



MVHS Back to School Bash brings community together

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LOCAL NEWS... LOCAL VIEWS

September 18, 2024

\$1

SLV Today

CD-3 candidate forum cancelled

Unfortunately, the CD-3 candidate forum scheduled to be held by the League of Women Voters on Wednesday, Sept. 18, has been cancelled. The website lists as the reason "a scheduling conflict with one of the candidates." If the forum is rescheduled or a substitute event is held, notice will appear in the Valley Courier.

AI is subject of ASU Faculty Lecture Series

ALAMOSA — The Adams State University Faculty Lecture "What A.I. Can Never Do," by Chris Kam, P.D., assistant professor of psychology, begins at 6 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 19, in McDaniel Hall 101. The lecture is free and open to the public.

Taking principles from Jungian psychology, spirituality, philosophy, and informal psycholinguistics, this lecture will attempt to argue that there are some things that AI can never do.

For more information on the Faculty Lecture Series, contact Jess Gagliardi at 719-587-8921 or jgagliardi@adams.edu.

SLV REC board of directors meeting

MONTE VISTA — San Luis Valley REC will have the regular meeting of the board of directors at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 24, at 3625 US Highway 160 W, Monte Vista.

Advance notice is required to attend the meeting, call Michelle Trujillo at 719-852-3538.

SLV WEATHER



Sunny, Breezy 72/31

Thurs: Sunny, Breezy 75/34

Fri: Sunny, Breezy 74/38

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Violence in Alamosa: a public forum

Conducted Sept. 19 by the DA's office, ACSO and APD

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER
Courier Reporter

ALAMOSA — A public forum on violence in Alamosa will be held on Thursday, Sept. 19, from 6 to 8 p.m. at Society Hall.

"This community has witnessed an increase in violent

criminal episodes over the summer months in the City and County of Alamosa," writes DA Anne Kelly. "While these incidents do not signal any discernable trend, the District Attorney's Office, the Alamosa Police Department and the Alamosa County Sheriff's Office are responsible for ensuring that the community is well informed about how our agencies are responding to community concerns."

For this reason, local residents will have the opportunity to ask questions, express concerns and hear what leaders in law enforcement and the district attorney's office are doing in response to the high level of violence the city has been experiencing lately.

Alamosa County Sheriff Robert Jackson, Alamosa Police Department Chief George Dingfelder, District Attorney for the 12th

Judicial District Anne Kelly and Assistant District Attorney Wesley Stafford will be presenting information and responding to community questions.

Anyone wishing to submit a question or concern prior to the forum can do so by sending an email to district.attorney@da12.state.co.us.

Society Hall is located at 400 Ross Ave. in Alamosa. Doors will open at 5:15 p.m.

Residents surmount a 14,000-foot challenge

By JOHN WATERS
Courier News Editor

SAGUACHE COUNTY — Colorado is blessed with some of the most spectacular mountain scenery in the world. The local Sangre de Cristo Mountains constantly remind us of this gift that we experience and share with visitors from around the globe.

The mountains near Crestone have several 14,000-foot peaks that are challenging to climb and are considered world-class hikes and climbs.

Crestone resident Adam Kinney, a long-time admirer of the Sangre Range, embarked on an adventure on the weekend of September 7-8. Alongside Pete

■ See 14,000 page 3

Saguache County residents Adam Kinney (left) and Pete Van Horn spent the weekend of September 7-8 hiking and climbing 14,087-foot Challenger Point in the Sangre de Cristo Range. The mountain was named Challenger by the USGS Board of Geographic Names in 1987 in memory of the crew of the Space Shuttle Challenger who perished in 1986.

Courtesy photo



Weight room renovated at Alamosa Family Rec Center

By JOHN WATERS
News Editor

ALAMOSA — Regular visitors to the Alamosa Family Recreation Center will notice the weight room has recently been renovated.

According to Andrew Rice, Director of Parks, Recreation and Library, told the Valley Courier, "We're pleased to announce the Alamosa Family Recreation Center (AFRC) recently overhauled the weight room with new Hoist Fitness Inc., resistance training machines. It's hard to believe our building is over 20 years old now and the new equipment brings state-of-the-art functional (and safe) resistance training to the public. An additional Smith Machine was added which allows patrons to bench

press and squat with built in safeguards. A full set of free weights is also available and a personal trainer for reasonable rates is on staff."

The center has reasonable rates and offers a variety of exercise classes as well.

Rice added, "Thank you to City Project Manager Steve Copley and Alcon Construction Inc. for excellent work in extending the roof out over the air handlers and repairing the stucco and foundation. This work should prolong building durability for many years."

"The Adams State pedestrian bridge project and the Alamosa Riverfront Project are moving right along but not too much tangible progress to report on yet," said Rice.



Courier photo by John Waters

The weight room at the Alamosa Family Recreation Center has recently been upgraded. The facility has a variety of activities available. For more information visit www.ci.alamosa.co.us/parksandrec/home or call 719-587-2529.

Society Hall welcomes Nashville multi-instrumentalist Erik Stucky

ALAMOSA — Society Hall is excited to bring Colorado native and multi-instrumentalist singer songwriter Erik Stucky to the stage. The concert will be at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 20, at Society Hall, 400 Ross Ave., Alamosa.

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

Society Hall board member and Alamosa record producer

and musician Don Richmond says, "We've had a few people telling us that we ought to get this fellow to do a show — folks like David Starr and Jordyn Pepper, who have both played our stage. So, we're excited to welcome Erik Stucky to Society Hall and the San Luis Valley."

Growing up in Montrose, in the rugged mountains of west-
■ See STUCKY page 3

Colorado native and multi-instrumentalist singer songwriter Erik Stucky will perform on Friday, Sept. 20, at Society Hall.

Courtesy photo



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Record

OBITUARIES

Harmony Faith Hernandez

Harmony Faith Hernandez was born on Aug. 28, 2024, in Alamosa, Colo., to Aaron Moses and Florinda Maria (DeHerrera) Hernandez of San Luis, Colo. Harmony weighed 4 pounds 7 ounces and was 16.5 inches long. Harmony went to be with the Lord on Sept. 12, 2024.

She was our tiny little princess who had a big and lasting impression on everyone who had a chance to meet her. She was the youngest of six children.

Harmony is survived by her parents Aaron and Florinda Hernandez; sister Alissa Medina of Okla.; and four brothers Zoziah Hernandez, and Gabriel Hernandez both of Alamosa Colo., Eliaz Hernandez, and Emiliano Bailon both of San Luis, Colo.; her maternal grandmother Katherine Manzanares; paternal grandparents Aaron P Hernandez Sr. of Denver, Colo., Josephine (Jeff Hard) Atencio of San Luis, Colo.; great-grand-



mother Criselda Atencio of Chama, Colo.; uncles Orlando Bocanegra of Wyo., Justin Hernandez and Richard Hernandez both of San Luis, Colo.; aunt Lucinda DeHerrera of Alamosa, Colo.; godparents Fares and Amy Jacquez of Alamosa, Colo., and Susie Martinez of San Luis, Colo. She is survived by many great-aunts, great-uncles and many cousins.

Harmony is welcomed into heaven by her maternal grandfather Joseph Aruthur (Hueso) DeHerrera, great-grandmother Esperanza Maria Manzanares, great-grandfather Sebb

Martinez, great-grandfather Antonio Manzanares, maternal great-grandparents Gilbert and Manuelita DeHerrera, paternal great-grandparents Paul and Virginia Hernandez, great-grandfather Gilbert Atencio and great-grandmother Priscilla Marquez.

In Harmony's short time on earth, she has taught us more than most people will ever learn in a lifetime, with her unconditional love that we will cherish for eternity. Our Baby Girl will forever be loved and missed.

Viewing and visitation will be held on Sept. 20, 2024, from 4-6 p.m. at Grace Chapel located at 914 Alfonso St. Funeral Service will be held on Saturday, Sept. 21, 2024, at 2 p.m. at LDS Church located at 705 Main St. in San Luis.

To leave online condolences, please visit romerofuneralhomes.com. The care of arrangements has been entrusted to Romero Valley Funeral home of Alamosa.

Angelena M. Duran

Longtime Antonito resident Angelena M. Duran was called home on September 15, 2024. She passed away at the Conejos County Hospital with her loving family by her side. Angelena was welcomed into the world on March 14, 1950, the beloved daughter of Oliver Johnson and Bernice (Barela) Johnson. Angelena devoted her life to caring for her family. They were her world. Angelena enjoyed going gambling at the casinos, watching her T.V. shows, and spending as much time as she could with her family and friends. She was also an avid Denver Broncos fan. She was so very loved and will be dearly missed.

Angelena was preceded in death by her parents Oliver and Bernice Johnson, her son Michael Rosales, brothers Oliver Johnson II, Nestor Johnson, Julian Johnson, nephews Paul Johnson and Jimmy Johnson.



Her memory and legacy will live on through her beloved husband Paul Duran of Antonito, CO; daughters Dolores (Matt) Laliberte of South Dakota; Beverly (Rick) Chacon of Antonito, CO; Liz (Daniel) Ruybal of Denver, CO; son Paul Duran, Antonito, CO; grandchildren Daniel Gurule, Dwayne Gurule, Jack Tallman, Joseph Chacon, Daniel Ruybal III, Raya Ruybal, DeAngelo Chacon, Rick Chacon Jr., Bre Laliberte, Trent Laliberte, Bryce Laliberte, great-grandchildren Liam, Alyson, Ellie, Halley, sisters Priscilla Mares, Mary Lou Salazar, Becky Hurtado, Gloria Burrola,

brothers Juby Johnson, Willie Johnson and Roger Johnson. She is also survived by numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Viewing and visitation will be held on Thursday, September 19, 2024 from 11-3 PM at the Romero Funeral Chapel in Alamosa. Vigil Service with Recitation of the Rosary will be held on Friday, September 20, 2024 at 2:00 PM, Mass of the Resurrection to follow at 2:30 both at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church in Conejos. Cremation will follow and Inurnment will be held at a later date. To leave online condolences please visit romerofuneralhomes.com. The care of arrangements has been entrusted to Romero Funeral Home of Alamosa.

To send flowers or a memorial gift to the family of Angelena "Angie" M. Duran please visit our Sympathy Store.

SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Benito Tony Quintana

Passed away Aug. 16, 2024. Burial of his ashes will be Saturday, Sept. 21, 2024, La Jara Cemetary at 1 p.m. Friends and family are welcome to attend.

Monte Vista Clean Up Days are Sept. 27 and 28

CONTRIBUTED
MONTE VISTA - The City of Monte Vista is holding its annual City Clean Up Days on Sept. 27 and 28.

The city invites all residents to bring their trash and debris to the Public Works Yard at 384 Ski Hi Trail for free dump services.

Dumpsters will be set up to collect the waste. The hours for this event are Friday, Sept. 27, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday, Sept 28, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

"We will take all trash and debris to include household trash, wood, construction products, limbs, metal, non-refrigerant appliances (stoves, washers, dryers). We, however, cannot receive any electronics, paint, refrigerators, fuel, tires, or other items prohibited at the Landfill. This year we will take automotive batteries," city officials stated.

City employees will not help unload debris not in a container or bagged. Employees will not climb onto any trailers or trucks.

This opportunity is only available at the Public Works Yard at 384 Ski Hi Trail in Monte Vista. This opportunity is for Monte Vista residents only.

The SLV Regional Landfill is not sponsoring this, and it is not a free dump day at the landfill. If you go to the landfill, you will be expected to pay the current rates for the debris you bring.

Prohibited wastes are:

- Hazardous waste—includes any item that would be classified as hazardous including fuel.
- Radioactive waste
- Toxic, corrosive, reactive and Ignitable waste — includes batteries and all electronics. Automobile batteries will be accepted.
- Polychlorinated

Biphenyl (PCB) waste - Polychlorinated biphenyls were widely used as dielectric and coolant fluids in electrical apparatus, cutting fluids for machining operations, carbonless copy paper and in heat transfer fluids.

- Cathode ray tubes (CRTs), central processing units, computer keyboards, VCRs from non-residential sources cannot be accepted at the land fill. Includes TVs, computers, cell phones.

Effective July 1, no electronic item of any kind will be accepted at the landfill as determined by Senate bill 12-133 and defined by Regulation pursuant to Sections 1.2 and 16.5 of 6 CCR 1007-2, Part 1.

- Waste containing free liquids — includes paint, oil, or other liquids
- Appliances that contain refrigerant—includes Refrigerators
- Tires

Colorado Snowmobile Grant Program to provide over \$1M for winter trail grooming, equipment and maintenance

CONTRIBUTED

COLORADO - The Colorado Parks and Wildlife Snowmobile Grant Program will provide over \$1 million dollars to support winter trails in Colorado this year. Over \$350,000 was approved by the Parks and Wildlife Commission for Snowmobile Grant Program projects and an additional \$735,000 was provided for the Trail Grooming program to maintain winter trail opportunities.

Despite its name, the Snowmobile Grant Program supports trail grooming for winter trails that are open to both motorized and non-motorized use such as cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and fat biking.

CPW offers two types of winter trail grants each year.

Snowmobile Program grants are distributed through a competitive application process for large projects to maintain and purchase new equipment and maintain and build new winter trails and trail facilities. This year,

snowmobile grants will fund five volunteer snowmobile clubs to purchase grooming equipment and repair existing groomers.

Trail Grooming grant funds are primarily directed toward winter trail grooming, maintenance and signage. The Trail Grooming program currently supports 27 volunteer snowmobile clubs that maintain and provide signage on over 2700 miles of winter trails.

The majority of funding for the Snowmobile Program comes from snowmobile registration and permitting fees with close to 25% of funding coming from the Recreational Trails Program (RTP). The RTP is a federally funded grant program that receives money from a portion of the federal gas taxes paid on non-highway recreational fuel.

"When you register your snowmobile or buy a permit, you are helping to fund the winter trails that you enjoy," said CPW Assistant Director for Outdoor Recreation and Lands Fletcher Ja-

cobs. "While it does support other winter trail activities, the Snowmobile Program's primary goal is to improve and enhance snowmobile recreation opportunities across the state while promoting the safe and responsible use of snowmobiles."

In addition to trail grooming and signage for the snowmobiling public, registration/permit funding also supports registration operations, snowmobile law enforcement, the snowmobile safety certification program and Colorado's Avalanche Warning Program.

City, county, local and federal government entities and grooming clubs registered under the Colorado Snowmobile Associate (CSA) are eligible to apply for either a program grant or grooming services grant. The 2025-2026 snowmobile grant cycle will begin in March 2025.

Learn more about the Snowmobile Grant Program, 2024-2025 grant recipients and eligibility requirements on CPW's website.



Photo by Marie Mccolm

Bouncy houses were popular at the Monte Vista High School Back to School Bash on Sept. 13 at MVHS.

MVHS Back to School Bash brings community together

By MARIE MCCOLM
MONTE VISTA - On Sept. 13, Monte Vista High School held a Back to School Bash. The bash was organized by the Monte Vista School Parent-Teacher Organization with sponsorship from the LOR Foundation. The Back to School Bash was held at the high school baseball field, and everyone was welcome to attend.

Approximately 450 people, including students, teachers, and parents, attended the event, that took place before Monte Vista's home football game. The event was decorated with lots of green and gold decor, there were multiple booths all over the event, with free hot dogs, chips, and water being given out to all attendees.

There were at least three bouncy houses for the kids across the field. Monte Vista FFA, along with Monte Vista High School cheerleaders had a booth at the event. There was a splash tower set up for anyone who wanted to try to throw a splash bucket on whoever might have been sitting under it at the bash.

Kids who attended had large smiles as they climbed up, jumping, and sliding down the giant bouncy houses all over the park.

There was a booth set up specifically with Monte Vista Pirates hoodies for sale. The Sno Shack with snow cones was also on site, with the first 300 snow cones free that night. Students at the high school walked all over the field, smiling on their cell phones or near their parents, as they checked out all the events at the bash.

Officer of the LOR Foundation Ivette Atencio attended the event and stated, "it was great to see so many people there. LOR did sponsor the event. The kids and parents all looked like they were having so much fun. It was really great to see other organizations come out and support the event as well. I think community engagement is very important, and LOR is always happy to support such efforts."

Mother of a high school student, Christina Lopez, said the Bash was a great way to meet school staff.

"The teachers looked really happy to be here. The bash has been fun, lots of cool games, and some good organizations here showing spirit for the Pirates. One thing I appreciate is if you haven't met all your kids' teachers, the bash is a great place to do it, I met a lot of them here, it's been nice. They even give

out dinner and a free entrance to the game, very cool."

Grandmother of a high school student, Rose Salazar, also attended the event and said, "It's nice of the teachers to organize this, looks like a lot to put together. I saw a lot of kids and parents that are here, wearing Monte Pirate shirts, everybody looks like they are excited about this game. I want to thank everyone for doing this for the kids. I'm here with my daughter and grandkids and I'm a proud grandma of a football player, too."

School Menu	
Wednesday	
September 18, 2024	
BREAKFAST	
Egg & Cheese Breakfast Sandwich Fruit & Milk	
ELEMENTARY	
Meatball Sub Broccoli Veggie Bar Fruit & Milk	
MIDDLE SCHOOL	
Meatball Sub Broccoli Veggie Bar Fruit & Milk	
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Valley News



The Colorado State University San Luis Valley Area Extension Office's 4-H Juntos group poses for a photo during their trip to Pueblo on Aug. 23 and 24.



Courtesy photos

From left to right, Farm Fresh Direct CEO Mike Hulett and Mayra McKibbon, Director of Workforce and Community Programs, present a check to CSU SLV Area Extension Director Larry Brown, for the SLV Extension Juntos 4-H program.

Farm Fresh Direct makes \$5,000 donation to 4-H Juntos

Group attends two-day trip to Pueblo

By MARIE MCCOLM MONTE VISTA

The Colorado State University San Luis Valley Extension Office's 4-H Juntos group recently made an overnight trip to Pueblo, for an exciting Discovery Day adventure Aug. 23 to 24. It would not have been possible without a generous \$5,000 donation from Farm Fresh Direct.

Local 4-H Juntos Director Carol Gurule was excited about the trip and grateful to Farm Fresh Direct and Mayra

McKibbon, the Director of Workforce and Community Programs, for the donation.

"With heartfelt gratitude, I want to say thank you and share the success of this trip with everyone. This trip would not have been possible without Farm Fresh Direct led by Mayra McKibbon. This trip was a truly transformative experience for our 25 participants, including both youth and parents. I just want to say thank you for helping the 4-H Juntos program, take these children, and show them how valuable they are, and how valuable they can be in their future lives, too. Educat-

ing children is so important to me. Thank you so much. I truly appreciate what you have done."

Gurule described how the trip was an extraordinary adventure for everyone who attended.

"It all began with a journey to Pueblo. Our group stayed at a Holiday Inn. We took the kids on an inspiring tour of Colorado State University, Pueblo. The tour offered a glimpse into college life for the kids, and really ignited excitement in them about future educational possibilities," she said.

Gurule said the staff that gave the tour was enthusiastic with the kids, and the tour was memo-

orable from start to finish.

"Following the tour, we enjoyed lunch at Pack Café, located on the university grounds," she said.

Gurule said lunch was a wonderful way for families and children to get together and reflect on their tour and on the beginning of the day's events.

Gurule then described a boat tour that was taken of the historic Arkansas River Walk in Pueblo.

"It was a relaxing way to take in all the scenic beauty and rich history of the area," she said.

Gurule said that dinner was then held for the kids with their choice of either Angelo's Pizza Pie or Old

Chicago Pizza.

"Dinner offered the families a chance to unwind and discuss their experiences for the day, too," she said.

Gurule said that the next day the kids were all taken to the Colorado State Fair, where they looked at 4-H projects that were showcased from all around Colorado, including the San Luis Valley counties. Gurule said that the kids had fun exploring all the project areas, including the Creative Cooks Contest, Public Presentations Contests, and several pavilions, including the Agricultural Pavilion, East Horse Area, and Small Animal Pavilion.

"Each exhibit offered a window into the skills and hard work of 4-H members, reinforcing the value of their dedication," said Gurule.

Gurule said that the trip was a success for the 4-H Juntos group.

"The success of this trip would not have been pos-

sible without the astounding support from Farm Fresh Direct and the leadership of Mayra McKibbon. The positive feedback from families underscores the impact of this opportunity, highlighting the invaluable experiences gained by our Juntos 4-H youth. Throughout the trip, we ensured that all logistical needs were meticulously handled, including transportation, meals, and accommodations, allowing our participants to fully engage in these enriching experiences, all due to this wonderful donation," she said.

Gurule said she was grateful to McKibbon and Farm Fresh Direct for their commitment and support for local initiatives.

"Thank you for making this trip a memorable and educational experience for all involved," she said.

For more information about Juntos 4-H, contact Gurule at the CSU Extension Office at 719-852-7381.

14,000

Continued from Page 1

Van Horn, he conquered Challenger Point, a 14er that had long been on his bucket list.

Kinney is a business owner, member of the Crestone Board of Trustees, and Mayor Pro Tem. He said he and Van Horn are "lovers and appreciators of our natural surroundings here in Crestone."

For over 20 years, Kinney has gazed at the peaks yet has never summited one. Finally, on Sept. 8, he summited his first 14,000-foot mountain, Challenger Point with Van Horn.

The ascent of Challenger starts at the Willow Lake Trail No. 865 trailhead at the end of Forest Road 949, about two miles from downtown Crestone.

Many people who climb Challenger and nearby Kit Carson hike the 4.5 miles up to a popular backpacking area near Willow Lake, which is at an elevation of 11,580. Most climbers spend a night at this base camp and make their final ascent early the following day. The hike to the lake is spectacular and affords people a riot of wildflower colors in summer and aspen in the fall. As of last weekend, the aspen are beginning to turn, and hikers will be treated to this in the next several weeks. The three-hour-plus hike to the lake is strenuous, with a gain in elevation of about 2,000 feet.

Above an elevation of about 11,500, the trees

start to disappear, and the minute mountain plants of the Alpine tundra dot the landscape.

The gear required to make the ascent is minimal; Kinney said his pack weighed a light 28 pounds. "I was looking for the mix of having a lightweight pack and being comfortable sleeping."

After spending a night under the stars at base camp, the following morning at first light, the duo began their ascent of Challenger, a climb of about an additional 3,000 vertical feet. The steep and arduous climb lasted about three hours.

Kinney shared his experience of summiting Challenger with the Valley Courier, and here are some of the highlights of that conversation.

Regarding being at the summit, Kinney said, "I couldn't believe how calm and quiet it was. I was expecting extreme winds. We were drenched in sweat; I expected to be cold and wind-chilled. It was so calm and so quiet, serene."

"I couldn't comprehend how high up we would be; looking down on the [San Luis] Valley, we could see the Wet Mountain Valley to the east. It felt like being in an airplane, but we were perfectly still, calm, and on top of the world."

"One of the most enjoyable aspects were the people on the summit. I was the least fit person on the mountain that day. There were a few people who had started at the trailhead and summited. They passed me on the way up; they had hiked an additional 4.7

miles or so and were going that much faster. We met many amazing people who were all equally encouraging; they saw me practically crawling up the mountain and would say, "Hey, you are crushing this, keep going, you are almost there."

"On the summit, I could look over and see Kit Carson Mountain, see it in detail, and see how people get to it from Challenger. It was great to see them climbing from Challenger over to Kit Carson. [Many people summit both peaks on the same day.]

"Pete was fit and competent to do the hike, and his patience and graciousness were comforting and calming. He didn't rush me at all. He told me this was a beautiful day; we had plenty of time, no rush. His being gracious was meaningful and helped me get up there. For me, it wasn't easy to get oxygen and my out-of-shape 47-year-old body didn't help. It has been twenty years since I got up to even 13,000 feet."

"I was surprised at how beautiful and wonderful it was to be up there."

Kinney said he saw pikas, bighorn sheep, and deer on the expedition.

Kinney said that he experienced nausea and vertigo while making the last third of a mile, and that dissipated on the summit. "I would say the degree of awe of seeing the Valley from that perspective and feeling accomplished reinvigorated me. It even grounded me."

"The whole time I have lived here and looking up at these mountains, I've never been able to know

the names of all the peaks that are so much a representation of Crestone. Once I've been to a place, I feel differently about it. Now I know which peak is which. This was really meaningful to me to be up there and know this is Challenger, Kit Carson, and those are the Crestone Needle. I have not been down on the T Road driving into Crestone, but I'm excited to look up and know I've been there."

"At different times in my life, I've been connected to prayer, and over the last ten years, I've been so invested in making a place for my family that I've drifted away from my connection to prayer. On the final 1,500 feet of elevation gain, it was so steep and so hard I started praying again. This was a different version of prayer than I've ever had access to, and it was a sweet opportunity to connect with the mountain, the Earth, and my mother, my birth mother. I really needed that. The level of the authenticity of my prayer was so different because of the physical challenge. I was the physical exertion was also a detox."

"When I came down, I was so exhausted, I could barely walk, and my wife of sixteen years said there was something different in my eyes — a light in my eyes."

Regarding time in the mountains, Kinney said, "For so many of us, this is a way to treat the potential for depression or anxiety that many of us experience in our daily grind. I can't believe how lucky we are to live here."

Stucky

Continued from Page 1

ern Colorado, Stucky picked up his first mandolin at the age of 8 and began taking lessons from the internationally acclaimed bluegrass legend John Moore at 10. Stucky later spent time working for and traveling with the renowned musician and horse trainer.

Following the release of his debut album "Stray Clouds" in 2017, Stucky packed up his instruments and a single suitcase and pointed his pick-up for Nashville. Since then, he's released his sophomore album, "Good Vibrations," and held stages across the United States and Europe.

In January 2024, he released his latest single, "Vigilante Love," which

has taken off following its national premiere on RFD-TV. The song has been featured by Dirt Road Country as well as Nikki in Nashville and has received over 23,000 streams on Spotify so far.

Stucky has been featured multiple times by RFD-TV and Today in Nashville, as well as The Cowboy Channel, The Bluegrass Situation, Nashville Entertain-

ment Weekly, and many other media outlets. His music has been praised by Americana UK, Roots Music Report, M Music & Musicians Magazine, and CMA, AMA, and ACM award-winner Crystal Gayle.

When he's not writing or playing music, Stucky enjoys exploring the outdoors, reading, practicing martial arts, hunting, and eating great food.

Don't Miss

Cruisin'

the Canyon Car Show

Saturday, September 21

in beautiful Creede, Colorado

For information

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Opinion

Volunteers power the Colorado Trail

The Colorado Trail, an iconic 567-mile high-elevation trail that crosses the Rockies, owes its existence largely to Gudy Gaskill, a charismatic, six-foot-tall woman who could make tough things seem easy.

Gaskill not only carried out the vision of a state trail, beginning slowly in the late 1970s, but also gave birth to it. In 1972, she lobbied Congress, along with forester Bill Lucas, credited with the Colorado Trail idea, to change federal law so that volunteers could be allowed to build trails on public land.

Volunteerism was so potent an idea, that when, in 1984, writer Ed Quillen broke the story about Gaskill's efforts to revive trail building that had foundered under the Colorado Mountain Trails Foundation, people were energized to join her. Soon, thanks to fundraising, she had 350 volunteers coming each summer to join trail crews she often led herself.

She made creating the Colorado Trail seem like a privilege: You camped out in beautiful backcountry, ate great food, and found stamina you never knew you possessed.

In 1985, caught up in the story, my father, Ed Marston, then publisher of High Country News, volunteered my sister, Wendy, 15, and me, 13, for a week of trail building. That's how we learned how to swing those axe-like tools called Pulaskis on the Molas Pass to Durango section.

Gaskill herself led our crew, setting out early with orange ribbon to mark the trail. She was efficient and tireless, and in just a few hours, older, ur-

Writers On The Range



Dave Marston



ban and young volunteers became trail builders with blisters to prove it.

It was exciting to work on a trail that unfurled along the rooftop of Colorado. Typical trails in those days led up mountains or over steep passes. The Colorado trail rejected peak-bagging and offered a moderate route of week-long, 70-mile sections, neither losing nor gaining elevation rapidly, though often charting a route above tree line.

I joined a trail crew to revisit my childhood adventure this summer, and from Aug. 7 to 11, Denver friend Jeff Miller and I worked to repair trail in Chaffee County's Collegiate Peaks Wilderness.

In wilderness, if there's a tree to fell, you use a handsaw. We needed to move big rocks, so two of us yoked ourselves together in nylon harnesses to do that. We divided labor this way: Men hauled big rocks, and women wielding rock hammers smashed the rocks into gravel.

Trail work has changed a lot in 39 years. Back then we built water bars to stop erosion from runoff. Logs anchored into slopes sluiced water off trails but required annual maintenance. Now,

water moves off trail through "grade reversals." The trail swoops below grade, efficiently shunting water off the path, then swoops back up to level grade. Drains are large versions of grade reversals.

My fellow volunteers were largely thru-hikers, skilled backcountry voyagers who spend their holidays hiking the trail from Denver to Durango in one go. Mark Stephenson, 26, from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania was one of the trail's most ardent fans.

He arrived on the trail via Greyhound bus with \$40 in his pocket, saying, "This is a place where money doesn't matter."

Thinking a reported two-and-a-half-mile hike to camp would be easy, my friend and I arrived at the trailhead loaded up with both front and back packs. I confess to having done the shopping. My friend was optimistic: "I can carry anything two and a half miles."

But our camp had moved six miles away and 2,700 feet uphill. We made it, slowly, and once at camp, we quickly became free-store proprietors. But there was another problem: I'd left my

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The Courier's editorial board reserves the right to reject a letter for reasons it believes are appropriate. Letters may be subject to editing to fit available space, or exclusion from the Opinion Page. Please, no poetry. Please send signed letters to P.O. Box 1099, Alamosa, CO 81101 or email them to news@alamosanews.com. Letters to staff, not for publication, should be marked "personal."

tent poles at home. Crew leader Matt Smith, an engineer from Golden, easily came up with a fix: He used parachute cord to rig up the tent fly, then added a tarp to ward off the rain that soaked us every afternoon and night.

I don't recall meeting thru-hikers in the mid-1980s, but today they seem to dominate hiking culture. I could only listen as the rest of the group talked about trails known by acronyms, including the famous AT — Appalachian Trail.

"You're doing great work!" hikers told us as they passed by. Crew leader Smith offers this perspective today: "19,000 volunteer person-hours go into trail improvement every year."

We owe thanks to those original trail stalwarts — forester Bill Lucas, journalist Merrill Hastings and of course, Gudy Gaskill. Their vision created of one of the state's wonders.

Dave Marston is the publisher of Writers on the Range, writersontherange.org, an independent nonprofit dedicated to spurring lively conversation about the West. He lives in Durango, Colorado.

Professional Development Day unites school districts for collaborative growth

By DIANA JONES and LUIS MURILLO

In the ever-evolving landscape of education, continuous professional development is essential for teachers and staff to remain informed, inspired, and equipped with the necessary tools to foster student success. Recently, a collaborative professional development day was held, bringing together multiple school districts from across the San Luis Valley. The event, titled "SLV Educators Conference: Uniting Minds, Inspiring Futures", not only provided participants with an enriching learning experience but also served as a powerful reminder of the collective strength that emerges when educators from diverse backgrounds unite in pursuit of a common goal—enhancing their professional skills for the benefit of their students.

Setting the Stage for Collaboration

The decision to host a multi-district professional development day stemmed from a commitment to fostering collaboration beyond individual schools and districts. Now in its second year, with this being the third multi-district conference, the initiative aims to address a common challenge: too often, schools operate in isolation, where educators within a single school or district benefit from professional development while others facing similar challenges just miles away miss out on these opportunities. By uniting educators from different districts, the conference seeks to break down those barriers, creating

a space where participants can share resources, ideas, and experiences, and, most importantly, learn from one another.

Adams State University generously hosted the event, accommodating the large number of attendees and providing auditorium space for keynote presentations. The conference attracted teachers, administrators, and support staff from the Alamosa, SLV BOCES, Moffat, Monte Vista, and Sierra Grande school districts, as well as Adams State University faculty. The excitement was palpable as educators arrived, eager to connect with new colleagues, gain fresh insights, and expand their professional networks beyond the confines of their individual schools.

Workshops Designed for Maximum Impact

Following the keynote, attendees had the opportunity to engage in a variety of breakout sessions, each designed to address specific strands, challenges, and innovations in education. Facilitators included both local educators and external experts, providing a diverse and well-rounded perspective on key topics such as:

Artificial Intelligence in Education: These sessions delved into the emerging role of AI in the classroom, exploring its potential to enhance personalized learning, streamline administrative tasks, and provide real-time feedback. Educators examined practical applications of A.I. technologies and discussed the ethical considerations surrounding

their use in education.

Engagement Strategies: These workshops focused on innovative techniques for increasing student engagement in the classroom. Participants explored hands-on strategies to foster active learning, maintain student interest, and create dynamic classroom environments. Facilitators shared success stories and provided actionable methods that educators could implement to boost student participation and motivation.

Trauma-Informed Care: As more schools recognize the impact of trauma on student learning and behavior, these sessions provided insights into creating supportive, trauma-sensitive classrooms. Educators learned to identify signs of trauma and apply strategies that promote emotional and psychological safety, helping students feel secure and ready to learn.

Teaching Strategies: These workshops offered an in-depth look at best practices in teaching, focusing on differentiated instruction to meet the diverse needs of today's students. Facilitators guided participants through approaches to adapt lessons for varying learning styles and abilities, ensuring that all students have equitable access to the curriculum.

One of the most valuable aspects of these workshops was the collaborative environment that allowed educators from different districts to exchange ideas and solutions. Teachers grappling with specific challenges found

that their peers in other districts had already developed successful strategies, while administrators discovered innovative approaches to district-wide issues by learning from others' experiences. This cross-district collaboration not only fostered professional growth but also strengthened the collective effort to enhance education across the region.

Continuing the Momentum

As the day came to a close, participants expressed their excitement about the new connections they had made and the ideas they would bring back to their schools. Many educators commented that the opportunity to interact with colleagues from other districts had broadened their perspectives and provided them with a renewed sense of purpose.

One teacher from Monte Vista Schools summed up the day perfectly: "It's easy to feel isolated sometimes when you're just working within your own district. Today reminded me that we're all in this together and that there are so many great ideas out there that we can use to help our students succeed."

To maintain the momentum generated during the event, organizers have proactively planned to sustain the collaboration. The SLV Winter Educators Conference is already scheduled and in the planning stages. This forward-looking approach will facilitate ongoing cross-district learning and professional development.

The multi-district professional development day was a resounding success, distinguished not only by the valuable content presented but also by the collaborative spirit it nurtured. In a time when education is increasingly complex, the event highlighted the significant benefits of educators coming together to share insights and strategies. Through this collaborative approach, districts are empowered to innovate collectively, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to succeed. As educational environments continue to evolve, the insights gained from this event will underscore the importance of unity and the commitment to lifelong learning.

Diana Jones is superintendent of the Alamosa School District and Luis Murillo is the assistant superintendent of ASD.

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Managing Editor

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Lifestyles

Colorado wants to help farmers survive drought, pests and market changes

By SHANNON MULLANE

The Colorado Sun UTE MOUNTAIN

UTE RESERVATION — In southwestern Colorado, Greg Vlaming crouched down to look at dying remains of an oat crop baking under the July sun. It wasn't just a dead plant — it was armor, he said.

"This minimizes wind erosion and surface runoff," said Vlaming, a soil scientist, consultant and farmer. "Water can't run off on something that's like this."

Vlaming is working alongside the state, researchers, farmers and ranchers on a newly expanded soil health program established by the Colorado legislature in 2021. The goal of the program is to nurture soils in order to reap rewards — like more efficient irrigation, more carbon storage and healthier crops.

But changing long-standing growing practices can be a risky, expensive challenge for farmers already dealing with drought and thin margins. That's why the state spent this year building out resources, like traveling soil specialists, for anyone who wants to try its soil health practices, said John Miller, Soil Health Program administrator for the Colorado Department of Agriculture.

"They spend pretty much every day of the week on the road meeting with producers ... and we can't do it fast enough," Miller said. "They want more."

For almost all of the last 24 years, parts of Colorado have experienced some level of drought. Farmers and ranchers are used to dealing with swings in precipitation, but if there are multiple poor water years in a row, their crops, livestock and bottom line can suffer.

They are also facing increasing pressure to cut back on their water use as Western states grapple with gaps between the demand for water and the supply in river systems like the Colorado River Basin, the source for 40 million people and about 5.5 million acres of agricultural land.

Already in Colorado, about 20% of the agricultural demand for water goes unmet each year, according to the 2023 Colorado Water Plan. By 2050, that gap could widen by 150,000 to 200,000 acre-feet per year, depending on the location.

One acre-foot roughly equals the annual water use of two to three households.

The Colorado Soil Health Program team aims to help farmers and ranchers stay in business whether there's drought, low reservoir storage, poor market prices for their crops or a new influx of pests.

Improving soils is one way to make that happen, Vlaming said.

"If you're holding more water, you're building pest resistance, you're building resilience to drought, you're building vigor in the plant and higher yields," he said.

In the field at the Ute Mountain Ute Farm and Ranch in southwestern Colorado, Vlaming checked his cell phone, where he could access real-time measurements from a soil sensor.

"Look what it shows me," he said. "We're super dry."

Ideally, the soil is about 17% to 40% saturated with water, depending on the soil texture. As soils become more saturated, it can lead to flooding, erosion and runoff. This field — already cut and no longer irrigated — was at 15%.

Farmers can use these soil readings to time when

their center pivots will swing over the field and sprinkle water over the crops.

"You're not going by intuition, and you're going, 'Welp, field's dry, let's irrigate,'" Vlaming said. "It's like no, we know exactly how dry we are. That's part of this program. ... It's just so cool."

The soil health program focuses on building up organic matter, like decaying roots and plant leaves, and increasing microbial diversity in the soil.

Keeping a few inches of plant stubble on the ground after harvesting a crop is one method. The program also encourages farmers to minimize soil disturbance, increase the diversity of plants grown on the field, keep live plant roots in the soil and integrate livestock into farming practices.

More organic matter helps store carbon, cuts down on pest problems, boosts nutrients, provides aeration that helps roots grow and stabilizes crop yields.

It also acts like a sponge: For every 1% increase in organic matter, the soil can store roughly 20,000 to 27,000 gallons of additional water per acre, according to Miller and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

That means a farmer can wait longer before irrigating again, using less water on a particular field and opening up water supplies. They can reinvest that extra water in their business or even conserve it as part of efforts like the System Conservation Pilot Program, a federal program that pays farmers to cut their water use.

Growing without organic matter is like growing something on Mars, Miller said.

"Organic matter is the key to everything," he said. "If it's just dirt, just the mineralized portion, that water is not going to stay there at all."

The Ute Mountain Ute Indian Tribe, which owns the Farm and Ranch, has 10 fields in the state soil program, most of which are using at least one soil health principle.

"It's gonna be a good

program for us to be able to monitor and stay on top of our soil health program along with our water placement and usage," said Simon Martinez, who manages the 7,700-acre operation.

The Farm and Ranch is one of 300 producers that enrolled in the three-year program this summer. It's the second iteration of the program: In 2022, 120 producers enrolled and are wrapping up their participation this summer. The total number of farms and ranches in Colorado as of 2022 is 38,800, according to a 2023 federal agricultural statistics report.

There's still a lot of work to do, said members of the soil health team during a tour of the Farm and Ranch on July 30.

The main challenge is money and mindset, they said.

People who want to try a different soil health practice, like minimizing disturbance of the soil, might not have access to a less disruptive tiller. They might want to leave stubble to armor the soil's surface, but they can't afford machinery with a giant roller that creates a mat on the soil's surface.

Or they heard that their neighbor tried to grow a new crop to increase the plant diversity, and it was a costly failure.

"Anything experimental can lead to a failure. ... When you have the type of thin margins that ag operations do, costly failures can't be happening," Miller said. "It's a good way to go out of business."

The state's soil health program helps pay for the costs of trying out the new practices, and the team's soil specialists offer on-site advice to help people test out the new soil practices.

"It's not a lot of money, but the idea is to change the mindset in the management decisions," Vlaming said. "It values soil health in your decision-making."

Through the program, sociologists are talking to producers about barriers to changing practices. Researchers are doing economic case studies to understand the financial impacts. They're gather-

ing hard data on water retention, the quality of runoff, greenhouse gas

emissions and carbon sequestration.

"We want to know more

about what those microbes are and what they're doing," Miller said.

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Sports

High school football previews – Week 4

By **KEN HAMRICK**
Courier sports editor

ALAMOSA—The fourth week of the 2024 San Luis Valley high school football season is this weekend with all but one local team in action.

Here are thumbnail sketches of this week's game.

ALAMOSA (2-1) AT DELTA (2-1)

This week: The Alamosa Mean Moose will be on the road for the second straight week as it will travel to the defending state champion Delta Panthers. Kickoff is at 7 p.m.

Last week: The Mean Moose lost to Pueblo Central, the second-ranked team in Class 3A, 43-0 at Dutch Clark Stadium last Thursday. The Panthers won 49-0 at Rifle last Friday.

Next week: Both teams will have an open date before their respective league seasons.

#3 CENTAURI (3-0), IDLE

This week: The third-ranked Centauri Falcons will have an open date this week.

Last week: The Falcons defeated eighth-ranked Buena Vista 19-13 at Buena Vista last Friday.

Next week: Centauri will host Class 2A Bayfield next Friday beginning at 7 p.m.

CENTER (0-3) AT ELLICOTT (1-2)

This week: The Center Vikings will be on the road to the Front Range as it will play at the Ellicott Thunderhawks. Kickoff is at 7 p.m.

Last week: The Vikings lost at home to Cedaredge 52-12 last Friday. The Thunderhawks lost at Platte Canyon 26-20 in overtime last Saturday.

Next week: Both teams will be idle.

CUSTER COUNTY (0-3) AT SARGENT (1-2)

This week: The Sargent Farmers will host the Custer County Bobcats. Kickoff is at 7 p.m.

Last week: The Farmers lost at Hoehne 62-0 last Friday. The Bobcats lost at Holly 42-8 also last Friday.

Next week: Both teams will have an open date.

DEL NORTE (0-2) AT CEDAREEDGE (2-1)

This week: The Del Norte Tigers will be on the road to face the Cedaredge Bruins on Friday. Game time is slated for 3:30 p.m.

Last week: The Tigers forfeited their scheduled game at Roaring Fork. The Bruins defeated Center 52-12 on the road last Friday.

Next week: Del Norte will host Dolores Huerta Prep next Friday beginning at 3 p.m. Cedaredge will be idle.

FOWLER (1-2) AT SANFORD (1-2)

This week: The Sanford Mustangs will host the Fowler Grizzlies on Friday. Kickoff is at 7 p.m.

Last week: The Mustangs lost to seventh-ranked Haxtun 60-0 at home last Friday. The Grizzlies lost to second-ranked Akron 56-0 at home last Saturday.

Next week: Both teams will have an open date.

PAGOSA SPRNGS (1-1) AT #9 MONTE VISTA (2-1)

This week: The ninth-ranked Monte Vista Pirates will host the Class 2A Pagosa Springs Pirates Friday. Game time is at 7 p.m.

Last week: Monte Vista defeated North Fork 43-20 last Friday. Pagosa Springs was idle.

Next week: Monte Vista will have the week off. Pagosa Springs will host Elizabeth next Friday at 7 p.m.

SANGRE DE CRISTO (1-1) AT #1 DOVE



Sanford High School's Trason Gartrell (21) rolls out for a pass in last Friday's game against Haxtun. The Mustangs host Fowler this coming Friday with kickoff scheduled for 7 p.m.

Courier photo by Ken Hamrick

CREEK (3-0)

This week: The Sangre de Cristo Thunderbirds will be in the road to take on the top-ranked Dove Creek Bulldogs. Kickoff is at 1 p.m. on Saturday. It is a foundation game and will not count on their record.

Last week: The Thunderbirds had an open date. The Bulldogs defeated Escalante 50-6 in New Mexico last Friday.

Next week: Sangre will travel to Holly for a 6 p.m. kickoff. Dove Creek will travel to Monticello (Utah) with kickoff scheduled for

7 p.m.

#2 SIERRA GRANDE (3-0) AT ANTONITO (0-2)

This week: The Antonito Trojans will host the second-ranked Sierra Grande Panthers Friday beginning at 3 p.m.

Last week: The Trojans had an open date. The Panthers defeated Kiowa 63-18 on the road last Friday.

Next week: Antonito will host Branson/Kim next Saturday at 1 p.m. Sierra Grande will be idle.

Three local volleyball teams in CHSAA rankings

By **KEN HAMRICK**
Courier sports editor

ALAMOSA – The Colorado High School Activities Association released its weekly rankings with three San Luis Valley volleyball teams that are mentioned.

In Class 3A, Alamosa High School is ranked fifth. The Lady Mean Moose are 9-2 as of last Saturday and were on a six-game winning streak.

In Class 2A, Del Norte is in the No. 3 position. The Lady Tigers are undefeated in nine matches.

In Class 1A, Sargent is the No. 10-ranked team. The Lady Farmers have won all eight of their matches so far this season.



Sports Bulletin

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

SCOREBOARD TUESDAY

Prep girls softball
Alamosa at Gunnison – late
Prep girls volleyball
Alamosa at Centauri – late
Antonito at Questa (N.M.) – late

SCHEDULE WEDNESDAY

College men's soccer
Adams State at Oklahoma Panhandle State, 4:30 p.m.
College women's soccer
Adams State at Oklahoma Panhandle State, 1 p.m.

THURSDAY

Prep girls softball
Alamosa at La Junta (at Tippy Martinez Park), 4 p.m.
Prep girls volleyball
Sargent at Sangre de Cristo, 5 p.m.
Centennial at Questa (N.M.), TBA

FRIDAY Prep football

Sierra Grande at Antonito, 3 p.m.
Alamosa at Delta, 7 p.m.
Center at Ellicott, 7 p.m.
Custer County at Sargent, 7 p.m.
Del Norte at Cedaredge, 7 p.m.
Fowler at Sanford, 7 p.m.
Monte Vista at Pagosa Springs, 7 p.m.

Prep cross country

Antonito, Centauri, Centennial, Center, Del Norte, Monte Vista, Sierra Grande at Gerard Archuleta Invitational (at Antonito), 9 a.m.

Prep girls volleyball

Center, Evangel Christian, Sangre de Cristo at La Veta, 9 a.m.
Sierra Grande at Antonito, 11 a.m.
Mountain Valley at South Park, 1 p.m.
Pueblo East at Centauri, 4 p.m.

College women's volleyball

Adams State at New Mexico Highlands, 6 p.m.

SATURDAY

Prep football
Sangre de Cristo at Dove Creek, 1 p.m.
Prep cross country
Alamosa at Coronado

Invitational, 9 a.m.

Prep girls gymnastics
Alamosa at Overland Invitational, TBA

Prep boys soccer
Alamosa at Pagosa Springs, 10 a.m.

Prep girls softball
Lamar at Alamosa, 11 a.m.

Prep girls volleyball
Centauri at Pagosa Springs, 11 a.m.

Monte Vista at Center, 11 a.m.

Primero, Sargent at Centennial, 11 a.m.

Sierra Grande at Creede, 11 a.m.

Trinidad at Sanford, 11 a.m.

Montezuma-Cortez at Del Norte, noon

Mountain Valley at Crested Butte, noon

College football
Adams State at Western Colorado, 6 p.m.

College cross country
Adams State at Metropolitan State-Denver Invitational (at Washington Park), 8:30 a.m.

College men's soccer
Sul Ross State (Texas) at Adams State, 10 a.m.

College women's soccer
Sul Ross State (Texas) at Adams State, 1 p.m.

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Lifestyle

Colorado's multimillion dollar investment in quantum gets 70-acre campus in Arvada

By TAMARA CHUANG
The Colorado Sun

Two months after winning a \$40.5 million federal grant to invest in a quantum computing hub in Colorado, members of a local consortium have acquired a 70-acre property in Arvada, attracted millions more in funding commitments, and, on Monday, put shovels to the ground.

That's relatively quick in a realm where private industry must rely on public agencies and area universities to make decisions.

"Colorado and the Mountain West are on top not just because of the amazing scenic views but ultimately because of decades of innovation and startups that are right around risk taking and smart policy and startup entrepreneurialism," Zachary Yerushalmi, CEO of the Elevate Quantum consortium, told a small crowd during the ceremonial groundbreaking. "Entrepreneurship is, of course, no stranger to Gov. Polis, and the support for this effort and wider advanced technology policies of the state going back decades is why we stand here today."

The business park, dubbed the Quantum Commons, is the next phase of the state's Tech Hub effort, which became official in October after Elevate Quantum beat out hundreds of other applicants. The U.S. Department of Commerce program stemmed from the CHIPS and Science Act of 2022 to bring tech manufacturing back to the U.S. and spread tech expertise around the country.

But the real plan in the Denver-Boulder corridor is to take all the super brain power spawned during the decadeslong existence of federal labs and schools like the University of Colorado — four Nobel Prize laureates for physics hail from CU — and connect it to the dozens of startups and private companies working to commercialize quantum right now. Another goal is to create tens of thousands of jobs, not all of them requiring an advanced degree.

Get that formula right and the region, as more than one person alluded to, could become another Stanford Research Park, a 1950s partnership between city and industry that became a cornerstone of high tech's Silicon Valley.

"Quantum gives us a path to end infectious dis-

ease. It will cure cancer. It'll turn back the clock on climate change. The things we know it can do will fundamentally transform civilization," said Corban Tillemann-Dick, founder of Denver-based Maybell Quantum, which makes super-cold refrigerators to slow atomic motion so quantum computers can effectively operate. "That's why this place matters. The Quantum Commons isn't just these 70 acres. ... It's our Bell Labs, our Stanford Research Park, our Apollo program."

On Monday, though, the Arvada site looked like a neglected, 1970s-style industrial park, with dilapidated asphalt roads and worn-down parking lots. There's about 60,000 square feet of buildings, including one with labs in need of updating.

The property, just off Highway 72, is covered with wildgrasses and overlooks residential neighborhoods and a railroad track to the south. It's hard to miss with a 180-foot-tall landmark on site, according to the property broker. That's the old lift pipe tower originally used by oil-shale company Tosco in the 1980s to research how to extract oil shale from rocks. But then Tosco left town and while property owners tried to keep it leased to science and research tenants, the site has been for sale for years.

Enter the Colorado School of Mines, a consortium member eager for the advances and opportunities quantum will offer to students.

"We knew that a requirement for any successful proposal was going to be to have a location where companies could get together, advance their technologies, share resources," said Paul C. Johnson, president of the School of Mines. "That's where we jumped in and said, 'how about if we do that for you to make your proposal more competitive?' They got very excited about it."

Johnson said that the school had been aware of the site for years but hadn't found the right use. And then came quantum. He'd kept the board in the loop this year and let them know they may have to approve the purchase fast. The federal award was announced in July. Mines completed the purchase in August.

The school's commitment is likely to be "in excess of \$20 million by the time we're done in the

next 18 months," Johnson said.

That covers the cost of buying the property for \$14 million, fixing up the existing 60,000 square feet of labs and offices ("Maybell's going to have quantum refrigerators down in the basement that feed the upper floors," Johnson said) and developing a shared clean-room fabrication facility, which is critical for companies building such sensitive instruments that might get messed up if someone sneezes. It sounds like a coworking space for startups and tech companies that can't afford to build clean rooms of their own.

Mines is the owner, operator and developer of the property and at some point, it does hope to get some of the investment back. Payback could be in the form of cash, as the property develops and is leased to companies, much like Stanford Research Park.

The other return is the opportunity for students.

"Our goal is to make this successful so they continue to get funding and Colorado does become the world's epicenter of quantum technologies. That's our first goal," he said. "But we've already had discussions about students having internships with the companies up there and students doing senior design projects. It may not be a formal classroom kind of education, but we've certainly already talked about having students there getting experiential learning opportunities."

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Wednesday, September 18

Men & Women's Soccer at Oklahoma Panhandle State University at Goodwell, O.K.

1:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Friday, September 20

Women's Volleyball at New Mexico Highlands University at Las Vegas, N.M.

6:00 p.m.

Saturday, September 21

Men & Women's Cross Country at Metro State Roadrunner Invitational at Denver, C.O.

8:30 a.m.

Men & Women's Soccer at Sul Ross State University at Alamosa, C.O.

10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Football at Western Colorado University at Gunnison C.O.

6:00 p.m.



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DEL NORTE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER needed at the URGSD. We are seeking a hardworking and enthusiastic teaching professional to join our dynamic, vibrant and fun-loving team for the 2024-2025 school year. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree or higher and possess or be able to obtain a Colorado Teaching License. Please submit your application, resume and cover letter to: Amy Duda, Principal at aduda@urtigers.co or contact Amy at 719-657-4050. Applications can be picked up at the District Office or online at: urtigers.co. (10/4/24)

BARTENDER WANTED IN QUESTA, NM at El Monte Carlo Lounge. Thursday - Sunday, 3pm-11pm, hours may vary. \$13/hr with tips, housing can be available if needed. Call Mark 575-779-0653. (9/20/24)

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LEAD TEACHER FOR INFANT CARE CENTER NEEDED at the UPPER RIO GRANDE SCHOOL DISTRICT. 150 days per year which includes all days that teachers are at school. Please submit your application and resume to: Aaron Horrocks, Superintendent, at 950 French Street, DEL NORTE, CO, 81132, or call at 719-657-4040, x4000. Applications may be retrieved on-line at urtigers.co or at the District Office. (9/24/24)

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341 - GARAGE SALE

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426 - MOBILE HOMES FOR SALE

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525 - GUNS

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ONE BEDROOM APARTMENT, DOWNTOWN ALAMOSA. \$700/month includes basic utilities. Interested? Email slvbrental@yahoo.com. Available October 1st. (9/25/24)

2 BEDROOM DUPLEX available for rent. W 7th St, ALAMOSA. \$1,200/month; \$1,200 security deposit. Water, trash and sewer are included. Tenant is responsible for gas, electric, internet. 719-587-6960 or email manuelm@slvbhg.org. (10/9/24)

3 BEDROOM, 2 BATH duplex in BLANCA. Call 719-588-5900. (10/9/24)

EAST ALAMOSA: 1 BEDROOM, utilities included, \$635 monthly, \$700 deposit, income qualification. 719-580-3710. (9/24/24)

Accepting applications for 1 bedroom apartments. Must be 62 or older or disabled. Cielo Vista Apartments 166 S. Wills Center, Colo 754-3664

Accepting applications for 2 & 3 bedroom family units. Valley Grande Apts. 2256 E. Drive Monte Vista, CO 852-4302

Accepting Applications for waiting list for 2 & 3 bedroom apartments. Family units available. West View Villas 510 Dunham Monte Vista, Colo 852-3949

Accepting applications for 2 & 3 bedroom apartments. Rent based on income for qualifying households. Gomez Manor Apts. 804 State St. Antonito, Colo. 376-2388

Accepting applications for 2 bedroom apartments. Family living at an affordable price. Guadalupe Hacienda Apts. 404 W. 8th Antonito, Colo. 376-2025

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Comics

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

NEA Crossword Puzzle

- ACROSS**
- 1 "The — Who Loved Me"
 - 4 Tropical tuber
 - 8 Very great
 - 12 Orange pekoe
 - 13 Maple genus
 - 14 Fashion magazine
 - 15 Conger
 - 16 Online activity
 - 17 Means of control
 - 18 Destroyed
 - 20 Parts of plants
 - 21 "Grumpy — Men"
 - 22 Luau fare
 - 23 Cheese chunk
 - 26 Mutilated
 - 30 Animal fodder
 - 31 Insect secretion
 - 32 River in France
 - 33 Western state (abbr.)
 - 35 Skill

- 36 "She's the —"
- 37 Odds —
- 39 Cry
- 41 Negative vote
- 42 Enemy
- 43 Go stealthily
- 46 Inactive
- 50 Young woman
- 51 Restrain
- 52 — & Perrins sauce
- 53 Against
- 54 A single time
- 55 Mischievous child
- 56 Tarts
- 57 Root veggie
- 58 — the line

- DOWN**
- 1 Ragout
 - 2 Look searchingly
 - 3 Lock brand
 - 4 Block and —
 - 5 Yearned
 - 6 Interpret
 - 7 Scrap of food
 - 8 Dizziness

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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

- 9 Toward the sheltered side
- 10 Slender
- 11 Playing cards
- 19 Tooth on a gear
- 20 — of a Preacher Man
- 22 Treaty
- 23 "Slow down!"
- 24 Merit
- 25 Changed the color of
- 26 War god
- 27 Stretched car
- 28 Birthright seller
- 29 Dimple
- 31 Noble-woman
- 34 Origin
- 38 Snooze
- 39 Frozen dessert
- 40 — and haw
- 42 Compel
- 43 Loud sound
- 44 Hindu princess
- 45 Punta del —
- 46 Sand hill
- 47 Dismounted
- 48 "20,000 Leagues" captain
- 49 Race end marker
- 51 Male swan

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

SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★☆☆☆☆

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

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PREVIOUS SOLUTION

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

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

HERMAN



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Some conversations can look more like an interrogation

DEAR ABBY: I appreciate you offering your booklet "How to Be Popular" to people who are uncomfortable or uncertain in social situations. I don't know if the following tips are included, but here's what I do: When I meet someone for the first time, I say, "Tell me three things about yourself that you would like to share." As I listen to the response, I think of the "W" words -- who, what, when, where and why. Then, for elaboration, I ask one of those questions, or perhaps more, a few minutes later. I hope these suggestions are helpful. -- BOB W. IN NORTH CAROLINA

DEAR BOB: Showing an interest in others is generally a good idea. However, some people might find your direct approach intimidating if it's a conversation starter with no preamble. Asking who, what, when, where and why can be useful in conversation, as it also is when writing a news article. Making social conversation doesn't come naturally to everyone. Few individuals are adept at it because they are so focused on their own insecurities that it distracts them from reaching out. It can, however, be practiced and polished until it

becomes second nature. My booklet "How To Be Popular" contains many useful tips for accomplishing this. It can be ordered by sending your name and address, plus a check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds), to: Dear Abby Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price. It is meant for people of all ages and covers a variety of situations.

The keys to being socially successful are: Be kind. Be honest. Be tactful. Offer a compliment if you think it is deserved. Be a good listener, and people will think you are a genius. (It's true!) And remember, a smile is an excellent icebreaker because it puts those around you at ease.

DEAR ABBY: I am in my late 20s. My mom and dad will soon have been married for 30 years. I accidentally found evidence recently that Mom is having an extramarital affair. When I confronted her, she said I should go to therapy to help deal with my overreaction to her "doing something I don't like." She totally ignored the fact that it's not just a minor thing that I'm upset about, but something wrong, immoral, hurtful and disrespectful to my



ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

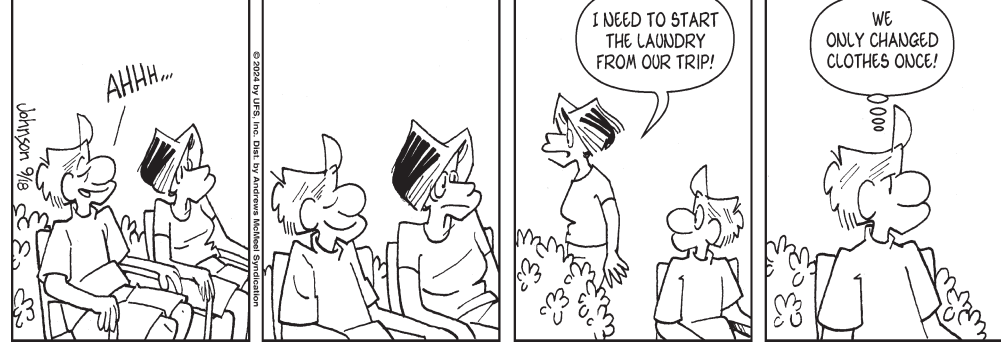
dad, my brother and me. Mom and I were very close, but this has ruined our relationship. I feel like she is putting reconciliation all on me, which feels unfair. What do I do? -- THROWN IN MARYLAND

DEAR THROWN: I am sure that what you discovered was a shock. However, you know nothing about the reason(s) your mother may be having an extramarital affair and whether your father knows about it. What's going on has nothing to do with you and your brother. Please take your mother's advice. Discuss this mess and your feelings about it with a licensed family therapist, and you may gain some insight.

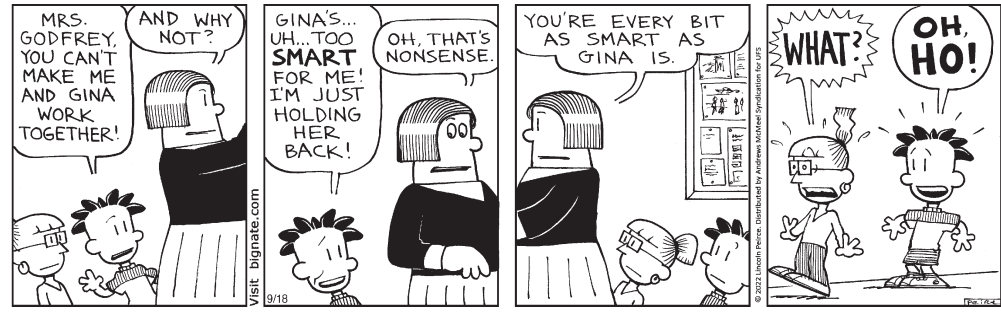
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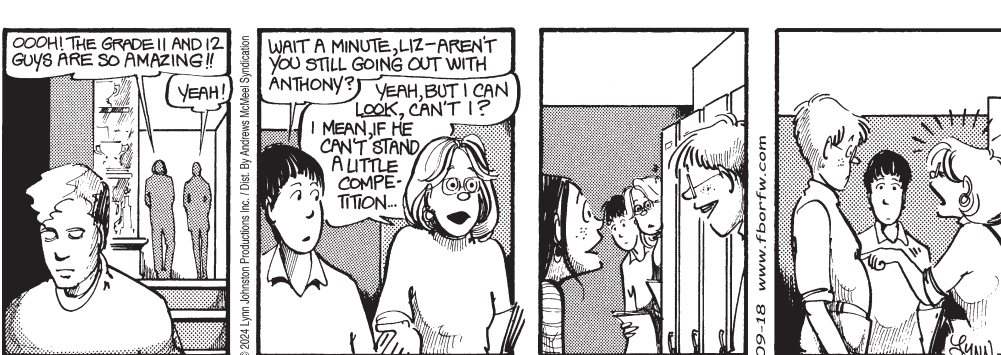
BIG NATE



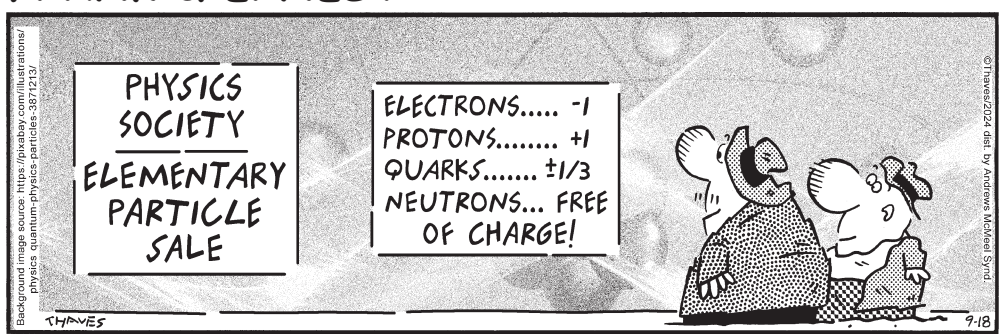
THE BORN LOSER



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE



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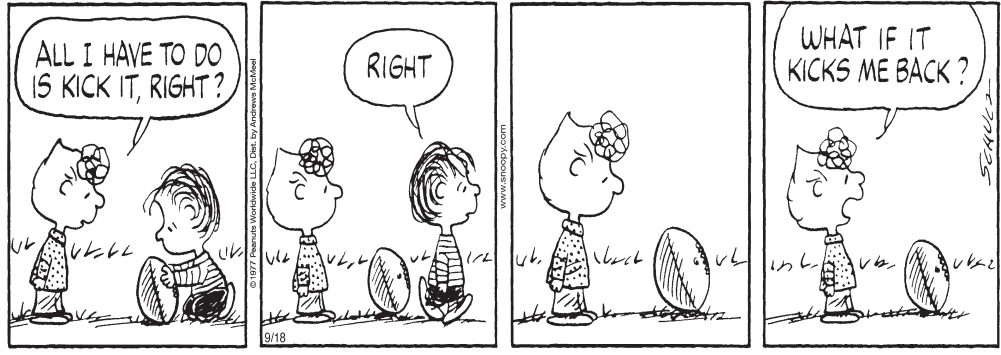
GARFIELD



THE GRIZZWELLS



PEANUTS



Lifestyle

Decades of national suicide prevention policies haven't slowed deaths

By **CHERYL PLATZMAN WEINSTOCK**

Colorado Newsline

When Pooja Mehta's younger brother, Raj, died by suicide at 19 in March 2020, she felt "blindsided."

Raj's last text message was to his college lab partner about how to divide homework questions.

"You don't say you're going to take questions 1 through 15 if you're planning to be dead one hour later," said Mehta, 29, a mental health and suicide prevention advocate in Arlington, Virginia. She had been trained in Mental Health First Aid — a nationwide program that teaches how to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental illness — yet she said her brother showed no signs of trouble.

Mehta said some people blamed her for Raj's death because the two were living together during the COVID-19 pandemic while Raj was attending classes online. Others said her training should have helped her recognize he was struggling.

But, Mehta said, "we act like we know everything there is to know about suicide prevention. We've done a really good job at developing solutions for a part of the problem, but we really don't know enough."

Raj's death came in the midst of decades of unsuccessful attempts to tamp down suicide rates nationwide.

During the past two decades federal officials have launched three national suicide prevention strategies, including one announced in April.

The first strategy, announced in 2001, focused on addressing risk factors for suicide and leaned on a few common interventions.

The next strategy called for developing and implementing standardized protocols to identify and treat people at risk for suicide with follow-up care and the support needed to continue treatment.

The latest strategy builds on previous ones and includes a federal action plan calling for implementation of 200 measures over the next three years, including prioritizing populations disproportionately affected by suicide, such as Black youth and Native Americans and Alaska Natives.

Despite those evolving strategies, from 2001 through 2021 suicide rates increased most years, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Provisional data for 2022, the most recent numbers available, shows deaths by suicide grew an additional 3% over the previous year. CDC officials project the final number of suicides in 2022 will be higher.

In the past two decades, suicide rates in rural states such as Alaska, Montana, North Dakota, and Wyoming have been about double those in urban areas, according to the CDC.

Despite those persistently disappointing numbers, mental health experts contend the national strategies aren't the problem. Instead, they argue, the policies — for many reasons — simply aren't being funded, adopted, and used. That slow uptake was compounded by the pandem-

ic, which had a broad, negative impact on mental health.

A chorus of national experts and government officials agree the strategies simply haven't been embraced widely, but said even basic tracking of deaths by suicide isn't universal.

Surveillance data is commonly used to drive health care quality improvement and has been helpful in addressing cancer and heart disease. Yet, it hasn't been used in the study of behavioral health issues such as suicide, said Michael Schoenbaum, a senior adviser for mental health services, epidemiology, and economics at the National Institute of Mental Health.

"We think about treating behavioral health problems just differently than we think about physical health problems," Schoenbaum said.

Without accurate statistics, researchers can't figure out who dies most often by suicide, what prevention strategies are working, and where prevention money is needed most.

Many states and territories don't allow medical records to be linked

to death certificates, Schoenbaum said, but NIMH is collaborating with a handful of other organizations to document this data for the first time in a public report and database due out by the end of the year.

Further hobbling the strategies is the fact that federal and local funding ebbs and flows and some suicide prevention efforts don't work in some states and localities because of the challenging geography, said Jane Pearson, special adviser on suicide research to the NIMH director.

Wyoming, where a few hundred thousand residents are spread across sprawling, rugged landscape, consistently ranks among the states with the highest suicide rates.

State officials have worked for many years to address the state's suicide problem, said Kim Deti, a spokesperson for the Wyoming Department of Health.

But deploying services, like mobile crisis units, a core element of the latest national strategy, is difficult in a big, sparsely populated state.

"The work is not stop-

ping but some strategies that make sense in some geographic areas of the country may not make sense for a state with our characteristics," she said.

Lack of implementation isn't only a state and local government problem. Despite evidence that screening patients for suicidal thoughts during medical visits helps head off catastrophe, health professionals are not mandated to do so.

Many doctors find suicide screening daunting because they have limited time and insufficient training and because they aren't comfortable discussing suicide, said Janet Lee, an adolescent medicine specialist and associate professor of pediatrics at the Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University.

"I think it is really scary and kind of astounding to think if something is a matter of life and death how somebody can't ask about it," she said.

The use of other measures has also been inconsistent. Crisis intervention services are core to the national strategies, yet many states haven't built standardized sys-

tems.

Besides being fragmented, crisis systems, such as mobile crisis units, can vary from state to state and county to county. Some mobile crisis units use telehealth, some operate 24 hours a day and others 9 to 5, and some use local law enforcement for responses instead of mental health workers.

Similarly, the fledgling 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline faces similar, serious problems.

Only 23% of Americans are familiar with 988 and there's a significant knowledge gap about the situations people should call 988 for, according to a recent poll conducted by the National Alliance on Mental Illness and Ipsos.

Most states, territories, and tribes have also not yet permanently funded 988, which was launched nationwide in July 2022 and has received about \$1.5 billion in federal funding, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Anita Everett, director of the Center for Mental Health Services within SAMHSA, said her agen-

cy is running an awareness campaign to promote the system.

Some states, including Colorado, are taking other steps. There, state officials installed financial incentives for implementing suicide prevention efforts, among other patient safety measures, through the state's Hospital Quality Incentive Payment Program. The program hands out about \$150 million a year to hospitals for good performance. In the last year, 66 hospitals improved their care for patients experiencing suicidality, according to Lena Heilmann, director of the Office of Suicide Prevention at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

Experts hope other states will follow Colorado's lead.

And despite the slow movement, Mehta sees bright spots in the latest strategy and action plan.

Although it is too late to save Raj, "addressing the social drivers of mental health and suicide and investing in spaces for people to go to get help well before a crisis gives me hope," Mehta said.



Pet FACT:

This device is placed around a dog's body instead of just the neck, which can make walking more comfortable.

Answer: Harness

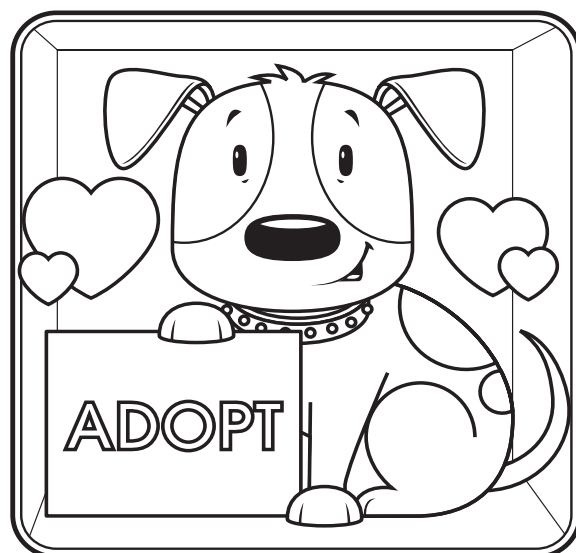
How they say that in...

English: Bark
Spanish: Ladrar
Italian: Abbaiare
French: Aboyer
German: Bellen



Creative Coloring

Color in this picture to create your own masterpiece.



Double Word Puzzle

Unscramble the words to reveal the sentence.

EWONR

TEP

DPTOA

CAER

I L V M Y G

Answer: I Love My Dog

THIS DAY IN HISTORY



1609: Henry Hudson begins his exploration of the river that would one day bear his name.

1943: German forces rescue Benito Mussolini from house arrest.

1984: Dwight Gooden of the New York Mets sets the rookie record for strikeouts.

NEW WORD

HEEL
 a command for a dog to have him walk close behind you

Did You Know?

A dog's sense of smell is amazing. A dog has as many as 300 million scent receptors. By comparison, a human nose has about 5 million receptors.

Get the PICTURE?

Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

Answer: Dog collar

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