for your amazing partnership and everything you have done to make Alamosa better," Coleman said.

Overall, the event was a visual success with event participants exploring their inner artists while creating dynamic paintings of aspen changing color.



Sierra, a member of Circus Salida, strikes a stunning pose as part of her aerial performance.



Courtesy photo

## Events

Continued from Page 1

ginning at 11 a.m. in the Nielsen Library parking lot; the event includes Spare Keg Brewerks beer and games.

Alumni and friends are welcome to attend a Farewell Breakfast from 9 to 11 a.m., Sunday, Sept. 29. For reservations, visit [adams.edu/alumni/homecoming](http://adams.edu/alumni/homecoming) or call 719-587-8110.

Throughout the week

activities for students include a club fair, painting the Rock, a petting zoo, Bingo, and a bonfire from 7 to 11 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 27, in the gravel lot between the High-Altitude Training Center (the Bubble) and the high-rise apartment complex. The bonfire will include a mariachi band performing from 7 to 10 p.m.

Student activities appreciate the donations from ALMA, the Adams State Equity Board, and Athletics.

**Don't Miss**



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# Lifestyles



Photo courtesy of USDA Forest Service, Rocky Mountains

A portion of the Wildfire Crisis Strategy involves removing fuel loads in parts of national forests across Colorado and Wyoming.

## NWTF, Forest Service expand Wildfire Crisis Strategy in state

*Impact will be seen in Rio Grande National Forest*

CONTRIBUTED  
EDGEFIELD, S.C. —

The National Wild Turkey Federation and the USDA Forest Service Region 2, encompassing national forests across Colorado and Wyoming, recently signed an agreement to build upon ongoing work in the region under the National Master Stewardship Agreement.

Accelerating the pace and scale of forest stewardship across the West, this additional agreement, part of the broader Wildfire Crisis Strategy, will remove timber, providing business to local mills for the retention of current forest business infrastructure necessary to carry out forest resto-

ration work.

As an integral part of the broader landscape-scale Lagarita Hills Restoration Project in Colorado, the Saguache Spruce Stewardship Project will play a pivotal role in tackling the long-lasting effects of the spruce beetle epidemic that has devastated the region for more than a decade.

The Saguache Spruce Stewardship Project will enhance forest health and reduce fuel loading across approximately 3,411 acres on the Rio Grande National Forest, the majority of which have been severely impacted by the spruce beetle outbreak. The project will involve the harvesting of dead Engelmann spruce within the designated project area, promoting forest stand resiliency and age-class diversity.

“By removing standing and downed dead trees, we’re not only reducing the risk of devastating wild-

fires but also improving wildlife habitat and protecting downstream watersheds,” said Brian Russell, NWTF wildfire crisis coordinator for Region 2.

The forest products generated from this project will be directed to local sawmills and wood processing facilities, ensuring that the critical infrastructure for forest product utilization remains intact. This is essential for the long-term success of future forest restoration efforts in the region.

In addition to the Saguache Spruce Stewardship Project, NWTF Wildfire Crisis Strategy staff will collaborate with Forest Service Region 2 staff this fall to develop a regional strategy. This strategy will focus on addressing wildfire risks, retaining wood products processing infrastructure and expanding workforce capacity to carry out forest restoration work.

## Outdoor Fitness Court Studio coming to DN’s Centennial Park

CONTRIBUTED

DEL NORTE — Rio Grande County Public Health in partnership with UHealth, and National Fitness Campaign (NFC) recently announced the grand opening of a new outdoor Fitness Court Studio in Del Norte.

The Fitness Court will be at Centennial Park, 140 Spruce St., Del Norte, and will open on Sept. 18, from noon to 2 p.m. with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

This Fitness Court Studio is the result of a partnership between Rio Grande County Public Health with the Town of Del Norte and Rio Grande Hospital as partners, UHealth and NFC to expand free access to high-quality workouts, creating equitable access to exercise for communities around the state.

The Fitness Court Studio delivers the powerful seven minutes full body workout on one side and a versatile outdoor class area for enjoying yoga, Zumba, pilates and other popular group wellness activities on the opposite side.

“Investing in an outdoor Fitness Court Studio is more than just adding new equipment to our community; it’s about creating accessible opportunities for everyone in Rio Grande County to prioritize their health and well-being.

By encouraging physical activity in a natural setting, we are fostering a healthier, more connected community that can thrive together. We are incredibly proud and excited to bring this outdoor fitness center to the Rio Grande County community. This initiative represents our commitment to enhancing the health and well-being of our residents. We highly appreciate the great partnership of the Town of Del Norte and Rio Grande Hospital, and other agencies that provided enormous support and collaboration to make this dream a reality for our community,” said Dr. Kolawole Bankole, Director, Rio Grande County Public Health Agency.

Created with people aged 14 years and older and with all abilities in mind, the workouts are adaptable for all fitness levels, allowing participants to move at their own pace. Users also may download the free Fitness Court app which acts as a coach-in-your-pocket and enhances the outdoor gym into a digitally supported wellness experience.

“Everyone can benefit from living an active lifestyle, both physically and mentally,” said Manny Rodriguez, UHealth’s chief marketing, experience and innovation officer. “It is

well documented that regular exercise can prevent illness, improve our mental health and help manage chronic health conditions. We are excited to partner with the National Fitness Campaign as part of UHealth’s ‘Ready. Set. CO’ challenge to improve the health of all Coloradans and restore our place as one of the healthiest states in the nation.”

The public is invited to attend the launch event on Wednesday, Sept. 18, from noon to 2 p.m. to try the Fitness Court Studio. For more information, contact the Rio Grande County Public Health Agency at 719-657-3352 or email kbankole@riograndecounty.org. For more information on UHealth’s support of NFC, please visit nationalfitnesscampaign.com/colorado.

“National Fitness Campaign is proud to welcome the Rio Grande County Public Health Agency to the campaign as a leader in Colorado, championing health and wellness for their residents,” said Mitch Menaged, founder of National Fitness Campaign. “The addition of the Fitness Court Studio, along with digital wellness programming, demonstrates a tremendous commitment to the health and wellbeing within the community.”

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- 2 Local independent businesses invest more in our community:** They support local charities, schools and community events which financially impacts our community.
- 3 Local businesses sell a wide range of great products at affordable prices and cater to the needs and wants of the community.**
- 4 Shopping Local saves you money and time!** Travel expenses and personal time make the overall cost of items higher.
- 5 Shopping Local retains our community:** Without the support in the local community, restaurants, shops and services are forced to close.
- 6 Shopping Local retains our distinctiveness:** Local businesses respond quicker to the needs of the customers and stock products to meet the core community’s needs.
- 7 Shopping Local encourages community growth.** By choosing to do business locally you help maintain Alamosa’s diversity, charm & appeal. Which in turn, attracts new community members.
- 8 Shopping Local invests in community services and city economy.** Your dollars spent in locally-owned businesses have three times the impact on your community as dollars spent outside of Alamosa.
- 9 Local shops value you more:** Local businesses survive by their reputation & repeat business which means you get a higher standard of service.

**Valley Courier**  
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# Lifestyles

## Groups help build horno at heritage center in San Luis

By MARIE MCCOLM  
**SAN LUIS** — Carol Gurule of the CSU Extension is excited about a new addition that the Sangre de Cristo Heritage Center and Museum has added to its grounds.

"Anytime the group 'Juntos,' can be a part of something, it is very near and dear to my heart. We worked in collaboration with other groups to make this possible, and we are proud to be a part of history in the making," Garule said.

The Sangre de Cristo Heritage Center and Museum in San Luis added an adobe horno that was built by Adobist Ole Bye, to the museum grounds. According to southwest-discovered.com, an adobe horno is a hive-shaped outdoor oven, that is traditionally made from mud and adobe. These outdoor ovens were used by early settlers, for baking food inside. A fire is created inside of the oven and then allowed to burn out. Food is then placed inside the oven, and the oven is covered in the front with a board or other item, to allow the heat to stay in the oven and bake the food.

The adobe horno was created in conjunction with several different partnerships including the CSU Extension Juntos Program, Soul Players of the Valley San Luis (SPV San Luis) Costilla County Conservancy District (CCCD), and the Town of San Luis. The groups all worked together to facilitate this project. The CSU Extension Juntos Program works in different counties to help families and with projects through out the San Luis Valley. The CSU Extension has an office that serves the San Luis Valley in Monte Vista.

A community build day for the horno project was held on Friday, Aug. 16. During the build day, volunteers assisted with moving, plastering, and placing bricks, as a support system for the horno.

Many of the bricks that were placed were over 150 years old. The horno was built for baking bread, pizza, cooking meat, and possibly cooking chicos.

According to Bye, there is rich history in what has been built. Bye spoke about the build and the culture behind the horno.

"The story is that the Spanish brought the design to this hemisphere from northern Africa. There are ovens like this still being used in places like Morocco. The Spanish came up from Mexico in the late 1500's and there is archeological evidence that hornos were used at the confluence of the Chama and the Rio Grande. It's likely these hornos were built by women who were slaves or servants of the Spanish colonists. The work of adobe hornos is historically in the realm of women as well," Bye said.

Bye explained that everyone who volunteered and worked together, used many historical pieces to create another piece of history.

"The adobes came from several buildings that the community dismantled, so there is a bunch of history in the base of the horno," Bye said.

Bye said that the dome of the horno is being supported by bricks that are at least 150 years old.

"People know about hornos here and many people have one. It's been both intimidating and rewarding with everyone who comes by who shares their stories about how their grandmothers had one," Bye said.

Bye hopes that the community uses the horno, and it helps bring people together, as that is "the magic of hornos," bringing people together. "They have a magnetism that is the nucleus of the domestic environment, where people can come together, share food, and socialize."

Soul Players San Luis Valley is planning to celebrate the building of the

horno at an upcoming event by baking bread.

SPV San Luis thanked Gurule and Cody Groff of the CSU Extension and the Juntos Program, Costilla County Commissioner, Teddy Leinbach of the Town of San Luis, Christian Santistevan of SPV San Luis/CCCD Recreation Coordinator, and Bye. They also thanked Juan Ramon Maestas for sharing his background and knowledge of adobe making and helping to provide the dirt used to make bricks.

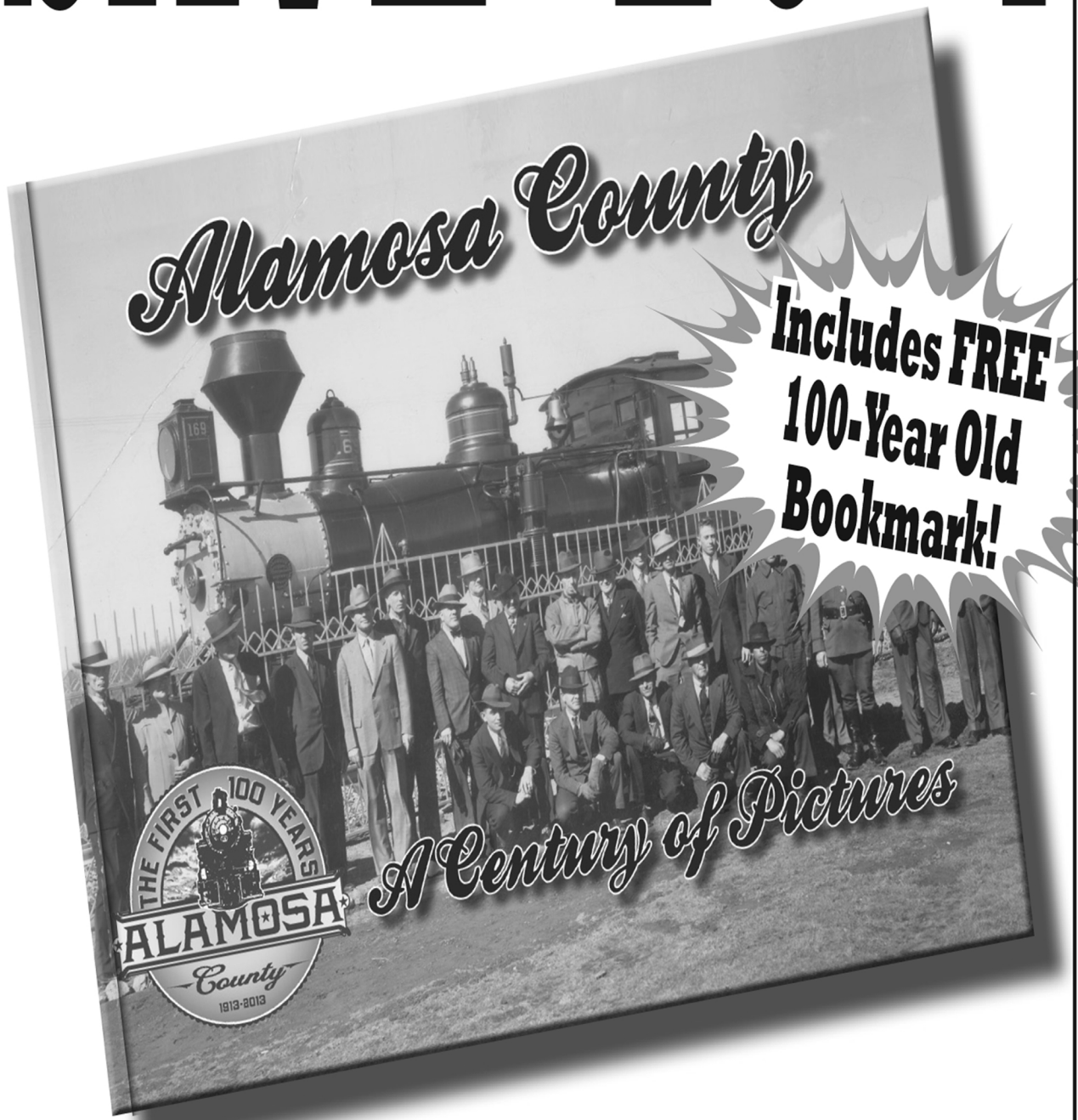
For more information on the horno, contact Gurule at 719-852-7381.



Photo by Yates McConnell

Groups collaborated to build a horno at the Sangre de Cristo Heritage Center and Museum in San Luis.

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# Valley Courier

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Alamosa

## Arapahoe County facilities workers latest to unionize under 2022 state law

By LINDSEY TOOMER  
*Colorado Newsline*

Workers with Arapahoe County's Facilities and Fleet Management department voted to unionize Friday, acting on a new Colorado law that allows county workers to organize.

Workers voted 30-15 in favor of forming a union with the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees Colorado local. An additional five "yes" votes were contested because workers filled out both sides of a dual-sided ballot, one in English and the other in Spanish.

The department includes workers who maintain county facilities, including maintenance staff and fleet technicians.

"This vote for our union is a commitment to our future," custodian Tommy Lujan said in a statement. "It means we now have a seat at the table to address our concerns and negotiate for better wages and working conditions and improve the services we provide."

The Colorado Legislature passed a law in 2022 giving government em-

ployees in larger counties the right to unionize and collectively bargain over pay, benefits and working conditions. The law withheld the right for these unions to strike or to slow or stop work.

The Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office also unionized, with the Fraternal Order of the Police, after the new law permitted workers to do so. Jefferson County Public Library workers voted to unionize with AFSCME in March under the law.

Elizabet Garcia, spokesperson for AFSCME, said the next steps for the facilities and fleet workers will be to elect union leadership and then start the negotiations process with Arapahoe County officials "to establish a contract that addresses their needs and concerns."

"This is an exciting first step for us, and I hope it inspires other county workers to consider coming together for a seat at the table," custodian Ryan Davis said in a statement. "The services all county employees provide are important. And our work should be recognized and valued."









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# Comics

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE

### NEA Crossword Puzzle

- ACROSS**
- 1 "Funny you should — ..."
  - 4 Floating ice mass
  - 8 Drink to excess
  - 12 Legume
  - 13 Track
  - 14 Bird of paradise constellation
  - 15 — soda
  - 16 Doing nothing
  - 17 Music maker
  - 18 Remove
  - 20 Unfriendly
  - 22 Chess piece
  - 23 2,000 pounds
  - 24 Disney hero
  - 28 Nouveau —
  - 32 City in Morocco
  - 33 Earth's satellite
  - 35 Went underground
  - 36 Past

- 37 Tater
- 38 Cakes and —
- 39 Sit on a perch
- 41 Subatomic particle
- 44 Embrace
- 46 Zilch
- 47 Royal seat
- 50 Domain
- 53 Interpret
- 54 Stem joint
- 57 Foot digit
- 58 Like the Sahara
- 59 Regrets
- 60 "Hail, Caesar!"
- 61 Smallish equine
- 62 Formerly, formerly
- 63 Snood

- DOWN**
- 1 Domed church area
  - 2 Burn
  - 3 City in Michigan
  - 4 Chum
  - 5 Boy
  - 6 Lubricate

Answer to Previous Puzzle

TUG			AWE		ACTS
ERR			CROW		PHIL
EGO			HIKE		AONE
NEW			BIE		ROCKED
			ILLS		SEE
STIL			LLEVA		HIM
LINK			HAIR		ODE
ADS			HALE		PLEAT
YEP			EYE		CADET
			EWE		DARN
CICA			DA		BEE
ASTI			CHAT		OIL
SLOT			RICE		ISM
TARS			ETA		LAS

- 7 Put into office
- 8 Sesame seed paste
- 9 Fall birthstone
- 10 Knitting stitch
- 11 See
- 19 Blue
- 21 Trumpet
- 24 From a distance
- 25 Toy blocks company
- 26 Devilkin
- 27 Person, place or thing
- 29 Trickster
- 30 City in Hawaii
- 31 "East of —"
- 34 Poem
- 37 Shock
- 40 Low-quality
- 42 Turmoil
- 43 Cravat
- 45 Literary category
- 47 Capture
- 48 Big sandwich
- 49 Word in forecasts
- 51 "The — Boat"
- 52 Come upon
- 55 " — Town"
- 56 — Plains, IL

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12				13					14			
15				16					17			
18			19				20	21				
			22				23					
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58					59				60			
61					62				63			

## SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ☆☆☆☆☆

			3	8	1							
8		2	6									4
	1		2	5	4	8						
2			8			7	4					
6	8	1		4		2	9	3				
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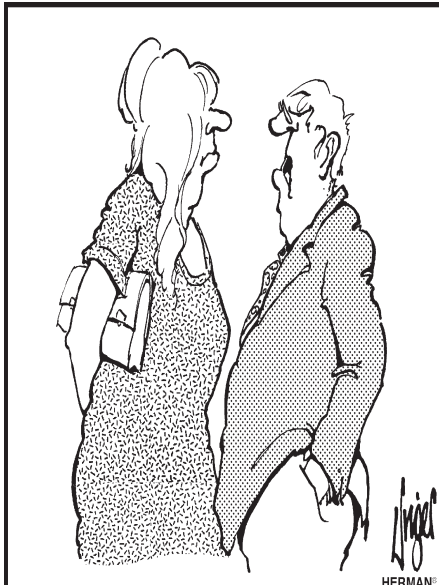
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**PREVIOUS SOLUTION**

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

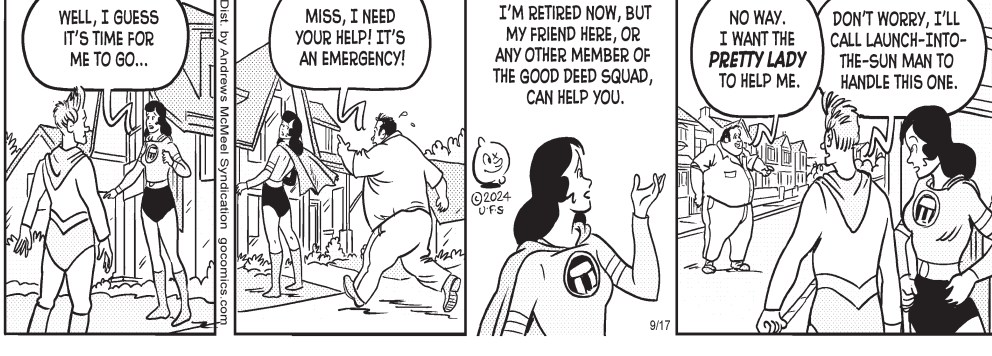
**HOW TO PLAY:** Each row, column and set of 3-by-3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 through 9 without repetition.

## HERMAN



"When your online profile said 42, 22, 38, I didn't realize you meant age, I.Q. and shoe size."

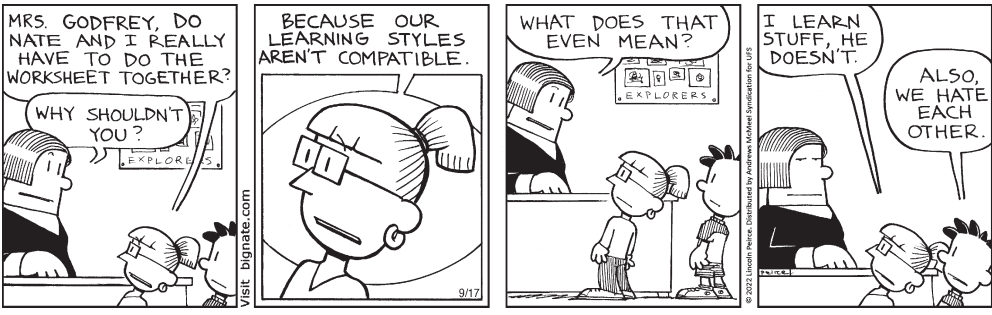
## ALLEY OOP



## ARLO & JANIS



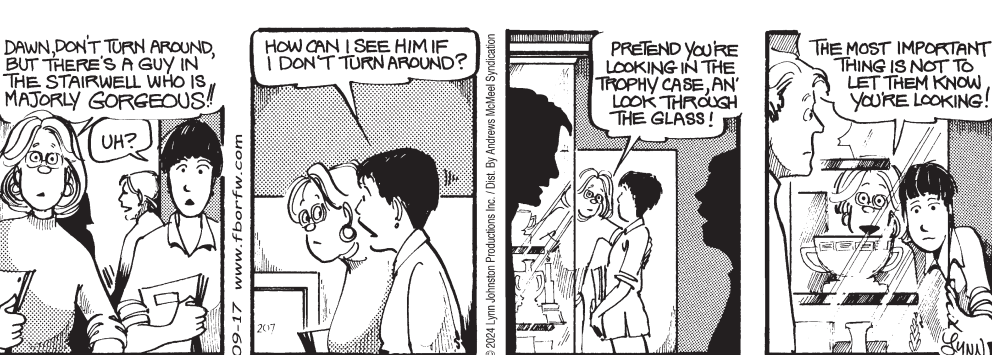
## BIG NATE



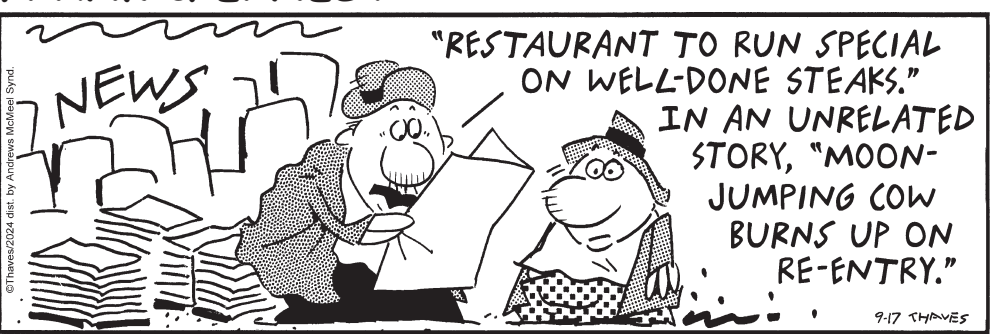
## THE BORN LOSER



## FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE



## FRANK & ERNEST



## GARFIELD



## THE GRIZZWELLS



## PEANUTS



# Active lifestyle makes it harder to find love

**DEAR ABBY:** I'm a mature male who had a weight problem years ago. When I turned 50, I was diagnosed with metabolic syndrome, hypertension and diabetes. I took my doctor's advice about diet and 150 minutes of exercise a week. Fast-forward to today, and I have lost almost half my body weight and am now in good shape.

My problem now is finding women near or around my age who have the same dedication to exercise and fitness. It is nearly impossible to find a partner who shares the same values. I have tried dating sites, and almost always get catfished. I go on dates, but if I'm not physically attracted to someone, things don't get out of the "friend zone."

I feel physical attraction drives a good part of a healthy relationship. I value having friends, but finding someone who can run, bike, kayak, etc., is, to me, vital to a successful relationship. Should I settle to have someone to spend time with, or keep the faith and hope I find a woman I'm attracted to? I've had little luck finding a compatible partner. Am I too picky, given that a lot of people don't or won't take care of themselves? -- **DISCOURAGED IN MEMPHIS**

**DEAR DISCOURAGED:** Physical attraction is important, but what attracts us to others varies from person to person. You don't have to be lonely. Because physical fitness is so important in your life in addition to chemistry, continue to look online. If you do, you will find there is more than one dating site geared to folks who are interested in health and fitness. I wish you luck.

**DEAR ABBY:** I am a senior lady who still works at a great job and who is generally very happy with my life. My husband is a clergyman, but we have our own apartment, so my adult daughter lives in the church rectory with her three children and partner. My husband has stated his intention to retire next year -- well deserved.

Naturally, my daughter will have to find a new place to live. She has suggested that I sell my apartment and go in with her and her brood on a two-family home. I love her and the grandkids, but my mortgage is paid off, and I don't want to do this. I seriously doubt she has any savings to contribute to a down payment or any of the other myriad costs of paying for or maintaining a house. How can I respond with-



**ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**

out hurting her too much? -- **BAD IDEA IN NEW YORK**

**DEAR BAD IDEA:** Your adult daughter has been very fortunate to have parents who have provided shelter for her, her partner and her brood. You didn't mention whether she and her partner have jobs. (I wish you had.) If they do, they could pool their earnings and be able to pay rent to a landlord. Ask your daughter how she intends to contribute to the arrangement she is suggesting, and be honest about your feelings. It isn't hurtful to stand up for yourself. You don't have to be harsh, but do communicate that what she has in mind wouldn't work for you.