

# The Mineral County Miner



1892 - 2024

'...there is no night in Creede.'

Volume 47, Number 40

Creede, Colo. 81130

Thursday, October 3, 2024

75¢

## Wreaths Across America to remember Veterans



CONTRIBUTED

**SAN LUIS VALLEY** — Wreaths Across America, a non-profit organization, was formed as an extension of the Arlington Wreath Project. The Arlington Wreath program was started by Morrill Worcester in 1992 with the donation and laying of 5,000 Christmas wreaths to Arlington National Cemetery. This became an annual journey for Worcester.

It was relatively obscure until 2005 when a photo of the stones

adorned with wreaths and covered in snow circulated around the internet. The project received National attention. Thousands of requests poured in from all over the country from people wanting to emulate the Arlington project at their National and State cemeteries, spurring the creation of "Wreaths Across America." Unable to donate thousands of wreaths to each state, Mr. Worcester conceived the idea of sending seven wreaths (one for each branch of the military as well

as POW/MIA).

In 2007 the Worcester family established the non-profit group Wreaths Across America to further promote Veterans remembrance. The mission Remember, Honor and Teach characterized the projects goals perfectly.

The wreath-laying will be held on December 14th, which Congress unanimously voted as "Wreaths Across America Day." Wreaths Across America would not be successful

*Please see WREATHS on Page 2A*

### NUGGETS

Community Notes for Mineral County

#### DNEFPD to discuss public safety sales tax

**DEL NORTE** — The Del Norte Fire Protection District will be holding an informational meeting at 7 p.m. on Oct. 8, in the old Tiger Field House, 955 French St., Del Norte, to discuss the possibility of a public safety sales tax. Every resident in the fire protection district is invited to attend and share their comments.

For more information, contact Ryan Haynie with the Del Norte Fire Protection District at 719-850-0656.

#### Rio Grande Public Health Department Flu Clinics

**RIOGRANDECOUNTY** — Rio Grande County Public Health will be offering the following flu shot clinics:

- Tri-County Seniors  
Wednesday, Oct. 9, 9-11 a.m.  
311 Washington St., Monte Vista
- Rio Grande Annex Building  
Tuesday, Oct. 15, 3-6 p.m.  
965 6th St., Del Norte
- Monte Vista School District  
Thursday, Oct. 24, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.  
59 North Broadway, Monte Vista (old auditorium)
- Sargent School  
Monday, Oct. 28, 3-5 p.m.  
7090 N. Road 2 E, Monte Vista (mini gym)

These clinics will provide both regular dose \$25 and high dose \$60 flu shots. They accept several insurances including Medicare. For more information, call Rio Grande County Public Health at 719-657-3352.

#### CORRECTION

In last week's Cruisin' the Canyon Car Show article it was incorrectly stated that there were 75 entries. There was a total of 116 vehicles entered in this year's show.

## Brilliant fall colors



Photos by Lyndsie Ferrell

**Autumn in the San Luis Valley peaked over the weekend with fall colors lighting up the horizon. From reds to yellows to oranges, the aspen trees really showed off this year.**

## Creede School selects new principal

CONTRIBUTED

**CREEDE** — The Creede School District is excited to announce the recommendation of hire of Cindy Haberman as Creede Schools K-12 Principal.

Haberman began her educational career in the East Otero School District in 1988 as an Elementary, Special Educational Teacher at East Elementary School.

Haberman spent 14 years teaching within the district as a Special Education Teacher, second and third grade teacher at both East Elementary and West Elementary in La Junta. She then served as a Disabilities and Mental Health Manager for Otero Junior College/Child Development Services Head Start for 13 years.

In 2015, Haberman returned to East Otero School District as the Primary School Principal (K-2) for four years.

Her educational experiences have afforded her the opportunity to collaborate with a diverse group

*Please see PRINCIPAL on Page 2A*

## SLV 4-H Judging Teams shine in Texas

By MARIE MCCOLM

**MONTE VISTA** — On Friday, Sept. 20, the SLV 4-H Livestock Senior and Junior Judging Teams competed in the Tri State Fair Livestock Judging Contest in Amarillo, Texas.

The Senior Team placed eighth out of 54 teams and the Junior team placed 16th out of 42 teams, according to a press release from the Colorado State University San Luis Valley Area Extension Office. The teams were coached by Eric Hinton and Janae Naranjo. There were 121 total participants in the competition.

The SLV 4-H Junior Team (ages

8-13) was comprised of Tynnley Burh, Macklie Sims, and Ashley Entz. Burh placed second highest in the individual "Sheep and Goats Category," and Entz placed 10th in "Oral Reasons."

The SLV 4-H Senior Team (ages 14-18) was comprised of Durae Naranjo,

*Please see TEAMS on Page 8A*

**SLV 4-H Senior Livestock Judging Team from left to right: Coach Eric Hinton, Durae Naranjo, Emily Seger, Darian Vance, Tiffany LePlatt and Coach Janae Naranjo.**

Courtesy photo



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# Creede 4-H elects' new officers

By FAITH COOPER

**CREEDE** — Recently the Creede 4-H Club has been getting used to newly elected officers. In February the members of this esteemed club assembled, casting their votes to select individuals to take on leadership roles.

Taking the lead as the new president is Brooke Sliwowski. Brooke brings a unique perspective to the role, with her brother being the previous president. We are sure that Brooke will bring new and

clever ways to show our support to the community. Assisting Brooke in guiding the club is the newly elected vice president Paisley Anderson. Paisley has been in the club for years and has experience in an officer position before.

We are also excited to introduce several new members who have taken up other leading positions. Our new Secretary is Israel Cooper. Israel is new to the club along with his brother Titus and sisters Faith and Lydia Cooper. This is

Israel's first time in 4-H, and he is enthusiastic for the opportunities this position could lead to.

Titus Cooper also contributes to the club by being the newly elected pledge leader, and by helping the members instill values of loyalty and community.

Additionally, the important role of treasurer has been entrusted to Lydia Cooper. Lydia brings valuable financial expertise to the role, having served as chief financial officer for BizTown last year.

And finally, Faith Cooper has been appointed as the club's reporter. Bringing her enthusiasm for journalism to the club.

Our club participated in a local fair, with several members showcasing their hard work across a variety of projects. Tyler and Brooke Sliwowski proudly entered their swine projects, Levi Brittan displaying his skills in archery and a Lego project. Celia Baldein presented her skills in cake decorating and JD Baldwin showed his robotics and woodworking projects. Ava Mankowski and Paisley Anderson both entered photography projects portraying creative and artistic talent.

We are also proud to announce the awards of our members at the State Fair! JD Baldwin earned Reserve Champion in robotics and placed fifth in woodworking. Celia Baldwin received Reserve Champion in freeze preservation, Paisley Anderson placed ninth and Ava Mankowski placed 10th in photography. Congratulations to all for their incredible accomplishments!

# OBITUARIES

## Wilma Grace Lewis

Wilma Grace Lewis, 77 passed peacefully on the evening of Sept. 16, 2024, in Salida, Colo.

She was born Aug. 26, 1947, in Beaver County, Okla.

She was preceded in death by her brothers Roy G, Jackie (Jack Jr.) and David Benn, and her sister Dorothy May Benn.

Her parents were Jack E. Benn and Dorothy Ione Tunnell.

Soon after completing high school in Fairplay, Colo., Wilma married Wilbur G. Lewis in 1965 in Hartsel, Colo. They had two children, Stephanie S. Lewis in 1969 and Jack H. Lewis (Jenny J. Sherburne) in 1972. The family moved to Saguache, Colo., in 1972.

Wilma stayed home with the kids until they were in their teens. Wilma was going to take a "few classes" and ended up with a degree in English Education from Adams State College, and a Graduate Degree from University of Northern Colorado. In 1985, Wilma began teaching English, Science and History at Monte Vista Middle School. Wilma loved her students, and over the span of 25 years brought learning to life by hosting the History Fair and dressing up as literary characters.

Wilma was always active in the community, a strong member of the Saguache Library Board and a member of the Saguache Museum Board. She also supported Wilbur with many Masonic community activities and was a member of the Eastern Star. She will be missed by her exercise class crew.

Wilma loved to travel and had a special affection for the coasts of Maine and Newfoundland, enjoying puffins, whales, lighthouses and moose. She loved to travel internationally as well and went to New Zealand multiple times and all across Europe.

One of Wilma's biggest joys was spoiling her grandchildren, Amy Grace Lewis and David Ray Lewis. Wilma was the 'rock' of the family, carrying the conversations, providing the stories, keeping in contact with family across the nation, and she truly loved being around her family and friends.

Online condolences can be offered through [lewisandglenn.com](http://lewisandglenn.com).



CREEDE, COLORADO.

100 YEARS AGO

*The Creede Candle*  
October 4, 1924

**Local Siftings**

The Commodore and Bachelor mines are both working on good bodies of high-grade ore at present. A number of miners are being added at the Commodore force.; Cattle and sheep are being taken to winter range as fast as they can be loaded at the station. A train load a day has been going out for the past week.; We have had all kinds of weather this week, from snow storms to ice cream sodas. They were simply samples of what the weather man has in stock.; County treasurer Wheeler went down to Alamosa Tuesday evening

to have a little business transaction with the dentist.; Silver reached the price of 70 cents an ounce this week and is still advancing the price.

**Forest Ranger Examination**

Notice is received that the yearly Civil Service examination the position of Forest Ranger will be held at Monte Vista October 21st. The entrance salary for the position ranges from \$1,500 to \$2,000 depending on local economic conditions and whether quarters are furnished not with a maximum of \$2,400 per year.

## PRINCIPAL Continued from Page 1A

of people to meet a common goal of increasing student achievement and well-being. Her educational philosophy is based on her uncompromising belief that all students can learn, given a positive learning environment, strong and knowledgeable leadership, a committed and focused educational team, and an encouraging community, and a supportive family.

Haberman received a dual bachelor's degree in Elementary and Special Education from Adams State University in 1988. She attended the

University of Northern Colorado where she received her master's degree in Elementary Special Education in 1993. After several years of teaching, she returned to Adams State University, where she achieved her Educational Leadership Endorsement in 2009.

Haberman retired from East Otero School as a school principal in 2019. She enjoys spending time with her spouse, John Haberman (retired high school principal), three children and five grandchildren.

The Huberman family has had a cabin in Creede for over five

decades where they enjoy spending their time.

Cindy Haberman accepted a position in the Creede School District, as the K-12 principal, where she looks forward to the opportunity of building relationships with students, staff, parents, and the community. Her first official day will be Oct. 8.

"We are excited to welcome Mrs. Haberman to the Creede Schools family and to welcome both Mr. and Mrs. Haberman to the Creede community as full-time residents. Go Miners," district officials stated.

## WREATHS Continued from Page 1A

without the help of volunteers, many active organizations, and the generosity of the trucking industry.

The goal is to have enough wreaths sponsored so that every veteran's grave at the Homelake Veterans Cemetery will be honored.

If you want to sponsor a wreath, contact Pam Self at 719-825-8216 or 719-849-3154. The cost is \$17

per wreath with all orders and money needed by Dec. 1. Please send your request and money to Pam Self, P.O. Box 97, Homelake, CO 81135. Wreath sponsorship for the Homelake Veterans Cemetery can also be completed online at [www.wreathsacrossamerica.com/](http://www.wreathsacrossamerica.com/) CO0031. The wreaths will be delivered to the Colorado Veterans

Community Living Center at Homelake.

This year's ceremony will take place on Saturday, Dec. 14, at the Homelake Veterans Cemetery at 3749 Sherman Ave., Monte Vista, at 10 a.m. The placement of wreaths will occur after the ceremony so volunteers who would like to help place the wreaths will gather after the ceremony.

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# OPINION & EDITORIAL

## October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

By TU CASA

October was first proclaimed as National Domestic Violence Awareness Month in 1989. Since then, October has been a time to acknowledge domestic violence survivors and those who have passed, and to be a voice for those who may be experiencing it. Domestic violence is prevalent in every community, and affects all people regardless of age, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender, race, religion, or nationality.

Every October, Tu Casa, Inc. joins with its partners, supporters, and allies across the country to recognize Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM). During 2023, Tu Casa served 294 individuals and answered 578 crisis calls.

Tu Casa, Inc. encourages everyone to get involved and help raise awareness about domestic violence. We have seen the power each and every one of us have in making a difference by bringing awareness to domestic violence. The color purple has been nationally recognized as the symbolic color to show support for those who have experienced domestic violence and let them know that help is available for themselves and their families. Tu Casa, Inc. hopes to spread awareness this October by asking staff and the community to wear purple every Thursday in the month. We also encourage you to ask co-workers, friends, and family members to join Tu Casa, Inc. in this month's activities in order to start conversations about domestic violence.

Tu Casa, Inc. invites everyone to join us at the following events:

• **The Purple Light Campaign:** The Purple Light Campaign was created to promote domestic violence awareness and remind survivors there are supports all around them. Tu Casa will be handing out purple lightbulbs to community members to light their porches for the month of October and help ensure survivors in our valley know they are not alone. Call the office to figure out where/when to pick up a lightbulb!

• **Lunch and Learn:** On Oct. 17, from 12-1 p.m., in the San Luis Valley Behavioral Health Group large conference room, Tu Casa will be presenting on the history of Domestic Violence Awareness Month and request attendees help us let survivors in our valley know that Tu Casa is here to help, by painting rocks with supportive phrases/words for survivors, designs, and Tu Casa's hotline number. These rocks will be placed throughout the valley for survivors to find and utilize if they need. We'll also be decorating luminarias for our "Light Up the Night

Event" at this Lunch & Learn as well!

• **"Light up the Night":** Our 4th Annual "Light up the Night" event will be held on Oct. 24, at 6:30 p.m. under the West pavilion in Cole Park, Alamosa. This event is free to attendees and works to honor victims, survivors, those who have passed, and anyone who has been affected by domestic violence. Refreshments will be served while you are provided with an opportunity to mingle and learn about resources within our community and at Tu Casa, Inc. We will start the ceremony at 6:30 p.m. with a warm welcoming introduction and guest speakers from our community and partners. We will take time to drop flowers in the river with a moment of silence and a performance by the ASU Samba Group in honor of the survivors in the San Luis Valley. The night's event will culminate with a candlelight vigil to light up the night and an opportunity for anyone who wants to share their stories or experience. Attendees are encouraged to take photos and participate in the activities.

Proclamations: Join Tu Casa, Inc. staff at the following meetings for the formal recognition of October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM)!

- Mineral County Commissioner's Meeting on Oct. 2 at 10 a.m.
- Alamos City Council Meeting on Oct. 2 at 7 p.m.
- Alamosa County Commissioner's Meeting on Oct. 9 at 8:30 a.m.

Throughout October you can stay updated on events and activities by following our Facebook: [www.facebook.com/TuCasaInc](http://www.facebook.com/TuCasaInc) and Instagram: [www.instagram.com/slvtucasa/](http://www.instagram.com/slvtucasa/) pages. We also request that you share photos of how you are raising awareness about this topic and tag us!

Domestic Violence can no longer be ignored; we must work together to raise awareness and to end violence. If you or someone you know is in need of assistance, call the Tu Casa, Inc. 24-hour hotline at 719-589-2465. If you would like to make a donation in honor of those who have been impacted by abuse, visit our website at [www.slvtucasa.net](http://www.slvtucasa.net), and click on the link to donate. If you are interested in volunteering with our agency or would like more information about events, contact us at 719-589-2465.

Tu Casa, Inc., which houses the Tu Casa Program, The Tu Casa, Inc. SANE Program, and the Children's Advocacy Center of the San Luis Valley Program (SLV CAC), is a 501(c)3 non-profit agency that works to empower children and adults to live healthy, violence-free lives throughout the San Luis Valley. All services are free, confidential, and available in English and Spanish.



Photo courtesy of Utah Department of Agriculture and Food

**Glyphosate treatment for Utah Lake phragmites infestation.**

## How a controversial poison saved Utah Lake

Ninety-five-thousand-acre Utah Lake is a major water source for the Great Salt Lake. If it dries up or sickens, so does the Great Salt Lake. Fifteen years ago, it was dying. But the controversial herbicide glyphosate saved it.

Virtually everything most Americans think they know about glyphosate—the active ingredient in products like Roundup—is wrong. That's because social media and ads by lawyers offering to sue Bayer (owner of Monsanto, glyphosate's original manufacturer) are rife with misinformation.

What most Americans don't know about glyphosate is that it's often the only option for saving native fish and wildlife from alien plants. When non-native infestations replace habitat, the animals don't go somewhere else. They die. That's why boots-on-the-ground environmental groups like The Nature Conservancy depend on glyphosate.

But fear of glyphosate has created big business for lawyers and a fundraising bonanza for some environmental outfits.

In 2015, with no original research, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) — an appendage of the World Health Organization (WHO) — placed glyphosate on its speculative list of "probable carcinogens" along with "red meat" and "very hot beverages." It did so even though all scientific authorities that have done original research, including its parent WHO and the United States EPA, report no link to cancer.

Some studies that review existing research do report possible links to cancer. But the study subjects are farm workers who used large quantities of Roundup for years, frequently without protective gear. Roundup is applied by wildlife managers in relatively tiny amounts.

Still, based on IARC's speculation, there have been glyphosate bans or restrictions in 28 nations as well as municipalities and counties in 15

U.S. states. And Bayer has paid \$11 billion to settle lawsuits brought by cancer victims blaming their illnesses on Roundup.

California responded to the IARC review by requiring that glyphosate products carry cancer warnings. But a federal judge struck it down, ruling it "inherently misleading ... when apparently all other regulatory and governmental bodies have found the opposite."

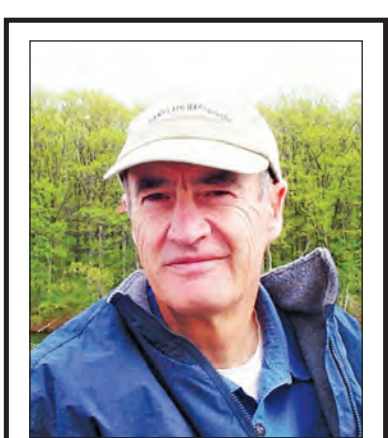
According to the international news agency Reuters, IARC "edited findings from a draft of its review of the weedkiller glyphosate that were at odds with its final conclusion."

And this from Dr. Lee Van Wychen, science director for the National and Regional Weed Science Societies: "IARC's review was such a crooked scam. I've never seen anything like it. IARC cherry-picked a couple studies and on top of that fudged the results... Now there are people on the conservation side who are afraid to use glyphosate."

Utah Lake's brackish water and extensive wetlands make it one of North America's most important staging areas for migratory water birds. The watershed also provides vital habitat for other birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and fish, including the federally threatened June sucker.

Fifteen years ago, this biodiversity appeared doomed by an explosion of phragmites, a non-native, deep-rooted reed that spreads through wind-blown seeds and rhizomes. It grows out to four feet in water and all the way to the transitional zone of dry land.

So thick was Utah Lake's infestation that wildlife couldn't move through it, and people couldn't access the lake. Phragmites created fire hazards, sucked vast amounts of water from the already diminished lake, and generated swarms of mosquitoes by blocking water flow.



**Writers on the Range**  
by Ted Williams

herbicide as the only option. Dead stalks are then crushed or burned to make new growth visible for retreatment.

Spraying with glyphosate formulations began in 2009. "Each year, managers would focus on a different area," reported the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food. Every area of the lake got three consecutive years of the spray and trample treatment.

Today, fish, wildlife, and human access have been largely restored. Glyphosate has eradicated 70 percent of the phragmites and future applications will kill most of what's left.

Revegetation started this spring. With help from local organizations, the Utah Lake Authority has planted 7,500 native seedlings. "Planting parties" of 400 volunteers will plant 10,000 more native plants by year's end.

"For the lake," said Luke Peterson, director of the Utah Lake Authority, "this is a turning point."

*Ted Williams is a contributor to Writers on the Range, [writersontherange.org](http://writersontherange.org), an independent nonprofit dedicated to spurring lively conversation about the West. He writes exclusively about fish and wildlife.*



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# Summitville preservation plans underway

## STAFF REPORT

**SUMMITVILLE**—The Rio Grande County Museum with the help of the Rio Grande National Forest and several leaders throughout the San Luis Valley have started a preservation effort for the remaining structures in the Summitville Mining District.

In 2020, after several years of negotiation, Rio Grande County finalized a land exchange with the Rio Grande National Forest and the EPA to take possession of a majority of the Summitville Mining District and have since began efforts to preserve the area and what is left of the remaining townsite and structures.

The Summitville site has always been a place of controversy as the natural geological makeup of the land is riddled with toxic materials outside of what was used to extract gold from the ground during the boom days of the mining district.

In 1870, a group of Army veterans traveled along a tributary creek that fed into the South Fork of the Rio Grande which led them to the base of South Mountain. It was at a location later named Wightman Fork that they discovered a catch of gold nuggets and began what was to be a long history of rich mining in the Summitville region.

Once, the Summit Mining District, now known as Summitville, was a thriving community of prospectors and their families. The town site

still remains today in sentinel ruins as a reminder of the past. The small township even had a school on site for children who lived at 13,000 feet with their miner parents.

Summitville is still acknowledged as one of the most profitable and mineral-rich sites in Colorado's San Juan Mining District. The town eventually died and became a superfund site that is monitored even today by the EPA and other assisting organizations to filter the water seeping off the mountainside which carries heavy metals and toxic materials such as cyanide.

Now, with the land exchange complete, efforts to protect the area are well underway. The first phase of the project is to seek funding to help secure the structures by fencing some of the less stable landmarks and to place warning signs in and around the area.

"I think one of the most important things we are looking at with this project is to make sure the public is safe while visiting the area. The landscape in and around Summitville is covered in holes, many of which are not marked and that is a problem. The second most important thing would be to preserve what is left of the townsites. There are four identified locations that we would like to fence off for preservation purposes. This was such a huge part of our past and plays an integral role in our future,"



Photos by Lyndsie Ferrell

Preservation efforts are underway to preserve and protect what is left of the Summitville Mining District southwest of Del Norte. The district played an integral role in the formation of the San Luis Valley and with the help of several leadership organizations and funding, the Rio Grande County Museum hopes to help protect the remaining structures and artifacts in the area.

said Rio Grande County Museum Director Lyndsie Ferrell.

The project will break down into several phases with the first beginning in the spring of next year.

"We were awarded funding through the San Luis Valley Council of Governments through their mini-grant cycle this year and will be using the funding to place temporary fencing around some of the structures like the boarding house. Having the fencing in place will open other



funding opportunities and allow us the time needed to excavate the site," stated Ferrell.

AS the preservation efforts move forward, the project will include signage highlighting the historical significance of the area, permanent fencing, marked trails and walkways as well as a potential visitor center

housing some of the historical artifacts found in the area over the years.

"This is a big project but one that will serve to protect our heritage and allow the public an opportunity to learn while still utilizing the amazing recreational opportunities available in the area."



## NOTICE OF GENERAL ELECTION

TUESDAY, November 5th, 2024

OPEN 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM

### NOTICE OF GENERAL ELECTION

THE ELECTORS OF MINERAL COUNTY: PURSUANT TO 1-5-205 I(a)-(d) and (4) Colorado Election code of 2023, Notice is hereby given that a **GENERAL** Election will be held as a mail ballot election in the lawful voter service and polling center in the Voting Precinct 1 of the County between the hours of 7:00 AM and 7:00PM, Tuesday the 5th of November 2024.

### BALLOTS WILL BE MAILED TO REGISTERED ELECTORS

**BEGINNING Friday, October 11, 2024.**

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal of the Office for the County Clerk and Recorder this 3rd day of October, 2024.

**Eryn K. Wintz**  
Mineral County Clerk & Recorder

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M-F 8:00a-4:00p Saturday, November 2 8:00a-12:00p



**When is the last day I can register to vote?** A person may register to vote in person at a county voter registration office or Voter Service and Polling Center at any time, including on Election Day. Other deadlines apply if you are not registering in person: To apply by mail or through a driver's license or other state agency, your application must be submitted no later than 22 days before an election; To apply online at [www.govotecolorado.com](http://www.govotecolorado.com), your application must be submitted no later than 8 days before an election.

## San Luis Valley Scoreboard 2023 -2024

### Football

Centauri 41.....Bayfield 0  
Holly 62 .....Sangre de Cristo 48  
Branson/Kim 80.....Antonito 0

### COLLEGE

CSU-Pueblo 66 .....Adams State 10

### Volleyball

Sargent def Sierra Grande 3-0  
Centennial def Creede 3-1  
Del Norte def Center 3-2  
Sanford def Buena Vista 3-1  
Centauri def Montezuma-Cortez 3-0  
Sierra Grande def Mountain Valley 3-0  
Sanford def Escalante NM 3-0  
Del Norte def Dolores Huerta Prep 3-1  
Bayfield def Centauri 3-0  
Alamosa def Montezuma-Cortez 3-0  
Sangre de Cristo def Centennial 3-0  
Center def Antonito 3-0  
Sargent def Del Norte 3-1  
Monte Vista def Crested Butte 3-1

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# Ribbon cutting held for EV charging stations

*City of MV worked with Xcel Energy on the project*

By MARIE MCCOLM

MONTE VISTA — The City of Monte Vista, Xcel Energy and the Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting for the city's first public electric vehicle charging stations on Thursday, Sept. 26, in the parking lot at the corner of First Avenue and Jefferson Street.

MV City Manager Gigi Dennis said, "I want to thank all of you for being here today, for the celebration of our electronic charging stations. This is a project that Xcel brought to the city, as a means to have more charging stations on highways. Monte Vista previously did not have any charging stations. So, this investment in four fast-charging stations means a lot. We would have sought out grant funds, and we probably couldn't have done it, so we appreciate the partnership with Xcel and what you are doing for the community."

Dennis said she was appreciative of how the charging stations created additional economic opportunities for the city.

"People will stop, they will charge, they will make their way downtown and support our businesses and restaurants, too. We want to say thank you," Dennis said.

MV Mayor Dale Becker was excited about the charging stations and said, "Thank you. This is a great thing. This is awesome right where it's at. I drive by here every day, and see vehicles plugged in. It's going to serve a great purpose, as people continue to get more of these EV cars. I think we will see more people stopping in our area. Thank you."

Xcel Energy Area Manager Ashley Valdez spoke about the collaboration and the opening of the charging stations in the centralized location.

"We just want to thank the City of Monte Vista for partnering with us," Valdez said. "You guys have been an absolute dream to work with. We looked at some other areas to do a charging station, but this made the most sense because people are able to get out, they are able to walk around and visit businesses, that is so important. We want that for our communities."

Valdez spoke about what Xcel Energy hopes to accomplish with the stations.

"Xcel Energy's goal is to have one of five vehicles on the road to be an electronic vehicle by 2030, and that also goes along with the state goal to have 940,000 electric vehicles on the road by 2030 as well."

Valdez said that there is some degree of difficulty in putting up these types of stations in different places due to permitting and other legalities. Valdez said that she really wanted to thank City of MV Public Works Director Robert Vance for helping Xcel throughout the process.

"We are happy to be here, and happy to continue to connect the community in a vital way. Not only Monte Vista, but the Valley as a whole too. I think as we can connect the Valley and bring more people in and through, this is just a great thing. So, thank you for letting us be a part of it. Congratulations to the Xcel team, and Monte Vista on this project," Valdez said.

Xcel Energy Clean Transport Infrastructure and Bus Operations Manager Mike Theis added, "The partnership has been mentioned a couple of times, and certainly we couldn't have done this project



Photo by Marie Mccolm

Monte Vista City Manager Gigi Dennis cuts the ribbon at Thursday's ceremony celebrating the fast-charging EV stations in downtown Monte Vista. The city worked with Xcel Energy on the project.

without the partnership. The city, Gigi and Robert have been fantastic to work with. Sometimes these projects can get caught up in red tape, that was not at all the case here. The city helped us through the construction and permitting process. It's been a fantastic project, and we are happy to have it opened now. We have gone through some testing processes here. It's been fantastic to work with the city and finally get this opened to the public."

According to Xcel Energy, the site offers four EV fast chargers, owned and operated by the energy company. The parking area is well lit, and accessible for public use 24/7. The area that the stations are in helps provide access to local businesses and restaurants while people are using the stations.

The chargers are equipped to serve a variety of EVs. The brand and model of the station chargers are ChargePoint Express Plus. The

chargers include power blocks, the blocks allow the chargers to delegate a nameplate charging speed of 160KW.

EV owner Jenny Nehring and fellow EV owner Laura Conchelos were at the ceremony. Conchelos is also a Monte Vista Urban Renewal Authority member.

"Well Laura got this kicked off, as far a nudge to the city and inquiring on the status of this. Laura and I are neighbors and EV owners. We love

seeing this in our city. As someone who knows what it's like to pass through a city, find a charging station, and then you have to wait 30 or 40 minutes, it's awesome to walk down the street to stop in somewhere for coffee, this location is perfect for that. Another thing about EV owners is when they stop and have a good charging experience they will return again and again to that spot. It's great for our city, our community, and our Valley," Nehring said.

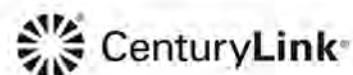
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The Colorado Public Utilities Commission designated CenturyLink as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier within its service area for universal service purposes. CenturyLink's basic local service rates for residential voice lines are \$34.00 per month and business services are \$53.50 per month. Specific rates will be provided upon request.

CenturyLink participates in the Lifeline program, which makes residential telephone or qualifying broadband service more affordable to eligible low-income individuals and families. Eligible customers may qualify for Lifeline discounts of \$5.25/month for voice or bundled voice service or \$9.25/month for qualifying broadband or broadband bundles. Residents who live on federally recognized Tribal Lands may qualify for additional Tribal benefits if they participate in certain additional federal eligibility programs. The Lifeline discount is available for only one telephone or qualifying broadband service per household, which can be either a wireline or wireless service. Broadband speeds must be at least 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload to qualify.

A household is defined as any individual or group of individuals who live together at the same address and share income and expenses. Services are not transferable, and only eligible consumers may enroll in these programs. Consumers who willfully make false statements to obtain these discounts can be punished by fine or imprisonment and can be barred from these programs.

If you live in a CenturyLink service area, visit <https://www.centurylink.com/aboutus/community/community-development/lifeline.html> for additional information about applying for these programs or call 1-800-201-4099 with questions.



## Trust God and Do Good

One of the most life-changing things I've learned since I've been teaching the Word of God is that God is always right! No matter what I think, how I feel, or what my circumstances look like, His wisdom and His way of doing things are always the answers to my problems.

Psalm 37:3 contains some of the greatest instruction there is for having a great life. It says, "Trust (lean on, rely on, and be confident) in the Lord and do good; so shall you dwell in the land and feed surely on His faithfulness, and truly you shall be fed" (AMPC).

All of us go through difficult times and experience pain and disappointment. In John 16:33, the Lord even tells us that "in this world you will have trouble" (John 16:33 NIV). However, I believe Psalm 37:3 provides us with God's prescription for every problem we face: **Trust God and do good.**

God's Word is medicine that brings healing and restoration to our souls. Our doctor is Jesus, we are His patients, and we can take His medicine—"Trust God" and "Do good"—as much as we need to. And refills are endless!

But there are side effects. When you trust God, you will experience peace, joy, stability, confidence, and overall better health. When you do good, you'll have extreme happiness and rewards in heaven!

Trusting God also brings freedom. Many times, things happen that we simply don't understand. But that's okay—we don't have to figure everything out. We can trust God that He knows and will take care of everything.

Maybe someone has really hurt you, and what's happening doesn't seem fair at all. The Bible says that God will be your Vindicator (Psalm 135:14). As you place your trust in Him, you open the door for Him to work in your situation and deal with the people who have mistreated you.

Your faith and trust also allow God to take the wrong things that have happened and ultimately work out them out for your benefit (Romans 8:28).

The Bible teaches us that it's not the

things that happen to us that determine the quality of our lives—it's how we choose to respond to them that really makes all of the difference. And trusting God is the key to making right choices that bring us the life He has planned for us.

We can *choose* to trust God. The truth is, God is the only One we can completely trust to take care of us and do what's best for us at all times, in every situation.

Maybe you're thinking, *Well, I trusted God, and He didn't take care of me.* I understand how you feel, because I've gone through hard things and didn't get what I wanted, *when* I thought I should get it, *in the way* I thought it should come.

However, what I failed to understand was that doing what we want and getting our way all the time isn't what will make us happy. Being selfish and self-centered is actually a miserable way to live! God is faithful, and He promises to take care of us as we place our trust in Him. However, an important part of trusting Him is trusting in His will and timing.

It's good for us to tell God what we want, but we also need to realize that He is smarter than we are! I've learned to pray, "God, if what I want is not what You want for me, then please don't give it to me! I want to do Your will in this situation, and I'm trusting You to give me what You want for me."

That's why it's so important to study and meditate on God's Word. As we do, it renews our minds so we think the way He thinks. It also turns our will in God's direction so we want what He wants for us.

Remember, trust requires unanswered questions. It requires us to fully lean on God, believing and trusting that He has our best interest in mind. The Lord has asked me this many times, and I believe He is also asking you: "Do you trust Me?"

The second part of the prescription is just as important—do good. One of the most powerful things you can do when you're hurting is to reach out and help someone else. You not only sow seeds for your own breakthrough, but



helping others releases tremendous joy. Nehemiah 8:10 says, "...the joy of the Lord is your strength" (NIV).

I know it's not always easy to trust God and do good. But it's the best option because it's the only thing that will really work. I know it works because I was a mess, and learning how to trust God and obey His Word has literally changed my life.

Life in God is a journey, and we partner with Him by putting our trust in Him (1 Corinthians 1:9). When we're dealing with a difficult situation, He may also show us something we need to do that will help solve our problem.

I want to encourage you to trust God completely in every area of your life. Remember that He is always on your side and He is fighting for you as you go through the challenges in your life. He loves you and has your best interest at heart at all times.

No matter what you need or what your circumstances are, you can live with peace, joy, stability, confidence, and overall better health if you will trust God and do good.

For more on this topic, order Joyce's four-part teaching resource **Trust God and Do Good**. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, *Enjoying Everyday Life*, by calling (800) 727-9673 or visiting [www.joycemeyer.org](http://www.joycemeyer.org)

Joyce Meyer is a New York Times bestselling author and founder of Joyce Meyer Ministries, Inc. She has authored more than 140 books, including *BATTLEFIELD OF THE MIND* and *OVERCOMING EVERY PROBLEM (FaithWords)*. She hosts the *Enjoying Everyday Life* radio and TV programs, which air on hundreds of stations worldwide. For more information, visit [www.joycemeyer.org](http://www.joycemeyer.org)

Please note: The views and opinions expressed throughout this publication and/or website are those of the respective authors and do not necessarily reflect those of Joyce Meyer Ministries.

# Rio Grande County Museum to host cemetery tour with URGSD

By LYNDISIE FERRELL

**DEL NORTE** — The Rio Grande County Museum in partnership with the Upper Rio Grande School District and the Del Norte High School Theatre Group will be hosting a cemetery tour on Saturday, Oct. 12 from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Del Norte Cemetery to honor local Civil War Veterans.

This event offers a wonderful opportunity to step into the past and learn about the lives and accomplishments of some of the first settlers to come to the San Luis Valley after the Civil War and to honor those who served. Del Norte Theatre students will be reenacting some of the characters buried in the Del Norte Cemetery, opening a window into the past and bringing light to those in the present.

Several of the founding fathers of the San Luis Valley served in the Civil War and once the war was over, ventured to this area for a fresh start and a new way of life in the West. Thanks to the research conducted by both the Rio Grande County Museum and local historian Roselind Weaver, the event will be an educational experience for guests of all ages.

Guests are encouraged to come to the cemetery located at 1704 County Road 13, in Del Norte at 1 p.m. Most of the event will be held in the G.A.R. Block where a majority of Civil War Veterans are buried. Students will present characters to the attendees

and then be encouraged to continue on their journey with a scavenger hunt that highlights other Civil War Veterans in the cemetery.

One of the many Veterans that will be highlighted during the event is Founding Father of Del Norte James Cary French. French was born Feb. 1, 1837, in Bangor, Maine. French entered the military during the Civil War, serving as captain in Company F, 2<sup>nd</sup> Kansas Cavalry. French died in Del Norte on Dec. 28, 1889, and was credited with naming Del Norte after traveling west in the 1870s.

Another character that will be highlighted is Henry Foote. Foote was born in New York in 1830 and served in the Civil War for the Union Army. Foote came to Del Norte in 1874 from Leavenworth, Kan., and was instrumental in erecting the Windsor Hotel in Del Norte which was originally called the Winslett Hotel. In 1880, Foote purchased the hot springs in what was later to become Pagosa Springs and was involved in the development of the town.

The event will feature many Civil War Veterans throughout the history of the Valley and will be open to anyone. Light refreshments will be provided. Prizes will be awarded to participants who complete the scavenger hunt by the Rio Grande County Museum.

For more information or questions, call the museum at 719-657-2847.

# Secretary of State Jena Griswold Announces Winner of 'I Voted' Digital Sticker Design Contest

CONTRIBUTED

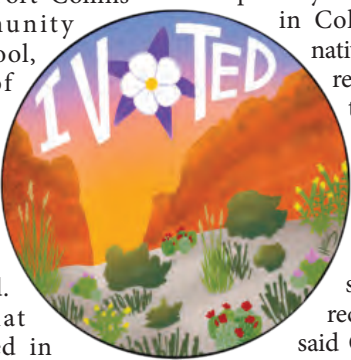
**DENVER** — Colorado Secretary of State Jena Griswold announced Monday, Sept. 23, that Cosmo Bell, a ninth-grader at Fort Collins' Compass Community Collaborative School, is the winner of Colorado's 2024 "I Voted" Digital Sticker Design Contest.

"Congratulations to Cosmo for his amazing design," said Secretary Griswold. "I'm so glad that Coloradans enrolled in BallotTrax can see and celebrate Cosmo's wonderful artwork when they receive their digital 'I Voted' Sticker. My thanks to every Colorado high schooler who submitted a design for consideration."

"I'm so excited to have my artwork chosen," said Cosmo. "A family friend

let me know about the competition and encouraged me to participate. I thought it would be fun, so I entered!"

Cosmo's design features rocks inspired by the Garden of the Gods in Colorado Springs and native plants from the arid regions of Colorado. In the right of the image, you can see Cosmo's artist signature: Harold.



"These are symbols that I thought someone could recognize as 'Colorado,'" said Cosmo. When asked what he thinks of when he hears the word "Democracy," Cosmo replied, "In essence: Collaboration. It means a bunch of people coming together and recognizing that we need this to succeed as a country, or that we think this is the right course of action. It's a collaboration between so many

different people who all have an effect on how America will function."

The new digital sticker will be sent to voters enrolled in BallotTrax once their General Election mail ballot has been returned and counted. It will also be featured on the Secretary of State's website, social media channels, press releases, and as part of a digital effort to encourage people to vote across the state.

BallotTrax enables voters to receive notifications by phone, email, or text about the status of their mail ballot, from the time it is mailed to the voter, to when it is received, and to when it is counted. Colorado voters can enroll themselves in BallotTrax by visiting [www.GoVoteColorado.gov](http://www.GoVoteColorado.gov) and clicking on "Sign up for BallotTrax."

As of September, nearly 2 million Colorado voters were enrolled in BallotTrax — over 50% of the active electorate.

# South Fork October blood drive scheduled

CONTRIBUTED

**SOUTH FORK** — There will be a Valley Blood Drive on Saturday, Oct. 12, at the South Fork Community Building from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. This is open to everybody from Alamosa to Creede and beyond.

Blood donation makes a monumental impact on the lives of people across the country and here locally. Because of the high temperatures across the US and in Colorado, New Mexico, and other surrounding areas, a lot of blood drives have been cancelled and so "we're in desperate need for blood," organizers stated.

Did you know you can give one super powered blood donation — a Power Red — that may have the same impact as two regular donations? A Power Red donation is a concentrated donation of red blood cells — the most needed blood component by hospital patients. Not everyone qualifies to make this donation but as an eligible type O, A negative or B negative donor, this may be ideal. Blood is drawn through special equipment that separates and collects two units of red cells, then safely returns the other blood components of platelets, plasma, plus some hydrating fluid (saline), back to you. Compared to a

regular blood donation, you may even feel more hydrated. This is as safe as a regular blood donation, and you'll be glad to know your single donation has double the impact and can go further to help patients.

"A lot of you have generously volunteered your time to come donate and make such a difference. Let's have a lot more folks! Thank you, thank you to everybody that has signed up already," organizers stated.

Bring your ID and/or donor cards when you come. Sign up at [www.bloodhero.com](http://www.bloodhero.com), sponsor code: southfork, or contact Karen Miller, 720-313-4834 or [mkmillermink@aol.com](mailto:mkmillermink@aol.com).

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## Why you need dental insurance in retirement.

Many Americans are fortunate to have dental coverage for their entire working life, through employer-provided benefits. When those benefits end with retirement, paying dental bills out-of-pocket can come as a shock, leading people to put off or even go without care.

Simply put — without dental insurance, there may be an **important gap** in your healthcare coverage.

**When you're comparing plans ...**

- ▶ Look for coverage that helps pay for major services. Some plans may limit the number of procedures — or pay for preventive care only.
- ▶ Look for coverage with no deductibles. Some plans may require you to pay hundreds out of pocket before benefits are paid.
- ▶ Shop for coverage with no annual maximum on cash benefits. Some plans have annual maximums of \$1,000.

**Medicare doesn't pay for dental care.<sup>1</sup>**  
That's right. As good as Medicare is, it was never meant to cover everything. That means if you want protection, you need to purchase individual insurance.

**Early detection can prevent small problems from becoming expensive ones.**  
The best way to prevent large dental bills is preventive care. The American Dental Association recommends checkups twice a year.

**Previous dental work can wear out.**  
Even if you've had quality dental work in the past, you shouldn't take your dental health for granted. In fact, your odds of having a dental problem only go up as you age.<sup>2</sup>

**Treatment is expensive — especially the services people over 50 often need.**  
Consider these national average costs of treatment ... \$222 for a checkup ... \$190 for a filling ... \$1,213 for a crown.<sup>3</sup> Unexpected bills like this can be a real burden, especially if you're on a fixed income.

1 "Medicare & You," Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2024. 2 "Aging changes in teeth and gums", medlineplus.gov, 4/17/2022. 3 American Dental Association, Health Policy Institute, 2020 Survey of Dental Fees, Copyright 2020, American Dental Association.

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# Kokanee salmon spawn returns to Colorado

Public advised to call in advance of giveaway days

By COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE

DURANGO — Fall has returned to Colorado, and kokanee salmon have started to make their run for spawning season.

For Colorado Parks and Wildlife aquatic biologists and hatchery staff, that means a busy month ahead of collecting eggs for Colorado's hatcheries to propagate the state's kokanee program.

As part of the kokanee salmon program, giveaway days are scheduled each year for interested members of the public who hold a valid Colorado fishing license to receive fish. However, the available kokanee for the scheduled giveaway days at each location can vary greatly.

In 2023, CPW scheduled additional giveaway days in some locations and canceled giveaway days in others. Because giveaways are dependent on available fish, it is always best to call ahead the day before scheduled giveaways to make sure fish will be available. The public can also follow CPW on social media channels from their area for the latest information.

Contact information for each giveaway location is available in the 2024 Kokanee Salmon Regulations brochure.

"In some recent years, we've had issues with too many people showing up to receive a small number of kokanee," said CPW's Dan Brauch. "There have been days where we had almost as many people show up as we had fish, so it's best for people to call ahead so they don't travel too far for a small amount of fish."

Kokanee salmon were introduced to Colorado waters in 1951. They are the landlocked version of sockeye salmon. These

fish grow quickly, typically live about four years and naturally die after spawning.

In 2023, CPW collected an estimated 8.3 million kokanee salmon eggs from eight spawning locations. Eggs are raised in hatcheries and stocked out across 24 bodies of water the following spring.

CPW conducts kokanee salmon giveaways to make sure the meat from spawned kokanee is not wasted. Each year, thousands of fish are given away, but availability at each location can vary depending on the size of the run.

"We have had great runs the last few years at Dolores, and Lake Nighthorse has been pretty consistent in recent years," said CPW Senior Aquatic Biologist Jim White. "I think we will have a reasonable number of fish for those scheduled giveaways. Recipients should always bear in mind that giveaways vary based on the natural run of the salmon, number of people that show up and size of the fish. Nighthorse fish are little hot dogs compared to Blue Mesa. Keep in mind, these fish are not going to taste like an ocean-run salmon"

To be eligible for the giveaway, a 2024 Colorado fishing license must be presented. Up to four youth may receive kokanee if accompanied by a license-holding adult. Southern Ute and Ute Mountain Ute tribal members may show a Tribal ID card, Brunot fishing license or a state fishing license to receive fish.

Those interested in receiving kokanee should bring their own small cooler or other container. Most of the kokanee are 10 to 13 inches in size.

Giveaways at the Roaring Judy Fish Hatchery north of Gunnison are scheduled for Fridays of Oct. 11, Oct. 18, Oct. 25, Nov. 1 and Nov. 8. Attendees should be in line by 9 a.m. to receive fish.

Kokanee numbers running up from Blue Mesa Reservoir are anticipated to be low



Photo courtesy of John Livingston/CPW

Kokanee salmon from the Dolores River. The kokanee spawning season has returned to Colorado, with public giveaway days scheduled across the Western Slope.

again this year. Severe drought negatively impacted several year classes of kokanee. CPW is hopeful that numbers may start to rebound by 2026. Consistent moisture and good water levels in Blue Mesa Reservoir are vital for rebuilding a more robust kokanee fishery.

The number of fish available on giveaway days will fluctuate depending on the number of fish spawned during the week. Participants should call Roaring Judy Hatchery at 970-641-0190 or 970-641-7070 prior to the giveaway day for more information.

Lake Nighthorse in Durango will host giveaway days at 3 p.m. Nov. 8, 15 and 22. Lake Nighthorse staff typically allow

participants to access the parking area around 2 p.m.

Joe Rowell Park in Dolores will also host giveaway days at 3 p.m. Oct. 24 and Oct. 31. It is recommended that those wanting fish arrive early to get in line at this well-attended giveaway event.

Those interested in the Dolores or Lake Nighthorse giveaways may call 970-247-0855.

For information on potential giveaways at Granby or Shadow Mountain, the public should call 970-725-6200. For information on possible giveaways at Wolford Mountain Reservoir, the public may call 970-725-6200.

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Courtesy photos

SLV 4-H Junior Livestock Judging Team: Coach Eric Hinton, Ashley Entz, Tynnley Burh, Macklie Simms, holding team mascot Steno, and Coach Janae Naranjo.



SLV 4-H Senior Livestock Judging Team member Durae Naranjo, center, was the "High Point Individual" in "Swine," second in the category of "Sheep and Goats," and fifth in "Reasons." She was also the High Point Individual "Overall" for the Senior Division. Pictured left is Coach Eric Hinton and right is Coach Janae Naranjo.

# TEAMS

Continued from Page 1A

Emily Seger, Tiffany LePlatt, and Darian Vance. The team came in first in the "Swine Category," second in the "Sheep and Goats Category," and fifth in "Reasons." The team also placed 10th in the "Beef Category."

Durae Naranjo was the "High Point Individual" in "Swine," second in the category of "Sheep and Goats," and fifth in "Reasons." She was also the High Point Individual "Overall" for the Senior Division.

After attending the Tristate Fair, the team then toured West Texas A&M University and its Agriculture Department and received information about options and opportunities for their futures.

Jesse Entz, who traveled with the team, spoke about the kids, and what they accomplished on the trip. "The group of kids on the team are so incredible and blew me away with how

they performed. These opportunities are made possible with the generous sponsorships of many businesses and people including, Poole Chemical, the Jean Ann Consaul Foundation, Steve Cordova, MPK Show pigs (Kole and Nikol Kelley, EGE Products (Brady Boyd), Ben and Sara Seger, Bountiful Meats and Processing and all those who have supported this teams' efforts."

Entz added that the team is in the process of offering a fundraising event, called the Leaf and Pine Needle Raking Fundraiser.

For more information on the fundraiser, contact Janae Naranjo at 719-480-4212 or Jesse Entz at 719-588-9526 to schedule a yard cleaning.

Livestock Judging is one of over 200 activities that 4-H members can participate in. To join 4-H or for more information about 4-H, contact the SLV Area Extension Office at 719-852-7381.

# Beautiful fall foliage



Photo by Lyndsie Ferrell

The aspen trees are showing all of their autumn colors.

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Supplement to The Monte Vista Journal, Center Post-Dispatch, The Conejos County Citizen, The Mineral County Miner, The South Fork Times, and The Del Norte Prospector.

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

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

*Please see STRATEGY on Page 10*

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

Photo courtesy of USDA Forest Service, Rocky Mountains



CDOT photo

During the drainage improvement project, motorists will be guided on the US 160 Wolf Creek tunnel bypass lane located between South Fork and the pass summit beginning Sept. 23 and continuing through November.

## Tunnel drainage improvements to US 160 on Wolf Creek Pass began

CONTRIBUTED

WOLFCREEKPASS—The Colorado Department of Transportation and contract partner Williams Construction began drainage improvements to the US Highway 160 Wolf Creek Pass tunnel on Monday, Sept. 23.

The tunnel, between South Fork and

the pass summit (Mile Point 174), will be closed throughout the project. Motorists can anticipate minimal travel impacts as they will be guided by signage onto the nearby tunnel bypass lanes. Work is expected to be completed in November.

The tunnel work zone is on the east side. *Please see TUNNEL on Page 10*

## Ribbon cutting held for new O'Reilly Auto Parts in Monte Vista

By MARIE MCCOLM

MONTE VISTA — The manager of the new O'Reilly Auto Parts store, Austyn James used a big pair of scissors to cut the red ribbon strung in front of the business at 60 North Broadway St., Monte Vista, on Saturday, Sept. 21.

Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce Manager Heather Hillin hosted the official ribbon cutting to celebrate the store's opening.

"It's a pleasure to be here today to welcome O'Reilly Auto Parts into our community," Hillin said. "This new store is not only a great resource for vehicle owners, but also a sign of growth and opportunity for our local economy. We appreciate O'Reilly's investment in Monte Vista, and the new

jobs they have created here. We are excited to see how they will support our community with their expertise and service. Thank you, O'Reilly Auto Parts, for choosing Monte Vista, and we wish you great success."

There were approximately 50 people at the ribbon cutting. *Please see O'REILLY on Page 5*

**O'Reilly Auto Parts Manager Austyn James holds the plaque the store received from the Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce during its ribbon-cutting ceremony on Saturday, Sept. 21. The new store is at 60 North Broadway in Monte Vista.**

Photo by Marie Mccolm



## Adams State recognizes Ortega's commitment to service



By ADAMS STATE UNIVERSITY

ALAMOSA — "I live with the philosophy of gratitude. I learned that from my mom and dad. This amazing award is really an honor for them," said Sandy Ortega '74, the 2024 recipient of the Billy Adams Award.

**Pictured, Sandra Ortega and the Stations of the Cross shrine; Ortega is the 2024 Adams State University Billy Adams Award recipient.**

Photo by Todd Pierson Photography

Since 1972, the award has been presented to those in the community who carry on the commitment to Adams State epitomized by the university's founder, Billy Adams.

She will receive the Adams State 2024 Billy Adams Award at the Homecoming Banquet on Sept. 27. For tickets or more information, contact the Alumni Relations Office at 719-587-8110 or visit [adams.edu/alumni](http://adams.edu/alumni) and click on the Homecoming 2024 link.

"We need more Sandys," said President David Tandberg, Ph.D. "She has impressed me as someone who always

shows up willing to roll up her sleeves and help out. Her passionate commitment to Adams State is seen in efforts she puts forth to move the institution forward, such as serving on our Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) Advisory Committee, and as president of our alumni board."

Ortega has served on the Alumni Association Board of Directors since 1990. "I'm still emotional. This is the first time in my 72 years that I was speechless," she added. "When Dr. Tandberg told me he selected me for the Billy Adams Award, I lost it. Holy guacamole, my *Please see ORTEGA on Page 5*

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### 05 Notices

**For information on meetings for AL-ANON NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS AND ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS**  
Please visit slvaa.org or call 719-937-5083.

### 07 Help Wanted

**Del Norte Bank is seeking to fill a full-time position** for a Teller in the Creede Branch. Duties will be to accept deposits, loan payments and process withdrawals while maintaining a balanced cash drawer. Must be personable and pleasant answering the phone and greeting customers. Many other duties will be assigned as needed. The position is permanent, full-time, M - F, 8am - 4:30pm, an hourly rate range of \$14.42 to \$17.00, with a robust benefits package. Application available at TrueLocalBank.com/careers or inquire at 117 N. Main St, Creede or call 719-657-3376 and ask for Dawn. EOE. (TFN)

**Elementary Paraprofessional Needed:**  
We are seeking a dedicated Paraprofessional for the 2024-2025 school year. If you're passionate about working with young learners, we'd love to hear from you! Salary starts at \$21,035.19 on the Paraprofessionals salary schedule.

New employees to the district may be granted up to 8 years of experience at the discretion of the superintendent at the time of hiring. Benefit package including employee health, dental, vision, optional \$1,200 a year toward an HSA, and life insurance coverage. Free admission to all home athletic events, staff wellness room, discount rates to Monte Vista Athletic Club, Sand Dunes Swimming Pool, and Monte Vista Golf Course. Please complete the non-certified application and submit with resume. For more information and to apply, visit www.sargent.k12.co.us or call 719-852-4023. Application Deadline: 10/8/24 or until position is filled. EOE (10/8) (10-9)

**Colorado State University San Luis Valley Research Center** in Center, CO, seeks Farm Manager, full-time salaried w/benefits. Min. requirements include experience managing an entity involved in research, agricultural production or related commercial enterprise environment. Read full job description and apply online by 09/30/2024 for full consideration at: <https://jobs.colostate.edu/postings/150505>. CSU is an EO/EA/AA employer and conducts background checks on all final candidates. (10-16)

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## PUBLIC AUCTION October 19, 2024 Saturday 9:30 am

**Location:** 6955 N Hwy 285, Center, CO. Auction site is just north of Rd G off of Hwy 285. Watch for signs.

**Auctioneer's Note:** James is consolidating his operation and is offering the following items for auction. Check our FB page for more pictures.

### Tractors & Equipment

JD 400 Industrial w/Ldr  
WD 45 Allis Chalmers  
JD 400 Backhoe  
12' offset Disc  
Hesston Wheel V-rake  
International 440 Baler  
907 NH Windrower  
Farmhand Manure Spreader  
International 510 Grain Drill 12'  
Ford side delivery Rake  
JD side delivery Rake  
3-pt Ditcher  
Eversman Ditcher  
14' Renovator  
JD Sickle Mower



### Misc Equipment

20' Van Box for storage  
Generator  
used 30" Culvert approx 16' long  
used 18" Culvert approx 20' long  
Several Fuel Tanks on Stands  
Propane Tank for Pickup  
Reefer Unit  
Several lots of Scrap Iron  
5th Wheel P/U Hitch



### Antique Equip. & Tack

2 - side delivery Rakes  
Wooden Branding Chute  
3- Saddles  
Bridles  
Halters

### Vehicles

2006 Peterbilt 387 Cummins  
13 speed, w/ Wet kit "nice"  
1997 Trail King Machinery Trlr  
1974 Ford Dump Truck  
1986 GMC 3500 w/12' flatbed  
1993 Ford Ranger 4x4  
2000 Ford F450 w/service bed  
1979 Chevy Corsica  
Isuzu Pickup  
Ford Crown Victoria wrecked  
2002 Chevy Blazer wrecked  
24' insulated Van Trailer

### Shop Equipment

Table Saw  
Radial Arm Saw  
Drill Press  
Hotsy Pressure Washer  
Misc Hand Tools  
Battery Charger  
Air Compressor

### Boats & Snowmobiles

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CDL Driver: JT Timber Falling is hiring a full-time log truck driver. Class A CDL. Based out of Blanca, CO. Local destinations and home every night. A Comprehensive benefits package is available. \$23-\$30/hr depending on experience. Call 719-379-4066 or visit jttimber.com for more information.

Saguache County is seeking an On-Site Wastewater Treatment System Inspector - The On-Site Wastewater Treatment System Inspector for Saguache County is responsible for maintaining and enforcing public health regulations relating to the community's environmental health. Through investigation, inspection,

education and enforcement, the On-Site Wastewater Treatment System Inspector takes action to mitigate or eliminate public health hazards. Inspections and investigations occur indoors and outdoors facilities such as residential homes, restaurants, swimming pools, public schools, penal institutions, childcare facilities, nursing homes, body art facilities, cannabis/hemp facilities, campgrounds, mobile home parks, public accommodations, bars/lounges, etc. On-Site Wastewater Treatment System Inspectors are assigned primary responsibilities in specific environmental programs but are required to possess knowledge of all programs in order to respond to public health emergencies. Starting salary of \$25/hour depending on experience and qualifications. Saguache County offers an exceptional benefits package including health, dental, vision insurance with an option for a Health Savings Account. Employees enjoy paid vacation, sick leave, 11 holidays. Saguache County is an equal opportunity employer. Saguache County is an EEO employer. Valid Driver's License, Drug testing which includes marijuana, and a background check will be required also a physical exam may be required for final applicants. To view the job description and an application they are available at Saguache County Administration office 505 3rd Street, Saguache or printable at www.saguachecounty.colorado.gov. Call 719-655-2231 for more information. Position opened until filled. (10-9)

Del Norte Elementary School Teacher needed at the URGSD. We are seeking a hardworking and enthusiastic teaching professionals 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. (10-2)

**12 Houses for Rent**  
 1-bedroom, 1-bath, furnished guest cabin Ponderosa Estates, South Fork. Garage, large, fenced yard, snow removal. All utilities. Fully maintained. Chauffeur and shuttle services available. \$1800 monthly. For more details call Scott, 719-404-4633. (10-16)

**14 Business Properties For Rent**  
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**36 Miscellaneous**  
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# SUDOKU

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

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Solution to last week's puzzle

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

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 — Heather P.

# Valley Wide Classifieds

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**New in Del Norte Peace-of-Art-Gallery-Pop-Up** Honoring the-life-and-lore-of Blake Higgins 728-Grande-Ave 85 years of fine art-collectibles-dolls-bears even rubber-stamps Opens September-8th-2024 719-588-1892 (10-2)

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**37 Wanted**

**In search of stackable-washer/dryer,** refrigerator/freezer, electric-stove, must be in excellent condition. Call KimAnna and Mike 719-588-1892, 719-588-3433 (10-2)

**55 RVs & Campers**

**For sale 2012 Airstream Classic Coach F 30 foot.** All set for off grid living. \$75,000, OBO. 719-404-4633. (10-2)

**64 Autos for Sale**

**2009 SAAB SUV 97-X AWD 166K miles.** Heated leather seats. Receiver hitch. Moonroof. Looks good, runs good. \$5,000 negotiable. 719-588-7553 (10-16)

**Rio Grande County is holding a silent auction** for the sale of a 2008 Chrysler Town and Country van. Vehicle starts and runs. Check Engine light is on but has not been diagnosed. Vehicle was removed from service as a Law Enforcement vehicle, due to purchase of replacement vehicle. Silent Auction will start September 2, 2024, and will end close of business day (4:00 P M October 2, 2024. Vehicle can be viewed at the Rio Grande County Sheriff's Office 640 Cherry St. Del Norte, CO 81132. Bids can be placed by writing your bid, name, and contact information, and enclosing in a sealed envelope. Winning bidder will be contacted by October 7, 2024. Rio Grande County does not provide guarantees and/or warranties relative to the sold item

**DISCLAIMER**

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

(s). Thus, the items) are offered on an "AS IS-WHERE IS" basis and on the timeline assigned thru the auction. The vehicle was removed from service for replacement. This was previously a Police Vehicle. The vehicle is not inspected. Must be picked up. (10-2)

**For sale - 1990 Toyota 2-wheel drive** super clean pickup; 2013 Toyota Corolla; brand new propane overhead garage heater; gas hole auger. 719-850-2027

**65 Professional Services**

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**Need a helping hand? SLV Concierge LLC** - Errands, shopping, household management, wellbeing checks, supervision for construction,

maintenance and repairs, setting up appointments, ect. Call Angel 719-480-1903 slvtaskmanager@gmail.com (11-27)

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# ORTEGA

Continued from Page 1

tears. It's an overwhelming, exciting feeling."

A 10<sup>th</sup>-generation native of San Luis, Ortega was recently honored with inclusion in History Colorado's 2022 Return of the Corn Mothers. The award-winning traveling photographic exhibition and accompanying coffee-table book is based on the Pueblo myth of the Corn Mothers, said to have sung in the essence of creation. This collection of portraits and stories is about today's Corn Mothers, women who live, study, and work in the Southwest — Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, and northern Texas.

Ortega noted she donated a copy of the book to La Capilla de Todos los Santos (All Saints' Chapel) at San Luis' Stations of the Cross shrine. She and her husband, Antonio Garcia, consider the chapel to be the "crown jewel" of projects completed by their company, Passive Adobe Solar Construction, from which they retired in 2010.

Prior to working with her husband, Ortega spent 20 years in social work in the San Luis Valley, Trinidad, and Colorado Springs. She also taught remedial reading at Centennial High School in San Luis. A first-generation college student, Ortega recognizes the importance of Adams State serving the region. She appreciates the academic scholarship that allowed her to graduate debt-free with a double major in sociology/social work and Mexican/American studies with a minor in special education. Three of her seven siblings are also Adams State alumni: Daisy Ortega '75, John W. Ortega '78, and Anthony C. Ortega '77.

Her fondest college memory is the

# O'REILLY

Continued from Page 1

cutting ceremony, including MV Mayor Dale Becker, and MV City Manager GiGi Dennis.

O'Reilly's provided donuts and light drinks and gave out some O'Reilly Auto Parts caps.

Store Manager James said, "This is super surreal. I am excited that the community has another option to go to for parts. I look forward to serving the community and helping everybody out. We are all super excited to be here, and we hope that everyone is also excited to have us here."

James said that the store in Monte Vista had been planned through O'Reilly for about a year. He worked in the auto parts business for about 5 years before being named manager of the MV store.

"I started with AutoZone, and I heard that this store was opening and wanted to see if I could make the transition, to be the store manager here. They gave me the opportunity and I am so excited," he said.

When asked if there is anything that sets Monte Vista O'Reilly's Auto Parts store apart from others, James said, "This is a little bit bigger store than the one in Alamosa. We carry more of a variety of products here. I am excited about that, and hopefully we will have some agricultural parts here, on the shelf soon too; that way if the farmers need any bearings or off the wall parts, that typically Napa or the O'Reilly's in Alamosa, or AutoZone, don't typically stock, well we hope to take care of the farmers in that aspect, here in our store too."

Store employee Tony Ortega said that he thinks that people in the community will appreciate that they have another auto parts store locally.

"We want people to know we are here with the parts they need. We have been working hard to stock the store for the past couple of weeks. We are excited about serving the local community," Ortega said.

Resident Mary Gonzales attended the ribbon cutting and said that it would be easier to get parts with O'Reilly's in town.

"Hands down they are the best place to get parts, and now we don't have to travel to Alamosa for them, they are right here. What a great thing to add to our town," Gonzales said.

time she and three other students drove to Puebla, Mexico, to study Mexican history for a semester through an exchange program with Universidad de las Americas.

These experiences, among others, influenced her commitment to higher education and her work with Adams State's HSI Advisory Committee. "The

Hispanic Serving Institution committee works to improve the educational experience for all Adams State students. I advocate for anybody who wants to earn a degree in higher education," she said.

Ortega explained the Alumni Association is now working with the Adams State Foundation to align alumni fundraising and friend raising activities

with the university's strategic plan. The group is exploring the possibility of creating a mentoring program matching students with alumni.

"We need to start having conversations with students and new alumni to cultivate a philosophy of giving, not necessarily financial giving, but also through giving their time and talent," she said.

Ortega has volunteered for many local organizations including the Alamosa Republican Party, Sacred Heart Catholic Church, the Colorado Commission on Aging, the San Luis Valley Development Resources Group, SLV Health, and the Alamosa City Planning Committee. She also serves as an Alamosa County Sheriff's Office Victim Advocate.

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# RMMFI celebrates anniversary and graduates

Event held at Ruby Rose Bakery in Hooper

By MARIE MCCOLM

**HOOPER** — Approximately 40 people attended the Rocky Mountain Micro Finance Institute (RMMFI) ribbon cutting celebrating its anniversary and its area 14 graduates on Saturday, Sept. 21, at Ruby Rose Bakery in Hooper.

A mini-business bazaar was also held as part of the festivities with local vendors and graduated entrepreneurs, selling many different items, that were both homemade and from their local stores.

Free food was also served at the event, including pulled-pork

sandwiches, coleslaw, macaroni and cheese, and a generous piece of peach pie with ice cream for dessert.

Daliah Torrez, who is a graduate and Digital Marketing Manager for the institute, was the hostess of the event. Everyone cheered and clapped for the graduates.

Torrez spoke about the institute and what they do for entrepreneurs.

“We just celebrated 16 years in business. We try to do these community events at least once a year in the Valley. We try to get all the entrepreneurs that have graduated from the program from the area together for this event, that’s why we held this here today. There have been a ton of entrepreneurs that have gone through the program already,” Torrez said.

Torrez explained that the institute gives entrepreneurs education on how to start a business, and all the aspects of running a business. There are also grants and loans available to graduates.

“This is a great program for anyone who is interested in starting a business, because we realize it can be hard,” she said.

Torrez explained that people who enroll and get involved with the program are paired up with mentors, including financial mentors and accountability mentors, to help ensure that everyone that’s going through the program is getting what they need from it.

“There are different phases to the program, there are some eligibility  
*Please see RMMFI on Page 7*



Photo by Marie Mccolm

A mini-business bazaar was also held during the Rocky Mountain Micro Finance Institute (RMMFI) ribbon cutting in Hooper on Sept. 21. The bazaar featured local vendors and graduates of the institute.

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# RMMFI Continued from Page 6

requirements involved in getting started. We do look at income and household size. Once it is deemed that you are eligible, you just move into the program from there," Torrez said.

Rocky Mountain Microfinance Institute or RMMFI according to its website is focused on helping individuals and communities that have been overlooked by traditional businesses and financial services. Torrez stated that the program does try to focus on people in rural areas too.

"The program takes you through many different aspects of business, including core, finance, marketing, business operations, and so much more. We do try to work with rural communities a lot. We want to see people succeed that are interested in creating their own businesses, that's what the institute is focused on and that's what it's all about."

Local RMMFI graduate Jennifer Graves attended the event and said it helped her open an art studio in Monte Vista.

"They have many individualized programs that help you with your specific area of business interest. It's a well-supported program that can take you from point A to point B and really teach you the ins and outs of running a business by yourself. I would recommend this to any entrepreneur looking at opening their own business, but not having all the information that they need to do so. The mentorship programs alone open your mind to so much and really help you in ways that support your individual dreams. I am very proud of the art studio that I have in Monte Vista, and I feel like RMMFI really helped me and opened a clear path to help me get there. I hope other entrepreneurs will consider enrolling. It is a fantastic program," Graves said.

Ruby Rose Bakery is at 11704 N Highway 17 in Hooper.

For more information, visit [www.rmmfi.org](http://www.rmmfi.org) or call 1-303-522-9266.



Photo by Marie Mccolm

Approximately 40 people attended the Rocky Mountain Micro Finance Institute (RMMFI) ribbon cutting celebrating its anniversary and its area 14 graduates on Saturday, Sept. 21, at Ruby Rose Bakery in Hooper.

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# Residents surmount a 14,000-foot challenge

By JOHN WATERS

**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 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



Courtesy photo

**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.**

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.”

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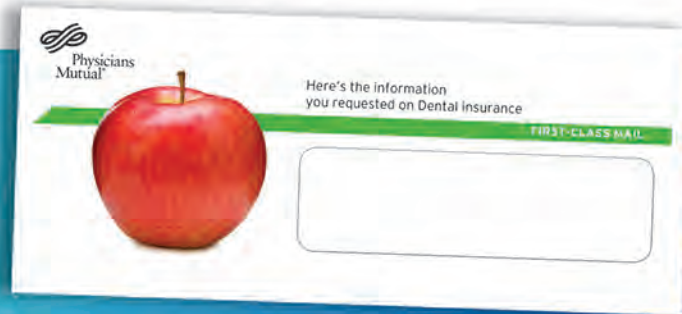
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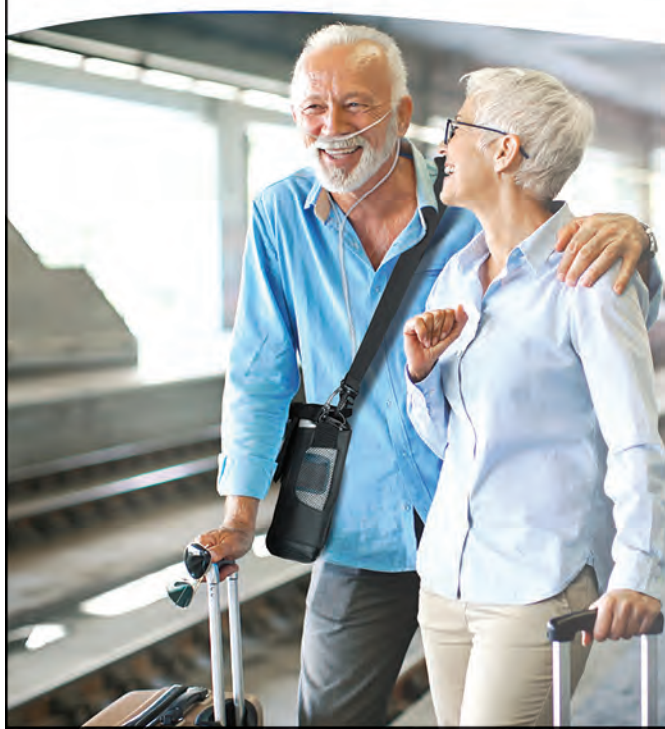
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# TUNNEL

of Wolf Creek Pass, about 10 miles west of South Fork and seven miles east of the Wolf Creek ski area. This safety project improves drainage near the tunnel's east entrance, reducing the potential for icy and hazardous conditions during the winter season.

"Over the past few winters, maintenance crews have noticed an increase in the amount of moisture on the road surface at this tunnel entrance. The new drainage system will divert water off of the travel lanes and reduce the frequency of icy or slick conditions," said Julie Constan, Regional Transportation Director.

The project will update the existing underdrain system that runs in the center of the eastbound travel lane with a larger, improved drainage system. Crews will install manholes at both ends of the tunnel to improve maintenance access. Additional work includes the

Continued from Page 1

replacement of several concrete panels and the installation of delineators near the drainage structures.

### Traffic Impacts

- Beginning Sept. 23, work hours will range from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday.

### Traffic impacts will include:

- Through November, signage will guide traffic onto the tunnel bypass lanes 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Motorists can expect brief intermittent delays
- Speeds will be reduced to 25 mph through the work zone
- Traffic fines will be doubled in the work zone
- Motorists should slow down as they approach the work zone, drive with caution, allow extra space between vehicles and give themselves extra travel time

# STRATEGY

Continued from Page 1

forest business infrastructure necessary to carry out forest restoration 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 wildfires 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.

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DF-CD-NP-G421



Photo by Marie Mccolm

Center Police Department Chief Aaron Fresquez, left, honored two students – Aylya Garcia and Armando Ruybal – who helped save the life of their fellow classmate at Center Consolidated School District.

# Two Center students honored for ‘saving a life’

*Helped a student that was choking*

By MARIE MCCOLM

CENTER — On Tuesday, Sept. 24, at the Town of Center Board of Trustees and Center Police Department Chief Aaron Fresquez honored two students who helped save the life of their fellow classmate at Center Consolidated School District.

Fresquez spoke at the meeting, while holding two plaques that he handed to the two students.

“I wanted to come to this board meeting, to the town, and acknowledge a seventh-grade student and an eighth-grade student. Another kid was choking, now keep in mind, that I found out, that neither one of these kids knew how to perform the Heimlich maneuver or anything like that, but they knew how to react when the situation happened. They ultimately ended up saving a life. I want to present to Armando Ruybal and Aylya Garcia an award for saving someone’s life. They had no idea what to do, they never had any type of thing like this happen, but these young adults here reacted, and ultimately saved a life.”

Fresquez also announced that Saguache County Commissioner Lynne Thompson was present and wanted to present them with an award.

“On behalf of the Saguache County Board of Commissioners, we wanted to present you with a certificate of appreciation. The following awards are giving to Aylya Garcia and Armando Garcia.”

Thompson also relayed that the Colorado State Patrol Dispatch and the 911 Authority also thanked the children for what they did.

According to Superintendent Carrie Zimmerman, two students, Armando Ruybal and Aylya Garcia, noticed their classmate Arian Benitez,

choking in the lunchroom of the school.

Ruybal and Garcia sprang into action and did what they could to help their fellow classmate spit up what he was choking on.

Garcia spoke about what happened and how she felt about helping her classmate.

“Arian was sitting with us, and he was eating his food, and we all got up to move with Armando to another table. Arian started walking and he started choking. He was jumping up and down while he was talking. I didn’t notice he was choking at first, then he went to the water fountain and tried drinking water. When I looked at him, he was turning purple, and I noticed the water kept coming out of his mouth, it wouldn’t go down his throat. One of my other friends told me to do something, and Armando came running from across the cafeteria and started hitting him on his back. I then grabbed him too; I didn’t know what to do but I started pushing on his stomach trying to help him. We just kept doing it until he started breathing and then the nurse came and took him,” Garcia said.

Garcia said that when Benitez returned from seeing the nurse, he thanked her and Armando for helping him.

Ruybal added, “I saw Arian struggling at first, but wasn’t sure he was choking on something, I thought maybe he was just coughing, but that’s when I saw him panicking. I started trying to help him, I tried to do some kind of maneuver to help him. Then it was me and Aylya trying to help him both, she came to try to help, and we just kept trying to help him back and forth and finally Aylya was able to get it out of him. It felt good to help him. He said thank you for everything, too.”

The two children were also thanked for saving the young man’s life by the residents and town trustees.

## City of Alamosa fall large item pickup

ALAMOSA — To help facilitate fall cleanup efforts, the City of Alamosa will be offering a large item trash pickup from Oct. 14 through Oct. 17 for City trash customers.

Call the Public Works office before Thursday, Oct. 10, at 719-589-6631 to schedule a pickup time. Pickup of no more than three large items will be offered during this time.

Tires, hazardous material or electronic devices cannot be accepted. Refrigerators, freezers and air conditioners must have the Freon removed and the red tag placed on them prior to the time of pickup. Lawn debris must be bagged separately for composting.

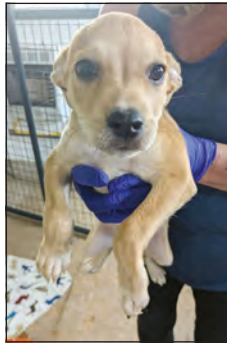
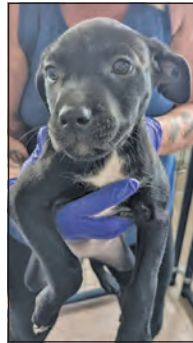
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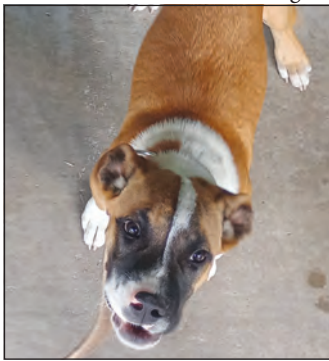
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