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the Montrose Mirror

RE-1J BOARD VOTES TO APPROVE BALLOT MEASURE FOR NEW MHS

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE-It was a chance for the leaders to learn, as the design team for a proposed new Montrose High School presented information and plans to the Montrose County School District RE-1J Board of Education at the regular board meeting of Tuesday, Aug. 27.

All directors were present for the meeting including Board President Sarah Fishing (District E); Board Vice President Steve Bush (District G); District A Director Neisha Balleck; District B Director Ted Valerio; District C Director Alice Murphy; District D Director Tom West; and District F Director Jody Hovde.

Board President Sarah Fishing called the meeting to order and led in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Continued pg 12



RE-1J Superintendent Carrie Stephenson presented an update on the design for the new Montrose High School. Joining Stephenson and the Board of Education were members of the design team. Above, graphic from presentation depicts the proposed facility from the Northeast.

CIVIL AIR PATROL VOLUNTEER HONORED FOR SAVING LIVES



Lt Colonel Mark Young of the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) received three awards at the National Civil Air Patrol Conference in San Antonio, Texas. Courtesy photo.

Mirror Staff Report

MONTROSE-On Saturday, Aug. 17, Lt Colonel Mark Young of the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) was presented with three awards at the National Civil Air [Patrol Conference](#) in San Antonio, Texas.

Award Information provided by the Civil Air Patrol notes that Young, a highly decorated CAP volunteer and longtime Montrose County resident, was honored with the Commander's Commendation Award, the Exceptional Service Award, and the Bronze Medal of Valor.

NATIONAL COMMANDER'S COMMENDATION AWARD

National Commander of the Civil Air Patrol General Ed Phelka honored Young and his team for locating an F35 Stealth fighter that went missing near Charleston, South Carolina on Sept. 17, 2023. Young and his team found radar tracks of the F35 that "were very clear" as to the location of the crash site. The debris was located about 30 minutes later, after the radar track by the Team was sent to the USMC.

The Civil Air Patrol *Commander's Commendation Award* is given to Civil Air Patrol members for "outstanding duty performance"

Continued pg 6

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Dear Readers:

We appreciate your letters! We like reading and hearing opinions from all perspectives. We are sharing herewith our updated guidelines: In the past we have had one rule, to be implemented at the editor's discretion. We are now including two more suggested "Rules" for letter writers.

RULE 1. The Dead Horse Rule has been in place from the start of the *Mirror*. This is somewhat self-explanatory, but there are times when something has been said so many times it can run afoul of the "Dead Horse Rule," in which case we will inform the writer.

RULE 2. While there are always exceptions, a letter can often say what needs to be said in one page or less. Our pages are 8.5 X 11, we use a 10 pt Calibri font; letters that are roughly 800 words fit well within this suggested guideline.

RULE 3. Please limit repetitive mud-slinging to avoid bumping up against Rule 1. Also, in the case of those writing to intentionally discredit a public official or candidate for public office, please provide a link to the source of your allegation if possible. Unsourced, unproven allegations are not credible, and could in fact be untruths.

Finally, opinions expressed in letters and commentary are those of the authors themselves, and do not reflect the views of the *Montrose Mirror* or editorial staff.

Thank you,
 Caitlin Switzer,
 Montrose Mirror Editor

THE MONTROSE MIRROR

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We encourage contributions and commentary. Submitted content may not necessarily reflect the opinion of the publisher.

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Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-The Historical Cedar Creek Cemetery Tour hosted by the Montrose County Historical Museum promises a unique opportunity to delve into the history and legends of local pioneers. With the tour taking place at Cedar Creek Cemetery, participants will not only learn about the individuals who shaped the region but also gain insight into evolving cemetery traditions over the years. This tour is broken into two parts because of the vast buried history. The first part will take place on Sept. 7 and the rest of the stories will be in the part two tour on Sept. 14. You will want to sign up for both tours for the complete buried stories. For those interested in attending, remember to RSVP by calling 970-249-2085. The tour is priced at \$10.00 per person, and space is limited, so it's a good idea to secure your spot soon. Join Us for "The Night at the Depot" Under the Stockman's Sign! We are thrilled to present this year's edition of "The Night at the Depot," featuring three unique stories of Remembered Notables. This year, we will be highlighting short vignettes about Dexter and Ethel Walker, Anna Fender, and Henry Haack—remarkable individuals who played a significant role in shaping our history and the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park. Mark your calendars for Sept. 13 and secure your tickets early, as seating is limited. Don't miss out on this special evening of history and storytelling! For more information, please email at info@montrosehistory.org or call 970-249-2085



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FOREST SERVICE OFFICES CLOSE FOR LABOR DAY HOLIDAY

Special to the Mirror

DELTA— The Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison (GMUG) National Forests' Supervisor's Office, along with all ranger district offices, will be closed in observance of the Labor Day federal holiday, Sept. 2, 2024. Offices will resume regular business hours on Tuesday, Sept. 3. Please plan accordingly for your GMUG National Forest's needs.

While Forest Service offices will be closed, permits for firewood can still be purchased online or at any of the following locations:
 -Paonia Flower Shop—201 Grand Avenue, Paonia, CO; 970-527-4664
 -Desperado General Store—40486 D Road, Crawford, CO; 970-921-5665
 -Gambles Ace Hardware—121 E Bridge Street, Hotchkiss, CO; 970-872-3535

-Valley Ranch—57454 Highway 330, Collbran, CO; 970-487-3000

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CIVIL AIR PATROL VOLUNTEER HONORED FOR SAVING LIVES *From pg 1*



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General Phelka spoke with the *Mirror* on Friday about the awards received by Young.

"Mark Young is a person who saves lives on a regular basis," Phelka said, noting that Civil Air Patrol volunteers are called upon by the US Air Force to assist in search and rescue for downed planes.

Phelka said that Young can provide first responder EMT services as well as organizing highly skilled search and rescue operations with his team. "They've pioneered and perfected radar analysis."

EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE AWARD

The *Exceptional Service Award* is presented to Civil Air Patrol members who provide exceptionally outstanding service while serving in any capacity with Civil Air Patrol. Young was honored for his longtime service.

"From 2018 to 2023, Young participated in 231 Missions with 1027 Hours resulting in 177 Finds and 44 Lives saved using Radar forensics to find missing aircraft."

Civil Air Patrol Bronze Medal of Valor

Young also received the Civil Air Patrol's *Bronze Medal of Valor*, awarded for "distinguished and conspicuous heroic action where danger to self is probable and known."

Details of the situation for which Young received the award are not shared, as they include personal and health-related information of the individual who was rescued.

Phelka said, "It was my privilege to award Mark Young that Bronze Medal of Valor; his actions were heroic."

When asked why he persists with search and rescue work, which demands intense focus, hard work and time, Young said, "I have lost many friends who were pilots over the years. I have found a niche that I am good at—using my IT, telecommunication engineering, and pilot expertise, in bringing those together to lead a team of like-minded people to save lives.

"It is thanks to many friends who have worked with me over the years in Search and Rescue, EMS, and piloting that I am able to give back to the community and nation. The friends who were there for me when others quit—these awards are for them too. None of them ever gave up on me, nor am I going to give up on others when it comes to using my skills to save lives.

"Too many people give up these days," Young said. "I am a fighter, and I won't give up."



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RED HAWKS TRAMPLE GREELEY WEST 42-6



Red Hawks practice prior to the Greeley West game. Photo by Cliff Dodge.

By Cliff Dodge

MONTROSE-The Montrose Red Hawks football team hit the road on Friday and travelled to Greeley where they took on the Spartans of Greeley West High School. The Red Hawks continued their offensive and defensive control and walked away with a 42 to 6 victory.

The Red Hawks won the coin toss and elected to kick off and play defense. The Spartans managed one first down and then were forced to punt. The Red Hawks used Elijah Womack as their first featured back and drove 53 yards in 9 plays to hit the scoreboard and a 6-0 lead. Womack ripped off a 27-yard scamper on the first play from scrimmage and then finished the drive with a one-yard touchdown run. The 2-point conversion attempt was not good.

The Red Hawks defense continued their strong play, limiting the Spartans' second possession to one minus yard before punting. The Red Hawks drove 73 yards in five plays with junior Chase Mehan scoring on a 23-yard run. The 2-point conversion was good, making the score 14-0 with less than 10 minutes being played.

The Spartans again were unable to move the football. The defense rose up and senior Abott Dietrich blew up the offense with a punishing sack of the Spartans

quarterback. Punt time once again.

The second quarter offered more of the same for the Red Hawks. It took the Red Hawks five plays to move the ball 38 yards with Chase Mehan scoring his second touchdown on a 12-yard scamper. The PAT made the score 21-0 in favor of the Red Hawks.

The Spartans' next possession met with disaster as the Red Hawks defense showed a stout pass defense. The Red Hawks Senior Zach Motley snuffed out a passing attempt with a leaping interception at the Greeley West 37-yard line. Sophomore quarterback Cade Saunders then hit Senior Hunter Gurule with a 41-yard touchdown pass increasing the score to 28-0.

Both teams hit a lull with their next possessions and the Spartan defense shut down the Red Hawks offense, forcing the offense to fail to pick up a yard on a fourth and one situation, thus turning the football over on downs. The Red Hawks defense then returned the favor and forced the Spartans into a 3 and out, turning the ball back over to the Red Hawks. With about a minute to play in the first half, Quarterback Cade Saunders fumbled the snap and Greeley West recovered but were unable to move the ball as the first half came to a close.

The Spartans kicked off to the Red Hawks to open the second half. Junior Chase Mehan fielded the kickoff at his 13-yard line, made the first defender miss, and then rambled 87 yards for his second touchdown of the contest. The PAT made the score 35-0.

The Red Hawks were now making wholesale substitutions in their offensive and defensive packages. Sophomore Rian Reeder finished off a 45 drive with a 10-yard touchdown run to advance the score to 42-0. The officials invoked the 40-point rule and ran the clock without stopping for the rest of the contest.

The Spartans managed to score a touchdown using a 7-yard pass for the score. The PAT was blocked by Senior Kayden Miller. The offense for the Red Hawks used a bevy of running backs to great success. The defense made it very difficult for the Spartans to move the football at all and it mattered little who Coach Mertens inserted. The Red Hawks ran up close to 400 yards of total offense while the defense kept the Spartans under 200 yards of total offense. The defense had an interception and the special teams scored on a kick off return. Next up for the Red Hawks--a date with the Palisade Bulldogs. The home game is slated to kick off at 7pm. on Friday, Sept. 6.

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TEEN BOYS: 13-17 yrs / Fancy, Grass & Traditional / 1st place \$200 / 2nd place \$150 / 3rd Place \$75

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

CANNABIS COULD HELP PAY FOR A NEW HIGH SCHOOL

Dear Editor:

First off, I am not a cannabis consumer.

This week I received the mailing regarding the proposal for a new \$198 million High School. It looks beautiful and would certainly be an asset to the community. However, asking the current citizens to increase their rent and mortgages by \$30-\$70 a month is challenging when the most common complaint here is the rising costs of rent.

Per the mailer, the increase would be \$8-\$10 per \$100k of actual home value. The actual value of most houses in Montrose is at least \$300k and renters would most certainly feel that impact as the homeowners could pass it down at least \$1 to \$1.

In 2012 Colorado citizens voted to approve the recreational sale of cannabis in Colorado under Amendment 62.

Tax.Colorado.Gov states "The first \$40 million in retail marijuana excise tax revenue collected annually goes to public school construction." However, the mailing for the new Montrose High School didn't outline any contributions from cannabis because the City of Montrose does not allow recreational sales.

Again, I have not partaken in cannabis usage in many years. But, I see how busy the Ridgway Pot Shops are and have a feeling that a lot of those consumers have passed through Montrose. Much like how Montrose benefits greatly from the pass through tourists that pay our grocery tax, we could benefit immensely from cannabis sales taxes and then utilize the money that is designated for public school construction.

I have heard the arguments that cannabis is a gateway drug or that it could present a

lot of crime. With my own eyes, I cannot say that Ridgway is a crime mecca because of their lucrative pot shops. The City of Montrose could create the rules for shops to be a certain distance from any school and amount of licenses (just like liquor) available. It could be done in a way that there aren't all of a sudden 30 pot shops but maybe 2 or 3. Grand Junction recently approved recreational sales and has a cap of 10 licenses available.

The new High School mailer emphasized urgency that for every year we wait, it will cost \$19.8 million more. But we have already waited over 12 years for recreational cannabis sales to be allowed and open up a significant revenue stream. Maybe we could get that approved first to utilize those dollars so our rents do not go up \$30 to \$70 a month.

Jeff Rice, Montrose




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For three years Gail lived in this unconventional family environment where she comes of age, while the old-timers age in place.

GAIL MARVEL
Montrose Author & Reporter

Where Wallflowers Grow is available online at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) and [wingedpublications.com](https://www.wingedpublications.com).



RE-1J BOARD VOTES TO APPROVE BALLOT MEASURE FOR NEW MHS *From pg 1*

Directors voted to approve the meeting agenda.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

RE-1J Superintendent Carrie Stephenson presented an update on the design for the new Montrose High School. Joining Stephenson and the Board of Education were members of the design team, including Peter Icenogle of BG+Co (formerly Blythe Group), who introduced the presentation. The proposed new facility would be accessed from Rio Grande Avenue rather than Townsend.

The presentation can be viewed in its entirety in the meeting board docs.

Directors were able to ask questions and discuss aspects of the design, including accessibility, restrooms, and the possibility of using solar energy.

Dan O'Connell of RBC Capital Markets discussed taxation impacts. He said that the residential assessment rate is 6.7 percent, so that residential property owners could expect to pay \$8 to \$9 per \$100,000 in value if the project is approved. Commercial rate payers would be assessed a rate that is four times higher, O'Connell said.

COMMUNITY INPUT

Cottonwood Elementary School Students were present, including Fifth Grader Emily Mertens. "I am here with other fifth graders because we're really excited about the possibility of a new Montrose High School and being a Red Hawk. If it gets built, we will be the first freshmen class, and the first graduating class to complete all four years there," Mertens said. "We think having a new high school, with better classrooms, more space, updated sports fields and an auditorium would help us learn and do our best."

"We hope you vote yes to build the new high school, not only for us but also for future generations."

Fishing thanked the students, who also received a round of applause. "Thank you for joining us, that was a very brave thing to do."

NEW BUSINESS

The Board considered Resolution 18-2024, calling an election on November 5, 2024 for elector approval to incur debt and levy property taxes to pay such debt; setting the ballot title and content for the ballot issue to be submitted; and authorizing that all necessary or appropriate actions be taken relating to the election for such approval.

District C Director Alice Murphy moved to approve Resolution 18-2024.

District B Director Ted Valerio spoke.

"This school project, it is beautiful. It's Awesome. A lot of people have put a lot of work in, there's been a significant investment in this project so far...one of my concerns...is the cost. I understand that at the ground level, it may not look so much to each family, but as we all know we've been significantly impacted over the last several years. Due to uncertainty in the economy and the future, I know that we can't always wait for the future and we do need to get ahead of it and it looks like we are doing that...I do support having the school at some point, I do support this type of forward thinking...but out of principal, I think this is an extraordinary cost and I'm not convinced that it is good for our current economy and the citizens...I don't intend to vote yes, but I am likely to be outvoted, and we are going to leave it up to the community and the citizens to vote for that."

"As part of the board I am happy to let our community decide what they want..." Valerio said.

District F Director Jody Hovde said she had spent a lot of time thinking about the issue. "I am thinking of the age of the facility--my husband and children all went through that facility. I think of that and the money that we're using as a district to put into it to keep it at the optimum level that we can...I wonder if our education environment would be better served with a more modern facility, with a commitment to this next generation of kiddos...the safety and accessibility has been huge because I believe the current

facility is a real struggle, safety-wise..."

Accessibility is essential, as those with a disability or handicap have not had the full benefit that they would have with a newer facility, Hovde said.

Fishing said she agreed with Hovde and that if the idea is to let the voters decide, than the right option is to let the voters decide. "I also am concerned that putting this off will end up costing the taxpayer more." She said that as a residential and commercial property owner she shares the concerns over the cost.

"I share those concerns with the community, I'll be bearing the brunt as well," Fishing said, "I also see that this is a huge potential benefit for the next generation of students coming through and also for the community as a whole, as an asset and as a resource for the whole community to use...the building as it currently stands is a money pit...the benefits are so far reaching here that we have to give the community the opportunity to support this...to tell us what they think about it..."

District D Director Tom West said, "I'll tell you, I've been in that building for 30 years. It isn't working any better, it isn't going to get any better. It's going to keep falling apart. It's going to keep taking money that we don't want to spend on it."

"Build us a new school."

The Board of Education voted unanimously to approve Resolution 18-2024, calling for an election on November 5, 2024 for elector approval to incur debt and levy property taxes to pay such debt; setting the ballot title and content for the ballot issue to be submitted; and authorizing that all necessary or appropriate actions be taken relating to the election for such approval.

The proposed ballot language and CMGC Contract with FCI Constructors, Inc. were approved in four to one votes, with Valerio voting both times to deny.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned.

The RE-1J Board of Education will meet again on Tuesday, Sept. 10.

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MONTROSE RED HAWKS SPORTS ROUNDUP

By Cliff Dodge

Red Hawks Volleyball:

The Montrose Red Hawks volleyball team opened the 2024 fall season with a pair of victories. The Red Hawks hosted the Wolverines of Bayfield in the opener at the Field House and picked up right where they left off last season by winning all three sets, defeating the Wolves in straight sets 25-19, 25-8 and 25-16. The Red Hawks, a talent-laden team, got over first set jitters and won by 6 points and then settled down and controlled the match.

The Red Hawks then travelled to Eagle Valley and took on the Devils in a non-conference match. The Red Hawks continued their fine play and defeated the Devils by the scores of 25-20, 25-16 and 25-18. The match was controlled by the Red Hawks from start to finish and improved the Red Hawks overall season record to 2 wins and 0 losses. Up next for the Red Hawks will be matches on the road at Rifle, Delta, Grand Junction and Fruita-Monument.

Red Hawks Co-ed Cross Country:

The Red Hawks Cross Country team travelled to Grand Junction and participated in the Grand Junction Central Warrior Invitational Meet last weekend. Seven area high schools entered teams in the competition. The meet was won by the Grand Junction Tigers with a low score of 33 points. The Montrose Red Hawks placed second scoring 62 points. The rest of the field included Fruita-Monument, Palisade, Olathe, Caprock Academy and North Fork High School.

The Montrose team finished as follows: Josiah Graff (9th place), Phin Howe (11th place), Vash Veatch (15th), Zach Quaid (21st), Jose Chavez (23rd), Grayson Vidnar (28th), Gage Stroup (30th), John McCardy (40th), Nic Ortega (51st) and Gavin Sulzen (59th).

The Montrose girls team were well represented but no team score was recorded. The Red Hawk girls finished as follows: Millie Crane (5th), Naomi McGarry (9), Jaiden Bresett (16th), Bennett Parker (17th), Georgia Ficco (19th), Hanna Morstad (20th), Julia Witte (26th), Lacy Waschbusch (28th), Addy Moyer (37th), Ashley Haynes (38th), Kylee Jones (40th).



The Red Hawks softball team prepares to take the diamond. Photo by Cliff Dodge.

Red Hawks Softball:

The Montrose Red Hawks softball team got off to a somewhat rocky start as the team works to get a footing as the league season comes into view. The Red Hawks took on the Gunnison Cowboys on their home field to open the season. The Cowboys pounded out 21 runs on 18 hits to score a 21 to 9 victory. The Red Hawks head coach Lily Westbay managed to score 9 runs on just 6 base hits. Red Hawk Cheyenne Whitcomb led the team with 2 hits and one RBI.

On Friday the Red Hawks took on the Durango Demons on their home field and won the contest 18-12. The game was opposite the first game as the Red Hawks pounded out 18 runs on 19 base hits. Isabelle Mott led the Red Hawks offense with 4 hits and 3 runs batted in. Cali Fulkis chipped in 3 hits and 4 runs batted in. Maddy Coca and Abby Siegel also had 3 hits in the game.

The Red Hawks opened league play on Tuesday as they played host to the Warriors of Grand Junction Central High School.

The visitors put together four base hits and two bases on balls and scored 6 runs in the top of the first inning and they never looked back. The Warriors scored 3 runs in the 3rd and the 5th inning to close out the game after five frames. Sophomore Isabelle Mott led the Red Hawks banging out two base hits including a ringing double. Alyx Bray and Cali Fulkis also had two base hits in the 13-2 loss.

Red Hawks Junior Varsity Football:

The Red Hawks Junior Varsity football team travelled to Durango on Saturday and took on the Durango Demons. The Red Hawks prevailed by the score of 25-12. The teams played on equal terms during the first half, each scoring a touchdown. Both teams scored another touchdown in the third quarter. The Red Hawks then took over control of the game in the fourth quarter, scoring twice making the final score the Red Hawks 25, the Durango Demons 12. Next action for the Junior Varsity team will be on Tuesday, Sept. 3rd as they host the Eagle Valley Devils with kickoff scheduled for 4 p.m.

REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

BLM PRESCRIBED FIRES PLANNED ON CARPENTER RIDGE AND WEST DOLORES RIM

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE—The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Tres Rios and Uncompahgre field offices plan to conduct prescribed fire treatments this fall. Prescribed fire is an important tool for reducing fuels and improving ecosystem health. The Carpenter Ridge project area is two miles outside Paradox Valley, CO, between Q13 and R3 roads (Rimrocker Route). Firefighters intend to burn 200 acres of oak brush and pine tree litter within ponderosa pine stands. The West Dolores Rim project area is seven miles east of Dove Creek. Fire-

fighters will use hand ignitions and Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) to ignite 1,402 acres of pine needle cast and mountain brush leaf litter within ponderosa pine stands.

"The Carpenter Ridge prescribed fire treatment will benefit big game species as well as reduce hazardous fuels, building a more resilient ponderosa pine stand for the future," said James Savage, BLM Supervisory Fuels Specialist. "The West Rim project continues to be one of the BLM's greatest successes in reintroducing fire onto the landscape. BLM began imple-

menting prescribed fire in the West Rim project area in 2008, and after 16 years and thousands of acres treated, the BLM continues to see fantastic benefits for the timber stand, wildlife, and public land users, including reduced risk to homes, infrastructure, and resources."

Prescribed fire mimics natural processes under appropriate weather and vegetative conditions, which improves forage for wildlife, increases plant diversity by creating breaks in the understory where native grasses and forbs can thrive, and effectively reduces hazardous vegetation while enhancing woodland health.

The projects are part of the BLM's ongoing commitment to protect human and safety while maintaining or enhancing forest and woodland health and functionality. The BLM obtained smoke permits from the Colorado State Air Pollution Control Division, which identify atmospheric conditions under which the burns can be implemented. Prescribed fire smoke may affect your health. For more information, visit <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/wood-smoke-and-health>.

More information on Southwest District prescribed fuel treatments [Southwest District BLM Prescribed Fire Information | InciWeb \(wildfire.gov\)](#) and follow our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/BLMMontroseFireUnit> or Twitter https://twitter.com/SWD_Fire

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HEAR FROM MUSEUM OF THE MOUNTAIN WEST DOCENTS

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

LET'S HAVE SOME ATTENTION AND TLC TO THE NORTH SIDE PLEASE

Editor:

The discrepancy is jaw dropping as I do my driving around both sides of town. The South side has all sorts of improvements being made, not only this summer but in the past. I'm not sure what Mr. Bell and the city council have against the North side. North Park Ave is worse than most county dirt roads, from all of the city's heavy equipment running back and forth to the city shop. The side streets are full of potholes and deteriorating curbs and gutters. Sidewalks are in terrible condition with heaved and broken concrete. I'm sure that most North side property owners are feeling that they are being treated like bastard red headed stepchildren as do I.

Let's have the city pay some attention and TLC to the North side.

Ric Simon, North side property owner

BILLY BELL AND THE SPEND SWIFTERS

Editor:

Imagine, if you will, a Rock and Roll Band by the name of Billy Bell and the Spend Swifters. The admission they charge to their performance is in the form of tax dollars.

They then take these tax dollars and provide incentives to individuals and companies for various private projects inside the City.

The reason they are able to do this as a Rock and Roll Band is because if they were a municipal government, Home Rule or not, they would be CONSTITUTIONALLY PROHIBITED from making such payments to individuals and companies, and, and, such leaders of municipal governments, both elected and appointed are under oath to; "Uphold and defend the CONSTITUTION."

I'll just leave this here for personal enjoyment:

ARTICLE XI

Public Indebtedness

Law reviews: For article, "The Colorado Constitution in the New Century", see 78 U. Colo. L. Rev. 1265 (2007).

Section 1. Pledging credit of state, county, city, town or school district forbidden.

Neither the state, nor any county, city,

town, township or school district shall lend or pledge the credit or faith thereof, directly or indirectly, in any manner to, or in aid of, any person, company or corporation, public or private, for any amount, or for any purpose whatever; or become responsible for any debt, contract or liability of any person, company or corporation, public or private, in or out of the state. Source: Entire article added, effective August 1, 1876, see L. 1877, p. 60.

Section 2. No aid to corporations - no joint ownership by state, county, city, town, or school district. Neither the state, nor any county, city, town, township, or school district shall make any donation or grant to, or in aid of, or become a subscriber to, or shareholder in any corporation or company or a joint owner with any person, company, or corporation, public or private, in or out of the state, except as to such ownership as may accrue to the state by escheat, or by forfeiture, by operation or provision of law; and except as to such ownership as may accrue to the state, or to any county, city, town, township, or school district, or to either or any of them, jointly with any person, company, or corporation, by forfeiture or sale of real estate for nonpayment of taxes, or by dona-

tion or devise for public use, or by purchase by or on behalf of any or either of them, jointly with any or either of them, under execution in cases of fines, penalties, or forfeiture of recognizance, breach of condition of official bond, or of bond to secure public moneys, or the performance of any contract in which they or any of them may be jointly or severally interested. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit any city or town from becoming a subscriber or shareholder in any corporation or company, public or private, or a joint owner with any person, company, or corporation, public or private, in order to effect the development of energy resources after discovery, or production, transportation, or transmission of energy in whole or in part for the benefit of the inhabitants of such city or town. Source: Entire article added, effective

August 1, 1876, see L. 1877, p. 60. L. 74: Entire section amended, p. 455, effective upon proclamation of the Governor, December 20, 1974.

https://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/info_center/laws/COConstitution/ColoradoConstitution.pdf

Richard Harding, Olathe

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DMEA TO CONSIDER USE OF UNCLAIMED CAPITAL CREDITS, APPROVES DONATION TO GRAND MESA NORDIC CENTER



Colorado Rural Electric Association CEO Kent Singer (center) was a guest speaker during the Delta Montrose Electric Association (DMEA) board meeting regular meeting held on August 27, 2024. Singer noted this was his 20th co-op visit. Unaccustomed to having the media at a co-op meeting Singer said, "My goal is to not say anything quote worthy!" Photo by Gail Marvel

By Gail Marvel

MONTROSE—On Aug. 27, the Delta Montrose Electric Association (DMEA) Board of Directors Regular meeting was called to order at 3p.m. Director Jock Fleming was absent, all other board members were present in person. The call to order was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, determination of a quorum, and approval of the consent agenda (Membership & Meter Report, Minutes from the July 2024 Regular Meeting).

Director Kevin Williams highlighted the 114 new meters. CEO Jack Johnston could not identify the cause for the substantial increase, other than to say, "We're growing."

Background and Member Attendance/ Introductions

DMEA co-op members are afforded an opportunity to speak during Member Comments, which for this meeting were scheduled for 5:30p.m. Joseph McGill (attended by Zoom), Atlasta Solar Center sales representative Isaac Ketcham, and invited guest Colorado Rural Electric Association (CREA) CEO Kent Singer attended in person.

During meetings the DMEA board hears

verbal summary reports of their monthly meetings and activities. Co-op membership has access to some of the written staff reports submitted for board approval, i.e., minutes of the previous meeting, CEO report, and action items (resolutions). Following the meeting members can access packet information through SmartHub, the online service which allows members to manage their DMEA accounts.

Committee Chair Reports:

Finance-Audit-Rate Committee (FAR) – Damon Lockhart, Chair.

Lockhart said, "We did not meet."

Engineering – Construction – Energy Services Committee – Enno Heuscher, Chair.

Heuscher said, "We did not meet. We will meet next month."

CEO Johnston elaborated on next month's meeting. He said, "We have a Work Plan for 2025. With vegetation [management] we have big game plans, and we'll get into a multi-year cycle. "It's a heavy agenda."

Member Relations Committee – Kevin Williams, Chair.

Williams said, "We met last week. There are three main topics. (#1) Member Ap-

preciation, we are going to do Friday Night Lights. We will partner with the school districts and have a free night for the communities. We think it's going to be a cool evening, multigenerational [event]. We want to give \$2,000 to each school district for specific activities." (#2) Scholarships, 2019 was the last time scholarships were reviewed. For 2025 we want to increase all scholarships to \$5,000. Typically, they have been \$2,000 - \$3,000. And we want to add a new scholarship, a Character Scholarship." (#3) General framework on Unclaimed Capital Credits. Williams said, "We want to meet with the whole board and go over Unclaimed Capital Credits. Looking down the road, the logic [for awards]. We can meet after the first of the year."

Board President Stacia Cannon suggested, "At a regular meeting that is light [on agenda items]."

Williams said, "The board has indicated several ways that we want to get the funds out to the community. The committee proposes the Annual Meeting be held on June 12, 2025, somewhere in Delta County." The motion to approve June 12, 2025, as the date for the Annual Meeting was approved unanimously.

Executive Committee – Stacia Cannon, Chair Cannon said, "The Executive Committee did not meet, so there is nothing to report."

Informational Item (Non-Privileged CEO Report) – CEO Jack Johnston.

Johnston passed around recently received county fair thank you notes that were sent to DMEA (purchase of 4-H animals) and touched briefly on recent training (CPR, lineman, RESAP). Johnston said, "There were no major event days this month. We can thank Mother Nature for that. Systems designs are not as strong, we are four weeks out on jobs. Charge Point has had a big jump. We don't know if it's tourism [related]. There is no new movement on energy assessments. Energy efficiency goes in waves and there's not a lot of movement." Staff contributed, "When people worry about a big bill, it opens the door for discussion."

Williams asked what percent of (Montrose) LED street lighting has been completed. Johnston said, "It's a three to five year project. I think we're in year

Continued next pg

DMEA TO CONSIDER USE OF UNCLAIMED CAPITAL CREDITS From previous pg

in year three. I don't know the percentage."

DMEA continues to improve in the area of cyber metrics. Johnston said, "We're excited. The last two months we were 100 percent. It's harder to trip us up with phishing." Johnston laughed and said, "We have a Phishing Derby. You don't want the trophy. I won't tell you who has it now. We police ourselves well and two months at 100 percent is fantastic."

Johnston continued sharing short bits of information taken from his written report. He said, "We have 136 FTE and new hires are starting. Operation and maintenance are under budget. In marketing we had the Garnet Mesa groundbreaking. Hydro is more productive. We had a good hydro season. There's some downward pressure on equity. Deferrals impact the balance sheet. Bottom line, we are using a lot of cash, but we are doing a lot of things. A good month overall."

The ending balance for Unclaimed Capital Credits is \$712,767.85. Johnston said, "It's always a very interesting discussion on the board level [how to use Unclaimed Capital Credits]. There are not many restrictions — operations, education, non-profits, whatever." CREA CEO Kent Singer agreed to survey other co-ops as to where they use their Unclaimed Capital Credits.

Informational Item (Non-Privileged Legal Report) – Attorney Sarah Abbott.

Abbott said, "We've been working on contracts and real estate related to Garnet Mesa. We've continued working on policies. [With] regulatory there is nothing new; then is nothing new on litigation." The Garnet Mesa air strip was discussed as to whether it was decommissioned, suspended, or temporarily closed. It was determined the correct terminology is temporarily closed.

Informational Item Director Reports Western United Electrical Supply (WUES) Report – Jock Fleming.

In Fleming's absence, Lockhart said, "They meet this Thursday. I'll cover the meeting." It was noted that Fleming is up for an officer position with WUES.

Colorado Rural Electric Association

(CREA) Report – Damon Lockhart.

Lockhart said, "We do not meet in July. There is a sign up for the Innovations Summit circulating."

Conferences, Webinars & Meetings

There were no reports. Lockhart and Sanchez gave a brief overview of the activities at the Delta and Montrose county fairs and DMEA's purchase of 4-H animals.

Defining Net Metering:

As defined by Solar Energy Industries Association, **net metering** allows residential and commercial customers who generate their own electricity from solar power to sell the electricity they aren't using back into the grid. Many states have passed net metering laws.

Colorado Rural Electric Association – Kent Singer, CEO

Singer said that this was his 20th co-op visit. Referring to the presence of the media Singer said, "My goal is to not say anything quote worthy!"

Singer continued, "I have three topics. Employee changes, net metering, and general previews for 2025. We have 11 full-time and two part-time. We had two significant departures. We have interviews this Friday. Net metering, there was a working group meeting earlier this year, it came to a head about a year ago." Singer gave a recap about the delivery charges for net metering considered by different coops, as well as the efforts by Governor Polis to assemble 30 stakeholders to study and resolve the issues. Singer said, "It was a great discussion on net metering, but that doesn't mean we resolved anything. Some coops are subsidizing net metering. 'It's just a good discussion.'"

On CREA legislative matters there is discussion on public safety power shutoffs. Singer said, "I think the focus is on Xcel and Black Hills. This [upcoming] election is not likely to change a lot. There will be a new focus after the election. We are keeping our ears to the ground. There is a huge concern about fire and liability."

NRECA MIP Select Training Presentation – Chad Stickler, Safety Director.

Stickler attended a two-week leadership program and part of his training required

a formal presentation, which he was then asked to present to the DMEA board. Stickler said, "Building energy storage systems is several years out. My criteria was self-imposed. [I wanted to show] the value to DMEA and how it is related to safety." Stickler used a PowerPoint presentation.

Board President Cannon recognized Atlasta Solar Center sales representative Isaac Ketcham. Representing the solar industry Ketcham said, "We want to be part of the conversation [energy storage systems]. We want to be at the table."

Member Comments:

During Member Comments Ketcham continued with his conversation on solar installations. He noted that, because of numerous incentives, the Western Slope is a prime location for solar companies. Promotion for solar in this [targeted] area is presented to potential customers as "Energy is supposed to pay for itself."

While some board members referred to the solar buildout activity in the area as "scams," Ketcham chose his words carefully and was not willing to discredit others in his industry. He said, "There are some out-of-state operators causing problems, especially in the Grand Junction area." Ketcham cited three projects by companies in Gunnison which were not satisfactory, and his company (Atlasta) has now been contracted to fix the problems. Ketcham said, "It's not who's doing business, it's who's still at the party." Ketcham threw a word of caution to residents who sign contracts electronically. He said, "It's difficult for homeowners to get out of [those] contracts."

Background: Throughout the summer DMEA has made great efforts to raise awareness to their membership concerning ongoing issues with out-of-state solar doorknockers.

Grand Mesa Nordic Council Unclaimed Capital Credit Donation Request.

Christie Aschwanden and Ben Graves, representatives from the Grand Mesa Nordic Council, presented their \$40,000 capital funding donation request from the unclaimed capital credit fund.

Continued next pg

DMEA TO CONSIDER USE OF UNCLAIMED CAPITAL CREDITS From previous pg

Board Group Photo – Postponed until all board members are present.

Executive Session

- Confidential Corporate, Litigation and Regulatory Matters
- Grand Mesa Nordic Council Unclaimed Capital Credit Donation Request.
- Bylaws Review

Executive Session Summary –Amy Taylor, Chief of Staff.

In an email Taylor summarized the action taken by the board after exiting the executive session:

“Upon motion by Director Metheny, seconded by Director Williams, the Board unanimously approved a \$20,000 donation to the Grand Mesa Nordic Council from the unclaimed capital credit fund. There were no additional items from Executive Session to address. Having no further business to conduct, the Board adjourned its Regular Meeting at 8:32 p.m.”

Dist. 1 – Ryan Sedgeley, 370-220-6086 ryan.sedgeley@dmea.com

Dist. 2 - Steve Metheny, 970-209-6172, steve.metheny@dmea.com

Dist. 3 – Jacob Gray, 970-778-9512, jacob.gray@dmea.com

Dist. 4 – Emily Sanchez, 970-209-4582, emily.sanchez@dmea.com

Dist. 5 – Kevin Williams, 406-839-1603, kevin.williams@dmea.com

Dist. 6 - Damon Lockhart, 970-314-1071, damon.lockhart@dmea.com

Dist. 7 – Enno Heuscher, 970-270-6523, enno.heuscher@dmea.com

Dist. 8 - (North Region) Stacia Cannon, 920-207-8831, stacia.cannon@dmea.com

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

WE NEED MORE INDIVIDUALS LIKE MR. VALERIO TO STEP UP, DO THE RIGHT THING

Editor:

It is certainly refreshing and encouraging when an individual here in Montrose that has been elected to a public position actually stands up for the taxpayer. Such was the case last Monday night at the Montrose School Board meeting when board member Ted Valerio noted that he was unable to support the bond measure of

\$198+million for a new Montrose county high school. Most taxpayers at this point are unaware that the bond measure could cap out at \$395 million. Frankly even proposing such an expenditure in the current economy highlights the fact that the Superintendent, Board Chair, and the majority of the board are fiscally irresponsible with no concern for the tax burden voters

currently bare. If passed individual families, renters and all of our businesses will be hit with staggering tax increases.

We certainly need more individuals like Mr. Valerio to step up and be willing to do the right thing for Montrose taxpayers. Thank you Ted for caring enough to stand on principle against the odds.

Dee Laird, Montrose

CITY OFFICIALS ARE MAKING MONTROSE A MORE EXPENSIVE PLACE TO LIVE

Editor:

Why is it that the city is allowing a brand NEW COMPANY only formed in August 2024 to have the bid on the City Building?

Who gets the Kickbacks from that and what happened to the Deal with the other company that was to purchase the building?

I find the oddities of HOW THE CITY OFFICIALS are all in the money pockets and using their clout to make it SO EXPENSIVE to live in Montrose a disgrace to REAL LOCALS who started the little community that is NOW AN ELITE RICH area that the locals can not longer afford to live there.

Jan Harvey, Montrose

REJECT THE APPLICATION OF THE MONTROSE CLASSICAL ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

Dear Editor,

Charter schools are important tools for districts to employ when certain students' needs are not being met through traditional schooling. Passages and Vista are two great examples of serving specific student populations. I am confused, though, by a charter school application that wants to cater to a "content-rich, directed curriculum" and seek a "core knowledge" approach to teaching. Aren't these already central values of our school district?

The proponents of MCA want to base their program on Liberty Common School in Fort Collins. The LC High School is ranked #3 in Colorado High Schools by US News and World Report.¹ However, it does not appear that Liberty Common accepts English Learners, Students with Disabilities, students identified for a READ plan or students eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch.² That is like saying your school gymnastic team has a high ranking because its roster consists solely of Olym-

pic champions.

Every week for many years, The Rotary Club of Montrose has celebrated seniors in Montrose and Olathe. These are exceptional students, earning scholarships to attend universities across the nation. These students have very rigorous academic schedules and are involved in a number of extracurricular activities. More and more of these students have disabilities, learned English as a second language or come from low-income homes. To me, this is the definition of success of our existing system, not failure.

These hard-working students are role models for other students in the community. I don't understand why we would want some of our best and brightest students to be segregated in a separate building for their schooling. I can't understand why we would want to make it more difficult for all students to access advance level classes. I fail to see why we would hire extra teachers, rent more space and create more administration to

serve students who already have many opportunities within the current system. It is easier and far less expensive to add Latin to our existing curriculum than to recreate a "content-rich" curriculum in a separate venue.

I also don't understand how this segregation serves the students well. Fully integrated schools teach students more than Math and English. They prepare students to live in a world with people who have a wide variety of skills and outlooks. How will students function in their adult lives if they are not exposed to other students with disabilities, low family incomes and different first languages? How can they have a "deep appreciation and understanding of the American culture and heritage" if they only see a small slice of it?

I urge you to reject the application of the Montrose Classical Academy Charter School. We need fewer silos in our education system, not more.

*Thank you for your time and attention,
Emily Schneider, Montrose*

OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

MOUNTAIN LIONS ARE PROVEN TO BE THE ETHICAL DEER AND ELK HUNTER'S BEST FRIEND

Editor:

The ballot measure to protect mountain lions from trophy hunting and bobcats from baiting and fur trapping for their pelts is a crucial step towards protecting the state's billion-dollar deer and elk hunting and wildlife-watching industries from the devastating effects of chronic wasting disease (CWD).

CWD is a neurodegenerative disease posing a significant threat to Colorado's deer, elk, and moose. It is transmitted through direct contact or exposure to contaminated environments (42 of 51 deer herds and 17 of 42 elk herds in the state are infected).

Mountain lions and bobcats play a vital role in regulating ungulate populations and in cleansing them of CWD. Continuing to sanction highly commercialized trophy hunting and commercial fur trapping of native cats in Colorado will mean 500 fewer lions and 2,000 fewer bobcats to cleanse CWD-infected cervids and ultimately to strengthen the health and viability of deer and elk populations.

Over the 50-year horizon, if we keep these commercial kills of native cats going, CWD mortality may increase to the point that hunting of deer and elk in parts of Colorado will no longer be possible. Given that all human attempts to control CWD have failed, mountain lions are a deer and elk hunter's best friend.

In the coming decades, CWD will become a bigger and bigger national issue far beyond Colorado, especially if it becomes zoonotic and infects people or livestock, like CWD's first cousin, Mad Cow Disease did 25 years ago.

By protecting mountain lions and bobcats from wasteful trophy hunts and fur traps, Colorado is taking a proactive approach to prevent the spread of CWD. This decision aligns with the growing consensus among wildlife experts and conservationists that the health of our ecosystems depends on the preservation of all species, including predators.

Learn more about the [vital role of mountain lions to combat CWD in Colorado](#) – a disease without a cure that is always fatal.

Sincerely,

Jim Keen, DVM, Ph.D.

Director of Veterinary Sciences for The Center for a Humane Economy, which is one of 100 organizations endorsing the [Cats Aren't Trophies](#) measure based in Grand County.



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

SMART IS BECOMING LESS COMMON IN AMERICAN POLITICS AND MEDIA

Dear editor,

My critical thinking professor in college had one saying I adopted...you can't fix stupid.

Smart is becoming less common in American politics and media.

I wonder if the people of the United States are going to be able to regain smart sense before the next election.

Thomas Jefferson said, "The government you elect is the government you deserve.

This nation was not built on confusion, or evil, or immorality, or hatred, or irresponsibility, or corruption, or deep state, or weaponized bureaucracy.

This country was built by honest, compassionate Christian people.

Yet, look where we are today.

Stupid is electing a president who is on the verge of senility and giving him access to the nuclear codes, then before his term is up to stupidly throw him under the bus.

Stupid is then dragging the bottom of the swamp....and dredging up a replacement who is unintelligent and without a shred of wisdom.

Stupid is then for her to pick a "valor thief" and pathological liar for a running mate.

Stupid is having a military commander who will deliberately leave 13 soldiers behind to die and to leave billions of dollars worth of perfectly operating war machines behind in the hands of an enemy that wants nothing more than to see you dead.

Stupid is letting terrorists who want nothing more than to see us dead come across the southern border in large numbers and that we....we.....are going to pay an unbelievable cryptic high price for it.

Stupid is defunding the police.

Stupid is not prosecuting shoplifters no matter the size of their theft.

Stupid is taking citizens' guns away so that only the bad guys will have guns.

Stupid is to let non citizens vote at any level ... If you're going to do that you might as well hand over the government and the keys to all the buildings.

Stupid is to let a group called the "squad" having a seat at the table running our country when they openly admit hating America.

Stupid is not treating government budgets just like you do your household budget.

Live within your means.

Stupid is being the oil richest nation in the world and buying oil from someone who wants nothing more than to see you dead.

Stupid is selling uranium for nuclear weapons to an enemy that wants nothing more than to see you dead

Stupid is pushing something called "artificial intelligence" on the next generation creating a critical loss of direct experience.

In our digital age, many experiences are already virtual rather than tangible.

This detachment from the physical world

will hinder our descendants' innate ability to use common sense.

This plague will do more harm to humanity than the Internet.

Mike Rowe of "Dirty Jobs" fame sounded alarm bells on the nationwide blue-collar worker shortage, warning there are significant national security implications for the country when American hands on skills plummet as a result of artificial intelligence.

Mike further discussed his concern stemming from the shortage and how it relates to national security and the country's debt, highlighting the importance of domestic production and a "balanced workforce."

"The more immediate mathematical problem revolves around the numbers five and two," Rowe said.

"Every year, for every five tradespeople who retire, two people replace them."

This has been going on for about 18 years, and the math has become so critical and so under-reported.

You can't find a single major corporation today who relies to some degree on skilled labor that isn't struggling to hire. There is no doubt that artificial intelligence will make it critical.

Oh I could go on for at least another hour but....

This is an election year.

What are you going to do about it?

Bob Stollsteimer, Montrose



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A full-page photograph of Larry Don Suckla, a man wearing a cowboy hat, a plaid shirt, a grey vest, and blue jeans. He is standing on a stage, holding a microphone in his right hand and gesturing with his left hand. Behind him is a large framed picture of a mountain landscape with a lake and autumn-colored trees. The text of the advertisement is overlaid on the right side of the image.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

CITY ANNOUNCES LABOR DAY CLOSURES

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE — The City of Montrose will be closed Monday, Sept. 2, in observance of Labor Day. City Hall, the Downtown Visitor Center, Municipal Court, Animal Shelter, Montrose Pavilion, and Public Works will all close in observance of the holiday.

Police Department offices will be closed but officers will be on duty and responding to calls.

The Black Canyon Golf Course will be open. The Rusty Putter restaurant, located at the golf course, will be open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., along with the snack bar.

The city's [trash and recycling collection schedule](#) for the holiday week has been modified.

For trash routes normally scheduled for Monday, Sept. 2, residences south of San Juan Avenue and U.S. Highway 50 will receive trash collection services on Tuesday, Sept. 3.

For residences north of San Juan Avenue and U.S. Highway 50, trash pickup will occur on Wednesday, Sept. 4.

The recycling collection normally scheduled for Monday, September 2, will instead occur on Friday, Sept. 6.

For more information, contact City Hall at 240.1400.

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

DEMOCRATS CALL REPUBLICANS 'NAZIS,' YET THEY ARE THE ONES FOLLOWING THE NAZI PROPAGANDA PLAYBOOK

Editor:

Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels taught that if you repeat a lie often enough it becomes the truth. How ironic that Democrats call Republicans "Nazis," yet they are the ones following the Nazi propaganda playbook. Push the lies until they become the truth. Fling open the border for four years and claim the border is closed. Waste trillions of unfunded dollars on wild spending bills and "free stuff" to buy votes, and tell us inflation is low and grocery prices are not sky-high, or blame it on "evil corporations." Cut off our domestic oil supply and buy it from our enemies, and blame the resulting historic price increases on "evil oil companies." Trample the Constitution by transferring billions of dollars of student loan debt from privileged college deadbeats to hard-working Americans who pay off their own loans, and then brag about defying the Supreme Court. Put tampons in boys' restrooms and label Republicans "weird". Allow men in women's sports and tell us their party opposes violence against women.

The blatant lies were apparent in the Democrat National Convention, including continuous lies about Trump: The oft-repeated assertion that Trump called neo-Nazis "very fine people" – debunked time and time again by even liberal fact-checkers like Snopes and Politifact. Biden being his usual lying self saying he "rebuilt the middle class," claiming inflation was "down, way down," saying Americans "are safer today than under Donald Trump," and on and on. Kamala had more than her share of whoppers in her speech, including Trump and Project 2025, Trump planning to cut Social Security and Medicare, "Trump will do anything to ban abortion nationwide," etc.

The most shameless lies involve the political rebrand of Kamala Harris. Suddenly we are to ignore her on-the-record stances on a wide array of topics. We are supposed to be excited about her "joy" and "good vibes", and not worry about hiding her record and policy positions. We are also to pretend that the Biden-Harris administra-

tion isn't currently happening. (So, you are running on the promise to fix the problems that you and your party created, and won't fix now while you have the power to fix them? Got it.) We are also to not believe our own eyes regarding her abilities. The Peter Principle states that a person rises to the point of their incompetence. Harris is at least several levels beyond that point. Besides being a Marxist and an economic illiterate, she is a constant gaff machine. She cannot answer unscripted questions. Her answers are unintelligible word salads. All the scripting in the world cannot hide her total lack of competence. Trump and Vance are giving multiple unscripted interviews on a daily basis with hostile media because they have the intelligence to do so. Kamala does not.

Like Goebbels, the Democrats hope to get away with their constant barrage of lies because they have a tremendous propaganda machine working full time for them. The word "bias" no longer describes our mainstream media. Bias means an inclination, leaning, or preference. The media no longer just prefers Democrats, they are Democrats. Take how they covered Biden. From January 2021 to the debate in June 2024 Biden was sharp, agile, and detail-oriented. From then to July 20, Biden was suddenly senile and cognitively compromised. From the 21st of July following his withdrawal from the race, he was back to being capable of running the country, in addition to suddenly becoming selfless.

Unfortunately, the Grand Junction Sentinel and the Montrose Daily Press are not that much different from the national media. Following is a letter I recently sent to the GJS.

(Start of letter) The 8/25 editorial "Truth is the only standard" is very revealing. I have been sending the GJSentinel a weekly analysis of their opinion pages for the last month. That analysis included the political cartoons, guest columns, and GJS staff editorials, and consistently showed very few (~ 10%) even remotely critical of Democrats and a much larger number (~43%) critical of Republicans – many harshly so. The balance (47%) were either

neutral or not political. Publisher Jay Seaton has indicated that he might view certain articles differently than my analysis, but has not challenged the overall accuracy of my numbers or my conclusion that the Sentinel reporting overwhelming favors Democrats.

The editorial reveals that the reason their reporting is anti-Republican is that "truth is the only standard," and according to them, the truth is, Republicans are "more prone to lies, exaggerations, and wacky statements." "We report, you decide" has been replaced with "We know Republicans are a "threat to democracy," so we will decide, and only report what we define as the truth."

I assume with this revelation, the Sentinel will be revising its published "Core Values" which read: "Journalists' role is not to determine what they believe to be the truth and reveal only that to their readers, but rather to report as completely and impartially as possible all verifiable facts so that readers can, based on their own knowledge and experience, determine what they believe to be the truth."

The editorial also indicates that their role is to provide a check on Fox News, as opposed to a check on the government? The Soviet Union's newspaper Pravda was the official mouthpiece of the Communist Party, and disseminated state-approved propaganda rather than actual objective journalism. "Pravda" means "truth" in Russian. Like the GJS, they only reported their version of that "truth." (End of letter)

I had similar discussions with the publisher of the MDP over a year ago when I analyzed their political cartoons for a full year: Over 46% were strongly pro-Democrat, while only 5% were even remotely pro-Republican. The publisher indicated to me that: "This back and forth on whether or not we are conservative enough for you is not productive," but didn't really challenge the accuracy of the analysis.

At least the Sentinel admitted (perhaps unintentionally) in an editorial that they are only publishing their version of the truth.

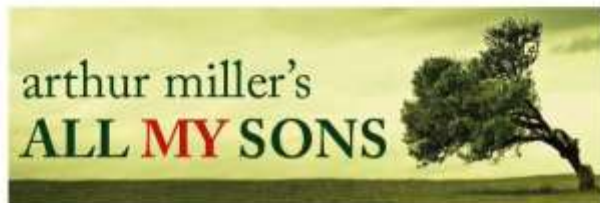
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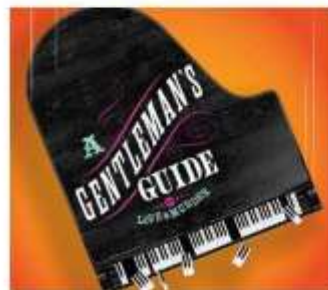
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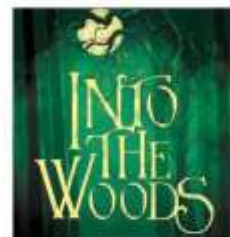
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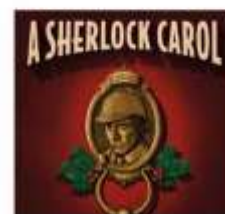
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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

PLEASE REMEMBER HIS DISGRACEFUL CONDUCT ON ELECTION DAY

Editor:

The convicted felon running for the U.S. presidency as a Republican has again, within the space of a month, disrespected our fallen service members. Earlier in August, he uttered the pernicious lie that the civilian Medal of Freedom is "much better" than the Medal of Honor. Now, he's broken the law by holding a nakedly political campaign event in our most sacred shrine, Arlington National Cemetery. This individual must never again hold the title of commander-in-chief of our Armed Forces. He has shown by words and deeds over the years that he is unworthy of that role by virtue of his unremitting contempt for our military and veterans. Fellow veterans (and all citizens), please remember his disgraceful conduct on Election Day.

*George Bacon
USMC Vietnam*

THE TIME TO FIX IT IS NOW, AND NOT NEXT YEAR

Editor:

During a BOCC meeting last December, Sheriff Lillard noted that he was losing deputies to other competing entities primarily because of better pay schedules and retirement programs. Yes, Sheriff Lillard's comments certainly should have raised red flags concerning public safety in Montrose County.

At a BOCC meeting on April 3 the BOCC approved an adjustment for deputies to \$63,000 annually. That "adjustment" was achieved, not by additional funding, but by deleting for budgeted FTEs, two of which were deputies and two of which were jail personnel and once again no consideration was given to the possibility of the MCSO moving to the FPPA retirement program, which has been another one of the prime reasons for the hemorrhaging of deputies to other competing entities for their own and families financial and long term welfare. Unfortunately, once again only a minimal improvement. The Montrose Police Department increase is starting right at \$80,000 including their FPPA retirement program which has been in existence for several years.

In the ensuing months the Sheriff Department has lost an inconceivable 36% of their road deputies to the Montrose police department and other agencies simply because they are unable to compete locally, regionally and even nationally to retain and hire qualified deputies.

Until such time as the commissioners decide to take definitive action to enable our sheriff's department to compete on a broader basis our public safety and officer safety remain at great risk. Waiting to correct this pay, retention and retirement in half measures will only increase a loss of personnel. The time to fix it is now. and not next year.

Dee Laird, Montrose

WHAT IF NO ONE SHOWED UP?

Editor:

Do you know what? What would have happened when our colony tried to break away from the tyranny of King George & the British Empire and no one showed up. Oh, we talked mean, but our everyday lives could not be interrupted. You know what? Tina Peters had a few dedicated supporters inside the courtroom, supporting her, but when there should have been 10's of thousands outside in the street, no one showed up. I know because I was the only one that did, nearly. We do not deserve her. She was/is, evidently, the only one of us that was willing to risk her freedom in the quest for freedom. No more words for her, and now she is going to prison for us and for her convictions. Evidently, she is the only one of us that actually believes in actions and not more mean words. Evidently, to her, "give me liberty, I will not live on my knees," is more than a motto, but not to us.

Don Hemme, Redvale



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MONTROSE CLASSICAL ACADEMY

Facts About This Tuition-Free Public Classical Charter School

- There is no type of qualification for enrollment in MCA; ALL in our community are welcome.
- There will be NO religious affiliation of any type involved with MCA.
- Charter schools enroll by blind lottery; however, they are allowed to offer a weighted preference for children who qualify for free and reduced lunch.
- Like Montrose district schools, charter schools operate on PPR (per pupil revenue); unlike district schools, charter schools must pay for their facilities through PPR.
- Everyone's tax burden for public education in CO is the same. The education of students currently attending schools in MCSD is partially paid for by their parents' tax money and that of many others in town; the same will be true for students attending MCA.
- Students' electronic devices, such as phones, iPads, and other related items will not be allowed in the Grammar School classrooms.
- Uniforms will be required; if cost is an issue, financial assistance will be available.

- Students at all learning levels will be adequately challenged by our curriculum and encouraged to excel; expectations will be high.
- Special needs students, including those with IEPs (individualized education plans), will be welcomed and accommodated by MCA.
- Our teachers will all be degreed, thoroughly vetted, and well qualified to teach in their subject matter area; all Special Ed teachers and PARAs will be state certified.
- The curriculum in MCA will be broad and comprehensive and modeled after that of Liberty Common Charter School in Fort Collins. Curriculum maps are available to view on our website, www.montroseclassical.org.
- MCA must adhere to all CO state requirements regarding testing and assessments.
- As a CO charter school, MCA will be granted waivers in curriculum, scheduling, discipline standards, and hiring qualifications. This school will have a separate Governing Board able to direct policies specifically involving MCA, providing more local guidance and parent input.
- Parent involvement will be a critical part of MCA; we will encourage parents to be on the Governing Board and to be active participants in their children's education.
- The "Core Knowledge Sequence" will include phonics, language arts, Singapore math, cursive writing, history, geography, fine arts, music, physical education, and Latin.
- Instruction and elective classes in technology will be available in the upper grades.

- The application for this charter school will be submitted to the MCSD Board of Education in mid-September. It must be reviewed by a District Accountability Committee that includes experienced charter reviewers and will ultimately be voted on by the school board members.
- MCA aims to be a cooperative partner with the Montrose County School District and enrich the educational opportunities for all students in Montrose and Olathe.

MCA Founding Board: Kay Alexander, Joe Fockler, Katherine Sharman, Becky Waugh

OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

KAMALA HARRIS: HER VALUES HAVEN'T CHANGED

Editor;

Remember her comment, "my values haven't changed" straight from her soft powder puff so-called interview on CNN. Kamala Harris had a record of pushing Left-Wing positions on the biggest legal issues as California AG. According to law professor Josh Blackman, She led a group of Democrat attorneys general in 2013 to OPPOSE a Michigan BAN on sex and race-based preferences in education. She argued the bans violate the Equal Protection Clause, but in 2023 the Supreme Court struck down the use of racial preferences in college admissions as a violation of the equal protection clause. So not surprisingly, she had that backwards. Of course never to accept a lawful stance by the Democrat cabal, that prompted the Biden-Harris team to "weigh" the background of a student, with their masterful word salads including racial experiences to "skirt the ruling". Remember her comment, "my values haven't changed"!

Harris joined a coalition of democratic attorneys general in 2013 to defend "buffer" zones around abortion clinics in Massachusetts that prevented pro-life advocates from engaging in sidewalk counseling. She also backed a California law that forced pro-life pregnancy centers to actually advertise abortions! She initiated the investigation into pro-life journalist David Daleiden, whose undercover videos exposed Planned Parenthood's involvement in fetal tissue trafficking. Remember her comment, "my values haven't changed"!

In 2013 Harris officiated the state's first same-sex wedding. When same-sex marriage came before the Supreme Court in the 2015 Obergefell v Hodges case, Harris joined an amicus brief with other Democrat attorneys general urging the right of same-sex couples to marry. Harris also worked "behind the scenes" to push forward a policy enabling inmates to obtain gender transition surgeries. (Of course paid for with your tax money!) She also co-sponsored the Equality Act, which would make sexual orientation and gender identity prohibited categories of discrimination under federal civil rights law which enables men to access female-only spaces, such as locker rooms and bathrooms and to compete in women's sports. And she continues to fight state bans on sex-change surgeries for minors in the courts. Remember her comment, "my values haven't changed"!

In 2012 Harris led 10 other states in opposing Arizona's immigration laws. The Biden-Harris injustice department sued Texas in January to prevent the state from enforcing a law permitting local and state authorities to arrest migrants who enter the U.S. illegally. The DOJ also sued Iowa in May to fight a similar law allowing the state authorities to arrest and charge illegal migrants who have outstanding deportation orders or reentered after previously being denied access. And all this and more from Vice President Harris who owns the title "border czar! Just remember her comment, "my values haven't changed"! And to add insult to injury she must think voters' values are dumb enough to want another Vice President who's in the pockets of China.

Jerry Bartholome, Montrose



OPINION/EDITORIAL: COMMENTARY

PROTECT WILD CATS FROM SENSELESS USE

Editor:

I am the Tribal Policy Director for the International Wildlife Coexistence Network, which is among the 100 wildlife conservation organizations endorsing the Cats Aren't Trophies measure designed to protect mountain lions from trophy hunting for their heads, and bobcats from fur trapping to sell their coats on the luxury fur market.

I'm Yankton Dakota member of the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux tribes of Northeastern Montana.

I'm happy to see a citizen initiative to allow the voters of Colorado to choose protections for a wildlife species that should be held in trust for all citizens.

Mountain lions and wild cats have intrinsic value in and of themselves.

Mountain lions and wild cats are an important part of the natural world and key to the balance of nature and our non-human relatives.

Lions and wild cats should exist and thrive in their natural habitat and their self-regulating populations without human persecution.

As 2-leggeds we must recognize that we are a part of the natural world too and not separate from it.

It is our responsibility as humans to recognize, honor and maintain our balance in the natural world and to coexist with our non-human relatives. And allow them to play their natural role in this balance.

In the pursuit of wildlife and human coexistence it is our job to change human behavior when excessive use is at play.

As an indigenous person concerned with and raised in a framework of right relationship with the natural world, I find trophy hunting and egocentric activity upends nature's natural balance.

I support the people's right to participate in the Democratic process to protect wild cats from senseless use. I prefer that in the public trust of these wild animals we allow them to roam free for the enjoyment of all.

J Dallas Gudgell is Wildlife and Tribal Policy Director for the International Wildlife Coexistence Network, which is among the 100 wildlife conservation organizations endorsing the Cats Aren't Trophies



J Dallas Gudgell. Courtesy photo.

measure. Gudgell is an experienced environmental scientist and member of the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes. He is originally from the Fort Peck Reservation.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

WESTERN COLORADO UNIVERSITY HONORS MARC CATLIN

Special to the Mirror

DENVER – Marc Catlin received Western Colorado University Rural Legislative Champion Award. The award was presented to Representative Marc Catlin in Crested Butte, CO. Representative Catlin was honored with the award from Western for his efforts on ensuring rural higher education received fair funding from the state of Colorado. The award states “in appreciation and recognition of your loyal dedication and service to Western Colorado University.”

Representative Marc Catlin has represented all of Gunnison County since 2022, when the redistricting commission incorporated Gunnison in House District 58. During that time, Rep. Catlin has brought forth several bills that help or will help with rural higher education.

For instance, Catlin ran and passed the Transfer From Severance Tax Operations Cash Fund bill (SB23-250), which appropriated \$4 million to Western Colorado University to provide additional teaching and laboratory space for the University’s pet-

roleum geology program and to allow for the expansion of the natural and environmental sciences department. Catlin also passed the Higher Education Crisis and Suicide Prevention (HB23-1007) bill, which placed crisis and suicide prevention contact information on college student identification cards.

In 2022, Catlin passed the Opportunities for Credential Attainment (SB22-192) Act, which worked with institutions to create “stackable credential pathways.” In other words, schools can create pathways, which enables students to earn-and-learn. A student can turn a short-term certificate in cyber security to credits toward an associate degree in information systems technology, on their way to a bachelor’s degree in computer information systems.

Representative Catlin says, “It is an honor to be presented with the Western Colorado University Rural Legislative Champion Award. I was excited when Gunnison was drawn in to the 58th. My office has done everything that we could to represent Gunnison and Western at the

Capitol. I truly believe that we need to make the investments in our young people so that they can continue to thrive and be able to stay, if they would like, in this great place that we call home.”

Colorado State Representative Marc Catlin represents the eight counties of Dolores, Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montezuma, Montrose, Ouray, and San Miguel. Representative Catlin is the Vice Chair of Agriculture, Water, & Natural Resources Committee, is a member of the Capital Development Committee, and is Ranking member of the Transportation, Housing & Local Government Committee.



Rep. Marc Catlin. Courtesy photo.




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**28 Elm Court
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This 4 bedroom home is spacious and enhanced with a fabulous gas fireplace in the living room, a separate formal dining area and a kitchen that opens to a multi use family room that is currently set up as a game room with pool table and great built-ins. The kitchen has updated appliances and it includes a washer & dryer. The home design is smart and iconic. You'll love the elegance of the walnut floors and the many solid wood pocket doors that allow a room or an area to be private if you desire. The primary suite has a built in dresser in the closet and a jetted tub for your relaxation in the en suite bathroom. The home is heated by hot water baseboard and cooled with an evaporative cooler.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

INJURY CRASH ON HIGHWAY 550 INVOLVING VEHICLE ELUDING FROM THE COLORADO STATE PATROL

CSP News Release

MONTROSE- On August 31, 2024 at approximately 1:40 AM on Highway 550 the Colorado State Patrol attempted to stop a Chevrolet pickup truck near Highway 550 and Columbia Way when it eluded law enforcement.

A Colorado State Patrol Trooper pursued the truck for less than 90 seconds when the truck collided with an uninvolved vehicle. As a result of that crash two parties in the uninvolved vehicle were transported to an area hospital with at least one sustaining serious injuries.

The suspect in the Chevrolet pickup fled the scene on foot and was not found. The suspect is described as a white male wearing a black t-shirt.

Montrose Police Department will be the leading investigating agency in this crash. If you have any additional information and have not spoken with investigators, please contact The Montrose Police Department at 970-249-9110.

MONTROSE POLICE DEPARTMENT CRITICAL INCIDENT INFORMATION RELEASE

Montrose Police Department News Release

MONTROSE-At approximately 0139 hours on August 31, 2024, a Trooper with Colorado State Patrol attempted to stop a vehicle in approximately the 200 block of South Townsend. The suspect vehicle fled running a red light at the intersection at South 12th and South Townsend Avenue, in the City of Montrose, CO. The suspect vehicle struck an uninvolved vehicle causing serious injuries to the victims.

There is currently no threat to public safety. Due to the ongoing investigation, the suspect's identity is not being disclosed at this time. The incident is under investigation by the 7th Judicial Critical Incident Investigation Team. The Colorado State Patrol's policy requires troopers involved in critical incidents to be placed on administrative leave pending the outcome of the investigation.

If you have any additional information that may help in the identification of the suspect involved, please contact WestCo Dispatch at 970-249-9110.

Further information will be provided by the 7th Judicial Critical Incident Investigative Team.

Contact Person: Sergeant Michelle Berry with the Montrose Police Department, mberry@montrosed.org.





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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

MY ANSWER TO BARB HULET

Editor:

Barb Hulet is someone who loves to engross herself in every conspiracy theory that comes along, especially if it involves the 2020 presidential election. She is an ardent supporter of Tina Peters (the convicted felon). But like all conspiracy theorists they like to leave a lot of facts out when they discuss these issues. So, I will discuss her accusations one at a time and include the facts she left out.

#1. By Barbs on admission the central committee did send an email on central committee assets (constant contact, web site, and using the central committee database) to advertise for an exclusive event where all the primary candidates were not invited. This is a violation of the bylaws. If the people who funded this exclusive event wanted it advertised, they should have taken out ads that they paid for. And not involved the central committee. I do not know how to explain it any better than that.

2: It is true that the central committee voted me out of the chair position at the February 2021 organizational meeting. But they also voted me in to the candidate support chair position. It is common for people to change positions at the re-organization meeting. Some people did not like the fact that I and other executive members pushed back on things that were divisive and in violation of the stated mission of the central committee. As to the receipts, that was all started by a lie from Kendra Jenkins who was treasurer in late

2021. The treasurer Nona Mayberry continued in that position for another approximately 6 months before Kindra took over. No one asked me about any receipts until the November 2021 meeting. At that meeting I asked about the tracer report because I had received a notice from the secretary of state that the tracer report had not been made. Kindra stated that she could not do the tracer report because I had not turned in all the receipts. I responded that is nonsense. You can file an incomplete report and amend it later rather than pay a fine. So, Kindra committed perjury and lied to the secretary of the state's office and claimed she was 15 days late filling (which is a \$750 dollar fine) because she had covid and the previous treasurer had not given her the log in information. At the November meeting she said nothing about being sick or about the log-in information.

3: At the thank you dinner at the Elks I let everyone know at the very beginning that at this event there would be no normal political discussions or political business. Just a thank you dinner for those who had worked hard turning out 91% of republican voters in Montrose County. The ELKS prefer to remain politically neutral. But Barb refused to accept that over my repeated objections. So, I allowed the vote and immediately after the event let her know we were not sending any money to Georgia for a recount. Paying for a non-automatic recount is a waste of money. They take the same ballots and run them

through the same machines and get the same results. Only a fool would waste money on that. Me and the other executive members looked at the Georgia issues and decided the best use of our money would be to send the Money to the two republican senators that still had a chance to win their runoff election. One of them kept the money, one of them sent it back. He did not realize it was legal. I researched it and made sure of it before we did it.

4: Barb is nonspecific about her claims here, so my only comment is about the secretary. She resigned and I did not ask why.

5: Barbs statement about Lauren Boebert is false. I spoke with Lauren and let her know she was welcome to address the committee for 5 minutes, which is the normal time allotted for candidates at our monthly meetings. She said that would not be enough time and scheduled her own event at another venue.

At a monthly meeting at about that time I let the central committee know that I as an individual would be supporting Scott Tipton in the CD3 primary.

The By-laws at that time allowed for this as the bylaws did not list federal offices in the neutrality clause. Scott Riba himself changed the neutrality clause in 2021. And that is why I find his hypocrisy so disturbing.

So, it is safe to say Barb Hulet does not like me because she could not bully me. And I am OK with that.

Ray Langston, Montrose



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COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

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Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-Ute Indian Museum | Sept. 21, 10 a.m. – 8 p.m. Join the Ute Indian Museum for its first Uncompahgre Pow-Wow! Hosted by the Western Slope Native American Resource Center and the Ute Indian Museum, the event offers visitors a chance to enter a dance contest, enjoy local food, and more. Over \$14,000 in prizes will be awarded with drawings for up to \$4,500 in prizes for all dancers who do not win first, second, or third in each of the dancing categories. Please note that parking at the museum is limited but a free shuttle will run every 15 minutes from the Target parking lot from 10:30 a.m. – 8 p.m.



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

NEW HIGH SCHOOL SHOULD BE DELAYED UNTIL MARKET CONDITIONS IMPROVE

Editor:

By now you have probably received a "Shaping the Future" mailer in your mailbox showing you why our taxpayers should have to bear the cost of building a new 200 million dollar High School campus in the middle of town. This full color, tri-fold brochure was professionally designed, printed, and mailed to you at your expense. It is intended to persuade you as to why you need to pay more for the right to own/rent your home. They tell us it's for the kids. The current High School is old and outdated. If we don't do it now, it will cost 400 million in 10 years. There is no mention as to whether or not our taxpayers can afford this project or how it will improve the quality of the education for the declining number of high school students enrolled. Nope. It's all about the sophisticated architectural design, the "view" and the "natural lighting".

They say our students deserve better. I agree. They deserve teachers who make a salary that is indicative of the important

job they do.

They deserve less administrators who drain the budgets of our Board of Education.

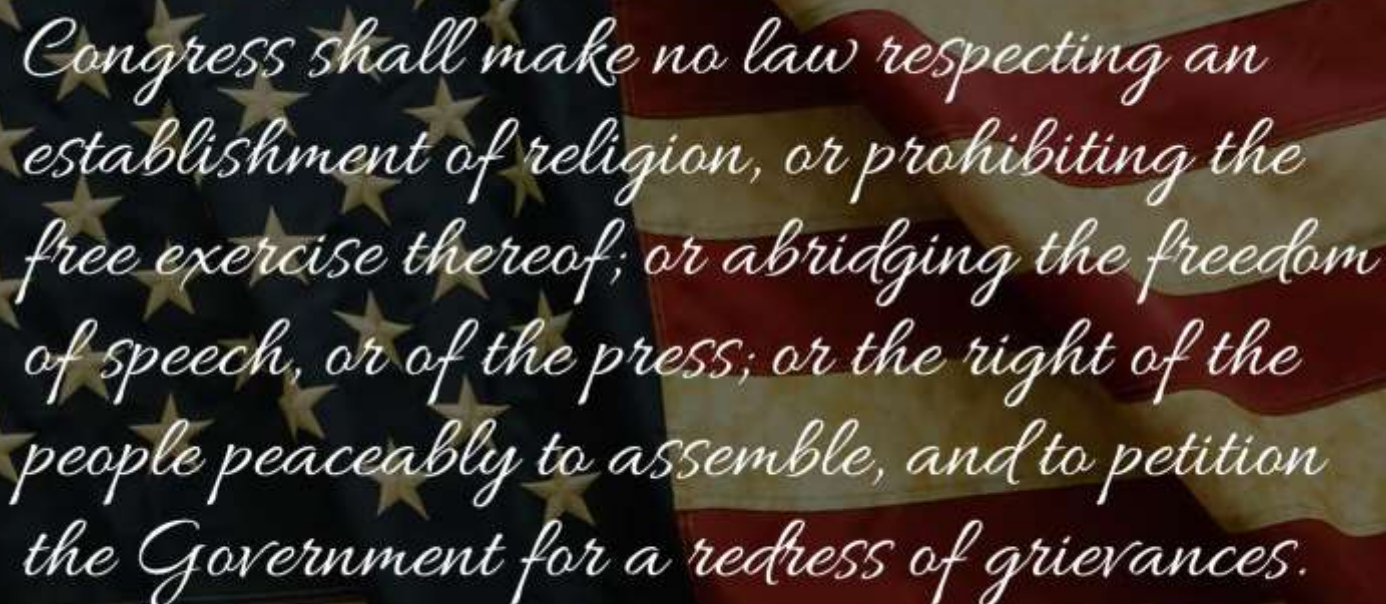
They deserve to continue to live in a stable home that is not threatened by property taxes that could force their parents to move.

A building made of bricks and mortar does not improve a student's education, educators do. Teachers, look around. Who stands to benefit from this project, you or the contractors who stand to make millions of dollars building it. Renters. Do you think you will not be affected? Your landlords will surely pass this tax along to you. Can you afford that? Seniors. What impact will this increase have on your fixed income budget? Veterans. How hard did you have to work to get a memorial location to honor your fallen brothers and sisters? A project of this magnitude will impact us all. It will burden our taxpayers with debt at a time when interest rates and construction prices are high.

A stunning new High School is a luxury we cannot afford right now. We need to keep our powder dry for expenditures that are absolutely necessary, that our taxpayers can afford, and that will serve the community as a whole. This is a decision that should be delayed until the natural economic cycle moves in our favor and market conditions improve. If we are going to teach our High School Students anything we should at least teach them that.

My name is Scott Mijares. I am the conservative Montrose County Commissioner candidate running unopposed in District 1. I have made my assessment on this issue based on the best information available to me. If you disagree and/or have information that supports the advancement of this project on the timeline proposed I would love to hear from you. Please email me at scottm4montrose@gmail.com. Of course if you agree and have something to add I would love to hear from you too.

Thank you,
Scott Mijares



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

US 550 PACO - BILLY WILDLIFE & SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT UPDATE



Paving of the new southbound passing lane near Pa-Co-Chu-Puk Campground is finished and crews are halfway through the construction of the wildlife underpass located at Billy Creek (Mile Points 114 to 115). CDOT Courtesy image.

Special to the Mirror

REGIONAL-Paving of the new southbound passing lane near Pa-Co-Chu-Puk Campground is finished and crews are halfway through the construction of the wildlife underpass located at Billy Creek (Mile Points 114 to 115). Crews will continue to finalize work on the Pa-Co-Chu-Puk passing lane, consisting of signage, delineation installation, and final soil stabilization.

Crews have started work on stage 2 of the underpass structure from MP 114 to MP 115. Traffic is switched to northbound lanes on US Highway 550 and can continue to see 15-minute delays.

Continuing into the fall, crews will work on landscaping, final signage, highway fencing, deer jump-outs, and deer guards between MP 112 and 115.

Traffic Impacts

Motorists and area residents can expect these general impacts for the duration of the project:

- Single lane closures and shoulder closures

will take place within the work zone

- Plan ahead and expect 15 minute delays

- 11 ft. lane width restrictions

- 24/7 alternating traffic

- Be aware of reduced speeds in work zone

- Travelers are urged to use caution and watch for workers and heavy equipment
- Construction schedules are weather dependent

- High traffic volume flows expected from 6 a.m. to 8 a.m. and from 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

- Intermittent county road and driveway closures for deer guard construction

- Single lane closures and shoulder closures during fencing operations as needed

- New passing lane alignment, right lane closures, passing prohibited during construction hours.

Project Overview

CDOT and contractor FNF Construction are making wildlife and mobility safety improvements to an 8-mile section of US 550 bordering Ridgway State Park from MP

109 - 117. Work includes the installation of wildlife mitigation features and shoulder widening for a southbound passing lane just south of the Pa-Co-Chu-Puk Campground.

Wildlife mitigation features include an underpass, fencing, jump outs, and deer guards throughout the corridor. These improvements are expected to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions by 85%. Additionally, the project will connect 3 miles of new deer fencing to existing features and will create 7 miles of wildlife safety corridor. Vehicles will be able to pass safely with the addition of a southbound passing lane near the Pa-Co-Chu-Puk Campground.

Stay Informed

For additional information about this project, contact the project team.

- Project Hotline: 970-360-1411

Project Email: us550wideningproject@gmail.com

Project webpage: www.codot.gov/projects/us550pacobilly

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

SWEITZER LAKE BEING DRAWN DOWN FOR DAM REPAIRS; BOAT RAMP CLOSING SEPT. 2



Special to the Mirror

DELTA, Colo. — Planned repairs to the spillway at [Sweitzer Lake State Park](#) are set to begin, and the lake has started to drain.

Construction on the spillway is set to begin this fall and will last through March. Because the water level is being lowered to complete construction, Colorado Parks and Wildlife will close the boat ramp at the lake the night of Sept. 2.

“We have started to drain the lake for construction, and the lake is already down about eight inches,” said Park Manager Scott Rist. “Some boats will already have issues launching.”

The water level will be reduced roughly six feet in total during construction. The 137-surface-acre lake will refill in the spring when the project is completed.

“This is an important project, and we thank the boating community for their understanding of the need to close the ramp at this time,” Rist said

The boat ramp at Sweitzer Lake State Park. The ramp will close this year the night of Sept. 2. Courtesy photo.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

"PEAR IT FORWARD" WITH FOOD BANK OF THE ROCKIES

Community members invited to harvest fresh pears and support hunger relief efforts

Special to the Mirror

DELTA— Food Bank of the Rockies is excited to invite the community to "Pear it Forward," a special event taking place on Saturday, Sept. 7, 2024, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Honey Rock Landing, located at 2444 Dominguez Canyon Road in Delta, Colorado. This unique experience offers participants the chance to pick fresh pears straight from the trees in a beautiful orchard setting while making a positive impact.

To support Food Bank of the Rockies' mission, attendees are encouraged to donate half of their harvested pears to the Food Bank. "We're thrilled to host 'Pear it Forward' at Honey Rock Landing, where the community can come together, have fun harvesting fresh pears, and support our mission simultaneously," said Gabriela Garayar, Food Bank of the Rockies Western Slope Senior Development Manager. "We believe our neighbors experiencing food insecurity should have access to nu-

tritious food and we're deeply grateful for community partners like Honey Rock Landing, who help create unique opportunities for the community to come together and give back." The Food Bank's culinary team will also prepare an on-site brunch featuring seasonal ingredients, including pears. The event is free, but space is limited. Community members are asked to register in advance by visiting foodbankrockies.org/ws or calling 970-438-4214.

FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN MOBILIZES FOR A MAJOR FOOD PACKING EVENT IN MONTROSE

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE — August 28, 2024 — Montrose Mobile Pack in partnership with Feed My Starving Children is bringing a food packing event to Montrose, Colorado, September 13-14, at Friendship Hall. This dynamic and impactful event aims to bring together the local community to pack over 100,000 meals destined for starving children around the globe, alongside 7700 meals for emergency food storage right here in Montrose.

Volunteers of all ages are encouraged to participate in this meaningful event. Each 2-hour session will provide an opportunity to contribute to the fight against global hunger and support emergency food needs within the Montrose community. Participants will work together to assemble nutritious meals, which will then be shipped to areas in desperate need of food relief.

Event Details:

What: Feed My Starving Children Mobile Packing Event

When: September 13-14, 2024

Where: Friendship Hall, 1001 N 2nd Street, Montrose, Colorado

Session Times: September 13 (3-5 PM & 6-8 PM), September 14 (9-11 AM & 1-3 PM)

Registration: Visit <https://give.fmssc.org/montrose> to register and make a tangible impact in the battle against world hunger

The event represents a unique opportunity for the Montrose community to come together in support of a cause that transcends borders. Each meal packed will make a significant difference in the lives of children facing severe malnutrition and food insecurity. By participating in this event, you are not only helping to alleviate global hunger but also strengthening community bonds through a shared commitment to making the world a better place.

Together, let's make a difference and help feed the world's most vulnerable children.

Contact:

Feed My Starving Children- Montrose Mobile Pack

Email: montrosemobilepack@gmail.com

Phone: (970) 430-9992

Website: www.fmssc.org





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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

NEW DELTA COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DIRECTOR BRINGS A WEALTH OF KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

Special to the Mirror

DELTA COUNTY— The Delta County Health Department is pleased to announce Samantha (Sam) Traubel as the Environmental Health Director. Samantha brings a diverse background to the role, including her recent experience as an Environmental Health Specialist with Delta County Health Department.

Sam brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the field of public health. She holds a Master's in Public Health and a Master's in Science Health Informatics and Analytics from the University of Arizona. Additionally, she earned her Bachelor's degree in Health and Wellness.

As a proud U.S. Navy veteran, Sam served 10 years as a Culinary Specialist, where she honed her leadership skills—demonstrating her commitment to public safety and health with certifications as a National Association of Wastewater Treatment Inspector and a State-Certified Retail Food Establishment Inspector.

"I am honored and excited for the opportunity to continue to work alongside com-

munity partners and members in a shared commitment to health," said Sam.

"Collaboration is the foundation to advancing our shared goal of a healthier, safer environment."

"Samantha's commitment to environmental health is evident," said Jacqueline Davis, Director of Public Health. "Her passion and proactive approach to working closely with community members, businesses, and local organizations, all while promoting health and safety initiatives, is unmatched and will prove to be a great benefit for Delta County."

The Delta County Health Department is confident that under Samantha's leadership, the department will continue to thrive in its efforts to maintain a healthy and safe environment for all who live and work in Delta County.

As a long-time resident of Delta County, Samantha is deeply rooted in her community in Cedaredge. With two boys and as a dedicated wife, Sam balances her professional achievements, a love for camping, the outdoors, and rural living with a



Samantha (Sam) Traubel - Environmental Health Director

Samantha (Sam) Traubel. Courtesy photo.

strong family life.

For more information, please contact the Delta County Health Department at 970-874-2165.

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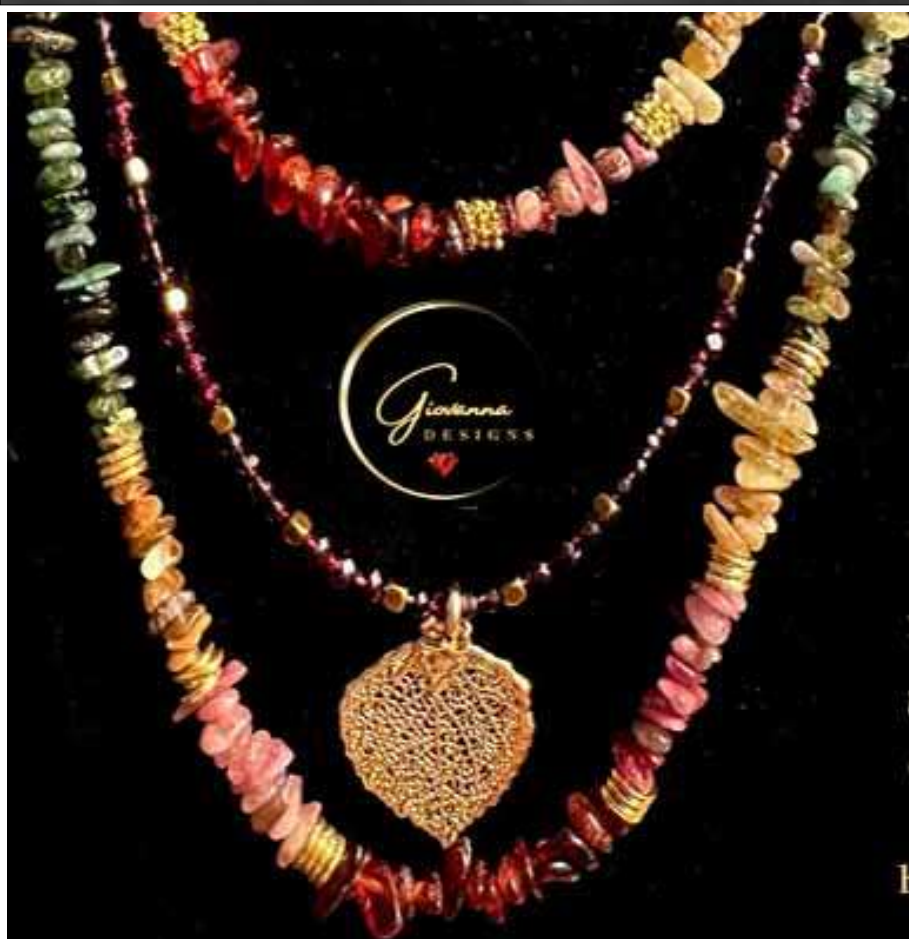
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Photographer Brian Serr shared these beautiful images of Ridgway Reservoir.



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COMMUNITYNEWS BRIEFS

MONTROSE CENTER FOR ARTS HOSTS EXHIBIT BY TWO LOCAL ARTISTS

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-Jenny McIntyre and Jean Munro, both Montrose residents, are currently exhibiting selected artwork at Montrose Center for Arts. The exhibit, "River and Rock" features interpretations of the Western Colorado landscape by both artists. There will be a gallery reception with the artists on Friday, September 6, from 4:30 – 6:00 p.m.

Colorado native Jenny McIntyre has been painting the Colorado landscape for over 25 years. She began her artistic adventures first as a professional photographer and then transitioned her love of composition and color into oil paints on canvas. As her vision expands, she has become intrigued by the movement and abstractions in the overall landscape, especially in the rock formations of Western Colorado and Utah.

Jean Munro began painting while working and raising a family in New England and moved to Montrose in 2020. Her love of the landscape drew her to painting outdoors en plein air as well as in the studio, primarily in oils and pastels. Her style springs from impressionist and abstract influences, focusing on the play of color and the rhythm of shapes in her compositions.

McIntyre and Munro have both won regional awards for their artwork. Montrose Center for Arts invites the public to view the exhibit through September 28 in the gallery at 11 S. Park Ave., Montrose.



Montrose Center for Arts presents

River and Rock

An exhibit of selected artwork by local artists
Jenny McIntyre and Jean Munro

August 3 – September 28, 2024



Canyon Afternoon



Along the Dolores



Juniper

Gallery Reception
Friday, September 6, 2024

4:30 pm – 6:00 pm

Montrose Center for Arts
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OPINION/EDITORIAL: COMMENTARY

WISDOM OR FOLLY? THE \$395 MILLION DOLLAR QUESTION FOR LOCAL VOTERS THIS NOVEMBER 5 *Is a new Montrose High School the Best or Only Solution?*

By David White

Like many of you reading this, I have had my children and grandchildren attend Montrose High School over the last 25 years and have watched the student body grow in size; watched the school go through an expansion and other renovations over the years as well as many other changes to make it more accommodating for students and faculty.

Now, after several additions to the original 1940 buildings, the School Board has, following much discussion and tens of thousands of dollars spent on analytical studies, professional architects and school design specialists and others, decided that the best solution to the ongoing logistical and maintenance issues with the school is to ask voters to replace it with a new, **\$395,000,000** high school building as detailed in the slick, 4-color brochure recently received by local voters from the School District entitled “**Shaping the Future**” pitching the need for a new school to be built on the current 31-acre school site. Here’s a link to the ballot language that the Board approved: [https://go.boarddocs.com/co/montrose/Board.nsf/files/D8EHQ7498EA0/\\$file/2024%20Ballot%20Language.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/co/montrose/Board.nsf/files/D8EHQ7498EA0/$file/2024%20Ballot%20Language.pdf)

To say that the sticker shock is literally over the top is putting it mildly. **Yes! The final price tag is up to \$395,000,000 (\$198M in principal plus \$197M in interest to be paid over 25 years with a 17.5 mill levy added to at least the 27.405 current mill levy).** While I can’t argue that something needs to be done with the high school along with some of the other schools such as renovating Northside Elementary, expanding Cottonwood Elementary and the Early Childhood Education facility among others, the question that has to be answered is quite simple...Are things really that bad? Is this the only solution to the problem? Will enrollment continue to increase at the high school? Answers to some of these questions can be found in the school district’s “Master

Capital Plan” which was released in early 2022 after a year of gathering data from community leaders but very few parents (<https://rtaarchitects.com/images/public-planning/montrose-mp/Montrose-County-SD-MCP-DRAFT-20220407.pdf>). This document is 517 pages long and recommends hundreds of millions of dollars in expenditures for new schools, renovation or expansion of existing schools. Fixing the problems with the high school is just the beginning of what will be asked of the taxpayers (at least those that pay property taxes until there’s a sale tax question placed on a future ballot like that which was put in place for the Rec District).

Some of the stated reasons for a new high school are found on the school district’s website wherein it’s stated in a 2021 report: **“Due to the age of parts of Montrose High School, it is in constant need of maintenance and repair. In many areas of the building, the MEP systems, roofing systems and interior finishes are reaching their useful lifespan and beginning to fail. There are still areas of the building that have fluorescent lighting that needs to be upgraded to LED for increased energy savings. Many exterior finishes are failing, and site pavement is deteriorating and needs to be replaced. The Montrose HS makes up 33% of identified improvements across the district making it a big part of where capital renewal funding is spent.”** **“Montrose HS enrollment is anticipated to fluctuate over the next five years but exceeds the building capacity by about 100 students in 2026. Additional space or creative scheduling and programming will be required to accommodate the anticipated enrollment over the next five years.”** (<https://rtaarchitects.com/articles/public-planning/montrose-mp/mcsd-facilities-mp-2#HS>)

The approved ballot language states the following:

-CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW MONTROSE HIGH SCHOOL ON EXISTING SCHOOL

**PROPERTY, TO INCLUDE UPGRADED SECURITY, A MAIN ENTRYWAY AND LOBBY TO BE LOCATED ON RIO GRANDE AVENUE TO REDUCE TRAFFIC CONGESTION, SPACE FOR VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL PROGRAMMING, VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS PROGRAMMING, STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES, AND CLASSROOMS AND SCIENCE LABS;
-SITE IMPROVEMENTS, INCLUDING EXPANDED PARKING AND RELOCATION OF ATHLETIC STADIUM, FIELDS AND COURTS;
-DEMOLITION OF THE EXISTING HIGH SCHOOL FACILITY WHILE PRESERVING THE LLOYD MCMILLAN
-GYM FOR SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY USE**

It is recognized that the school district held over 60 meetings to discuss the future of Montrose High School but only saw 530 people participate in these meetings. Perhaps if the community had better understood the magnitude of the issues being discussed, there would have been greater engagement. Now that this proposal is on the table, there is going to be A LOT of discussion taking place among those being asked to foot the bill directly through an almost 64% increase in the mill levy the school district collects in the form of property taxes on residential and commercial property. Most homeowners will pay hundreds of dollars more per year in property taxes and commercial property taxes will increase, per property, by thousands of dollars which will all be paid by the general taxpaying citizen through an increase in the cost of goods and services along with increases in rental rates on both residential and commercial properties for this one bond issue. Owners of these properties will not “eat” those kinds of increases. We will. If you’re paying property taxes on your home, you’ll also get to pay a portion of those taxes through everything you buy within the school district’s boundaries which include parts of Gunnison and Ouray counties.

Continued next pg

Is a new Montrose High School the Best or Only Solution? From previous pg

Increases in the mill levy for other school district obligations fluctuate over time. The school district touts the fact that they have the lowest mill levy (27.405 mills to include debt service on Columbine Middle School's \$22M in bonded debt from 2016-17) compared to their "peer districts" such as Mesa County School District which is currently at 45.070 mills ranging downward to the Ridgway School District at 29.250 mills. Approval of the bond issue for Montrose High School will raise the RE-1J mill levy to at least 44.905 mills if not more putting us on par with Grand Junction.

Since we'd now be in the same league as Grand Junction, let's look at some interesting statistics. The US Census Bureau estimated in May of 2024 that the population of Grand Junction is 68,054 with a median age of 37.5 years with a median household income of \$61,458 (<https://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US0831660-grand-junction-co/>) versus Montrose with a population of 20,394. The median age is 48.7 years. Median household income is \$60,132.00 (<https://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US0851745-montrose-co/>). Simply put, folks are a lot older in Montrose than in Grand Junction, a trend that is increasing by the year. Along with the age factor is a reduction in the birth rate

statewide.

For the sake of comparing costs, Grand Junction just opened their brand-new high school last month. It covers 250,000 square feet and was built for \$144.5 million (\$115M in bonded debt and \$29.5M in grant money). It can accommodate 1,600 students. Montrose High School is currently 200,000 square feet with an enrollment of approximately 1,350 students. Over on the Front Range, the Douglas County School District has a bond measure on their upcoming election ballot totaling \$490M. Of that, \$150M is to go toward building two new elementary schools and expanding a middle school. (https://denvergazette.com/news/douglas-county-school-renovation-bond-proposal/article_b11965b4-6583-11ef-b246-fb16a7f3b07e.html)

Community Hospital in Grand Junction built their 4 story, 140,000 sq. ft. hospital in 2016 for \$68M to include all new equipment, beds, furniture, etc. and opened the new James Pulsipher Regional Cancer Center and Medical Center (totaling 130,000 sq. ft.) in December of 2023 for a total cost of just over \$82M.

One question that I haven't seen asked is why not build a second, smaller high school? The school district owns plenty of land in the area and could site a second high school on another property. If you

cut the student population at the current location in half, it would alleviate the congestion around the high school and allow for the portions of that school that are at the end of their useful life to be torn down and the solid portions to be updated. All athletic competitions could continue to be held at the current high school. It's just a thought.

If it wasn't for the enormous price tag for this project, I suspect more of the voting population would back this proposal. Not having an organized committee of citizens such as the groups that supported the Public Safety Sales Tax for the County and City a few years ago or those that backed the construction of the Rec Center may prove to be detrimental to the school board's goal of building a new high school. Regardless of what is being said, it's up to the voters to make the final decision. Wisdom or folly. You're the ones that will call it like you see it. Just remember though... VOTE on November 5th!

Mr. White is an active citizen & community servant as well as a business owner, entrepreneur, former Montrose City Councilmember and Mayor as well as a two term County Commissioner and has served on many boards and commissions during his career. He & his wife are the parents of six children and have 10 grandchildren & a great grandchild.



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

GUNNISON GORGE NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA EARNS INTERNATIONAL DARK SKY PARK RECOGNITION

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE— Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area (NCA) has been certified as an International Dark Sky Park by DarkSky International. This significant achievement highlights the NCA's naturally dark skies, as well as the importance of the night sky as a valued resource worthy of protection. With no artificial light sources, the night skies above the NCA showcase spectacular views of the planets, the Milky Way, and beyond. Immediately adjacent to the NCA, Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park and Curecanti National Recreation Area are both certified as Dark Sky Parks.

"Most folks visit Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area during the daytime—as there's great fishing, boating, hiking, and trail riding to do then—but for those who remain after dark, a whole different experience presents itself," said NCA Manager Edd Franz. "Sleeping out under the stars can be one of the most peaceful and meaningful ways to experience this special place. I'm incredibly pleased to have the Gorge certified as a

Dark Sky Park, and proud of the BLM's commitment to conserving western Colorado's dark skies."

In order to earn Dark Sky Park certification, NCA staff, partners, and dedicated volunteers documented the quality of the night skies by taking readings over a period of time at various locations across the Gunnison Gorge NCA. Volunteers also took photographs highlighting the visibility of the Milky Way. A lighting inventory was conducted, confirming that the NCA has zero artificial lights within its boundaries. A light management plan was developed to guide future outreach and education about conserving the dark sky resource. Future threats, although minimal, were addressed in the application. Finally, numerous outreach and education events were conducted—with more planned—to promote the effort toward certification and beyond.

"The BLM plans to incorporate information about light pollution on trailhead kiosks, brochures, webpages, and social media and promote dark sky viewing, astrotourism, and astrophotography as recreational opportunities available in the



**Comet NEOWISE from Otter II Camp
GGNCA Photo by Andrew Hancock.**

NCA," said NCA Outdoor Recreation Planner Tatyana Sukharnikova.

"We will also include a "know before you go" section on the Gunnison Gorge NCA website to aid visitors in planning an outing and promote visitor safety under the dark night skies of Gunnison Gorge NCA."

Cedar Creek Cemetery Part One Tour

September 7th at 4:00pm

Limited spaces are available. Sign up by calling
970-249-2085 or email info@montrosehistory.org
\$10.00 per ticket



Cedar Creek Cemetery Part Two Tour

September 14th at 4:00pm

Limited spaces are available. Sign up by calling
970-249-2085 or email info@montrosehistory.org
\$10.00 per ticket



COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

BILLIE RAE WHITFIELD

December 30, 1928 — August 22, 2024

BILLIE RAE WHITFIELD of Montrose Colorado, 95, took the hand of Jesus on August 22, 2024, while residing at Colorow Care Center in Olathe, Colorado.

Born December 30, 1928, at Blackwell, Oklahoma. Billie Rae Whitfield was daughter to Ray and Leona (Million) Weaver. She spent her childhood and attended school in Boise City, Oklahoma, graduating in a class of 12 in 1947.

On June 8, 1947, Billie was married to J. R. Whitfield at Clayton, New Mexico. Seeking a new adventure, she and J.R. moved to Montrose, Colorado in 1953, and quickly

became involved in farming and building a dairy farm.

Billie worked at the Uncompahgre Valley Water Users for 17 years. Billie was actively involved in missionary work to Panama and Thailand for the Southern Baptist International Mission Board for 17 years after the loss of her husband. She was a member of Rosemont Baptist Church.

Billie is survived by five children: Rae Lyn Ehlers, Grand Junction, CO; Dana (Gary) Huskey, Montrose, CO; Ryan (Cindy) Whitfield, Delta, CO, Rick (Debra) Whitfield, Montrose, CO and Jeri

Whitfield, Montrose, CO. Also surviving are a number of first and second cousins. She is survived by grandchildren, and great grandchildren, nephews and a niece. Billie is preceded in death by her husband, J. R., her parents, Ray and Leona Weaver, and her brother, Jerry Weaver.

A Celebration of Life was conducted Tuesday, August 27, 2024, at Rosemont Baptist Church in Montrose, Colorado. The family has suggested that in lieu of flowers, memorial contributions be made to support Thailand ministries which was near and dear to Billie's heart.

BERNICE M. RUBY (MULIK)

July 30, 1941 — August 23, 2024



BERNICE M. (MULIK) RUBY, 83, died peacefully on August 23, 2024 in Montrose, CO, after suffering a stroke. Originally from McAdoo, PA, Bernice was born on July 30, 1941 to John and Mary (Malega) Mulik and graduated from McAdoo High School as valedictorian of her class in 1959. She obtained a degree in Medical Technology in 1961 and worked for Tice Clinic in Quakertown, a local physician practice, and Young's Medical Equipment in Lansdale. She married John J Ruby of McAdoo, PA in 1964 and moved to Pennsburg in 1967. Bernice enjoyed conversing with friends and family, shopping, reading, knitting, and crochet, and was a regular volunteer for the Friends of the Upper Perkiomen Valley Library, St. Philip Neri Church, and several local thrift shops. Bernice is survived by her daughters and sons-in-law, Lisa and Michael Raedler of Santa Fe, NM and Maria and Nathan Wagner of Montrose, CO; grandsons, Jake and Tom Basara; and step-grandsons, Jake and Kristopher Raedler.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be sent to the Upper Perkiomen Valley Library. (website: <http://www.upvlibrary.org/Donate.php>)



COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

DAVID "DAVE" PARKER

June 7, 1933-August 19, 2024



DAVID "DAVE" PARKER was born June 7, 1933, in Ansley Nebraska to Lemuel and Alma Parker. Dave was the third of seven children.

He was raised on a small family farm near Broken Bow Nebraska. As a young adult he traveled around Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Kansas working several jobs, including a bakery where he met Marcella Urban. This was the beginning of an inseparable union, and they were married on April 14, 1953. They had a son, a daughter, a grandson, a granddaughter, six great grandchildren, and one great-great granddaughter.

Dave started working for the Colorado DOT on the Denver/Boulder Turnpike in 1961. In 1964 he transferred to Nucla, Colorado and eventually Paradox where he finished his career of over 31 years. This would be where Dave and Marcella chose to spend the rest of their lives surrounded by many dear friends and family.

Dave passed away at the age of 91 on August 19, 2024. He was preceded in death by his parents, his wife Marcella, and four siblings.

SALLY LU SENGER

March 23, 1938 — August 22, 2024

SALLY LU SENGER was born March 23rd, 1938 in Winonna Minnesota to Chalmer and Pearl Johnson. She passed away on August 22, 2024 at Colorow Care Center. Sally grew up and went to high school in Cheyenne, WY. She later earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Arizona State University. She loved the heat in Arizona and made many friends there. Sally later moved back to Cheyenne where she met her husband of 57 years, Ben Senger. They soon moved to Wheatridge, CO where they started their family. In 1977 they moved to Montrose with their three young daughters.

Sally enjoyed a long career as a bookkeeper and worked alongside her husband in their family business, Montrose TV and Appliance. Her true calling, as she would say, was in being a mother. She never missed a sporting event or school activity. The only thing she enjoyed more

than motherhood was becoming a grandmother. She was famous for saying "you can have ice cream for breakfast at grandma's house".

She was blessed with five grandchildren whom she loved to spoil. Her children describe her as a terrific listener and someone who never wanted to be the center of attention.

Sally enjoyed volunteering for many years in the library at Oak Grove Elementary School and in the childcare at the United Methodist Church. She was a longtime member of Altrusa and participated in Bosum Buddies annual walk. Sally had many friends and enjoyed playing dominos, reading mysteries and camping with the family.

In 2010 Sally survived a hemorrhagic stroke and was able to stay at home with her husband for 12 years. The final 3 years of her life were spent at Colorow Care

center with their caring staff. She is survived by her husband, Ben Senger, her three daughters, Molly Feddersen (Scott) Grand Junction CO, Libby Baumchen (George) Durango, CO, and Ginny Senger Montrose, CO and her grandchildren, Kyra Tolin, Simon Feddersen, Zane Baumchen, Elyza Baumchen and Nick Feddersen.

There will be a celebration of life on Saturday September 14th at the Senger residence. Open house to pay respects from 1 pm to 4 pm.



ISSUE 484 Sept. 2, 2024

ART & SOL

YOUR BRAIN ON NATURE – FEAR



By Lauren Hall Ruddell, Ph.D.

Greetings Mirrorites!

Last week I was dining with friends in their home. Before serving the meal, these two friends decided to harvest some fresh basil from their co-created garden. One of them casually mentioned the word *spider*. The person who was about to go and do the harvesting reneged, and the person who mentioned the dreaded object had to go and get the basil herself. I was amused but also inspired. I had a bit of writer's block about the topic of this article and was instantly inspired by this interaction.

The person who reacted so strongly to the word 'spider' has phobias. Most of us are rightly cautious and even a bit fearful of certain aspects of the natural world. And rightly so. We are hard-wired to give certain objects, usually creatures, a wide berth in order to survive any potentially deadly encounters that prevent us from passing on our genes. That being said, limited contact with nature can engender phobias and even make them worse.



Photo courtesy of Eliza Diamond.

Avoidance, although totally understandable, turns out to be the wrong course of action for coping with phobias. Avoidance is a safety-seeking or protective response. However, as over-avoidance behavior becomes more extreme, a person's quality of life may lessen. This is as true for phobias as it is for PTSD.

Exposure to fearful stimuli in a controlled manner that results in a safe and positive experience is the best way to eventually overcome a turbo-charged fear response. I was anxious to see the beastly causing so much alarm to this charming and outgoing soul, but alas, the magnificent orb weaver was nowhere to be found. I had hoped to be able to sign her praises in a very Char-

lotte's web sort of way but was denied the opportunity. A therapeutic moment passed in favor of a pleasant sit down with wine in the apparently spiderless garden. Ophidiophobia. What an awesome word that I like to roll around on my tongue like a fine Bordeaux. It means fear of snakes, of which I have none. Since I was a little kid, I have loved snakes, even poisonous ones. My parents, much less so. To what do I attribute my lack of reasonable fear? Childhood snake charming is how. An older cousin was fascinated by them and often had pet snakes in his home, which I was allowed to handle under his watchful eye. Most overblown fears begin in childhood, and most blunted and habituated

Continued next pg

YOUR BRAIN ON NATURE – FEAR

From previous pg

responses begin to take shape then as well. I have handled poisonous snakes with the proper equipment (usually) many times, and although I do find it a spine-tingling thrill, I am so accustomed to it that I wouldn't call it fear, ever.

But phobic responses to creatures are potent, real, and sometimes crippling. It turns out that as with PTSD, exposure therapy is quite effective. Exposure is sometimes so infrequent in house-bound, urban dwellers who are never in nature that no opportunities are presented to slowly and safely come to grips with an overblown response.

"One of the most important disadvantages is that most people living in cities lose contact with nature including interactions with animals. Current evidence shows that countries with lower levels of urbanization also have a lower prevalence of animal fears and phobias." [Zsido et al, 2022](#). An epidemiological survey (Wardenaar et al., 2017) of 22 countries showed that the average lifetime prevalence of animal phobias was lower (3.4%)

in lower-middle-income countries compared to upper-middle- (4.4%) and high-income countries (3.7%). Urbanization? Quite possibly. Living in a city is an evolutionarily unfamiliar habitat to humans and urbanization is a fairly recent trend limited to the past few centuries.

Now here is an even groovier factoid... people with a high degree of nature-relatedness, like moi, seldom have animal phobias.


This could be a chicken and egg argument, in that being exposed to nature constantly provides safe opportunities for the brain to correctly process that supposed threat and adjust the level of response needed without going overboard. Or it may be that people without phobias tend to be more comfortable in nature just generally, and therefore seek it out more often.

Further, time in nature has been shown to increase nature affiliation. So, it is a bit tricky to parse out. But regardless, the more exposure, the better for most sufferers of animal phobias.

Phobias can center around landscape features, not just wildlife. My poor dear father had a phobia of cliffs and canyons. Classic fear of heights. He chose to avoid them all his life and grew terrified, short of breath, and even threw himself on the ground if a family member approached a canyon rim, guard rails and other safety measures notwithstanding. His maladaptive response was to try to get family members to alter their behavior in response to his.

Although I am not a therapist, I have to believe that some form of safe, controlled, and choreographed exposure therapy would have made certain family vacations more relaxed. He was a great outdoorsman in most other regards.

The moral of the story is... even if the wee beasties or the sheer cliffs of the Black Canyon of the Gunnison terrify you, get outdoors and give yourself a chance to come to grips with the emotions aroused. It can be very freeing and may even be a source of comfort and pride for your friends and family members.

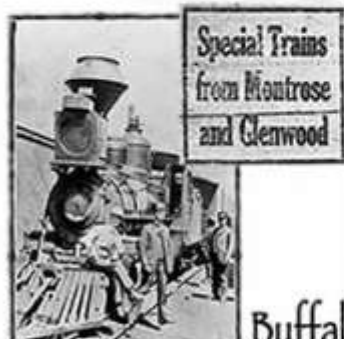


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Circus

Questions or reservations. contact Liz Gracesun at MRD. 970-252-4884.

1 pm. Mon., Sep. 16, 2024 | Montrose Senior Center, Montrose Pavilion

WHY ART IS IMPORTANT



Kathryn R. Burke

By Kathryn R. Burke

MONTROSE—In times of uncertainty and confusion, when people hold and express sometimes violently opposing political views, there is one thing that can foster community and keep us together: ART.

Attend an art gallery opening and you will observe a variety of reactions by the people there—reactions to the art and the artist, rather than to each other. It's common ground. The person standing next to you may not agree with you when it comes to the ballot box, but still be in accord when it comes to the artistic experience you are sharing. Love it, hate it, question it, and talk about it—without shouting and maybe destroying a friendship.

Most of the patrons and gallery visitors gathered for the event enjoy the comradery and communicating about what they find in the work that is pleasurable... or at least pleasant. They are supportive of the art and the artist, and therefore of each other. Chances are, if they came to the show, they already have a positive opinion of what they are seeing and are glad to see and visit with friends who are also attending, some they haven't seen for some time. It's a meeting and greeting time, a safe sharing experience.

Viewing the art, members of the audience may disagree, mostly mildly, occasionally with venom. But (unless a lot of drinking has been involved), they don't come to

blows. They may call the artist nasty names, but not each other.

Regardless of what "kind" of art is being shown—abstract, realism; impressionism, expressionism, baroque, pop, digital—and no matter what the subject matter—wildlife, still life, people life, landscape, sexually suggestive, demonic, sunny and smiley or death and destruction (or just whatever)—you will hear the same comments. "I hate it." "I love it." "What was the artist thinking!" "I'd love to be there." "I can't bear to look at it." "Oooh, I like how he painted that sky (water/forest/flowers)." "Makes me want to take a vacation and go visit that place." "Why would you buy that/hang it in your home/put it up on your wall." "I wish I could afford to/ or I'm glad I can afford to buy them all." "This guy is really good!"

That's the thing. You gather together, enjoy a common experience discussing and viewing an artist's visual perceptions which can be the same as your own...and the person standing next to you...or wildly different.

Take a show of photography. Everybody has their own way of seeing what's right in front of them. Looking through the lens, if you will. But the person snapping pix with his phone is usually focused on something in his mind but not editing out the rest of the whatever else is crowding the subject, so he winds up with something that doesn't tell the story he wants his picture to tell. The professional photographer displaying her work has mastered how to focus; she knows how to enhance the primary subject and fade back (or remove) what doesn't work, and so make a good photo a great photo, one worthy of framing and hanging on the wall. "Don't you love it?" you ask the person next to you. "Absolutely," he agrees, and your argu-

ment is about who will buy that beautiful photograph, not how you will vote in November. (In this case, fortunately, the artist can make a print for both of you.)

Consider a painter who specializes in still life. One painting is of a vase of spring flowers, petals drifting onto and reflecting from a sparkling glass tabletop. Soft colors. Gentle. Easy. Another is a dead duck, with brilliantly colored feathers, next to a sharp knife, and laid out on a similar table, blood oozing from its neck. Vivid. Disturbing. You may find the first comforting or too 'girlie,' lovely or boring. You may find the second intriguing, disgusting, a perfect likeness, or too realistic. You are standing there with friends, some like the first, others like the second, all of you enjoy talking about the merits (or demerits) of both paintings. It's an opportunity to enjoy a common experience where your views may differ, but your appreciation of the artist's effort is the same.

Art: It brings people together, gives them an opportunity for community, so important in a time of divisiveness, uncertainty, and confusion.

September is a big month for gallery shows and openings around our region. In Ridgway: The 610 Arts Collective (*Postcards from the Edge*); Ranch History Museum (Susan Humphrey); Create Space (Cheri Isgreen). In Cedaredge: Grand Mesa Arts & Events Center (Denny McNeill, Connie Williams). And in Montrose, Montrose Center for the Arts (Jenny McIntyre and Jean Munroe); LaNoüe DuBois Winery in Montrose (Giovanna Designs and Susan Humphrey).

Kathryn R. Burke is an artist, educator, author, and publisher. Visit her website to see more about artists and art shows. <https://kathrynrburke.com/writer/art-artists/>



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COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

THOMPSON PERFORMS POEMS FROM THE REZ FOR BARDIC TRAILS ON SEPT. 3

Special to Art & Sol

TELLURIDE-The Bardic Trails virtual poetry series, Sept. 3rd at 7 pm [Mountain Time], will feature Michael Thompson, a Mvskoke Creek poet, writer, and retired educator living on the Navajo Nation with wife and Diné poet Tina Deschenie.

"A strong performer of his poem stories, Michael makes us reinhabit a West those of us descendants of settler/colonialists may not know," said Talking Gourds director Art Goodtimes. "Michael and Tina both had poems in the Ah Haa show this past winter in Telluride: *In Their Own Words: A Poetry Experience / Según Sus Palabras: Una Experiencia Poética*."

Thompson was born in Holdenville, OK, and then raised on a South Georgia cattle ranch and row-crop farm near the Flint River -- among pine trees, oaks, creeks, and swamp. He taught for 42 years at various levels of education in Georgia, Kansas, California, and New Mexico. For most of his life, he was a high school English teacher. Today, he and his wife are restoring her family homesite and raising cattle on the Navajo Nation in Crystal, NM. They have four children and several grandchildren. Their family supports numerous Native American activities, traditions, and causes.

In addition to work in various journals, he

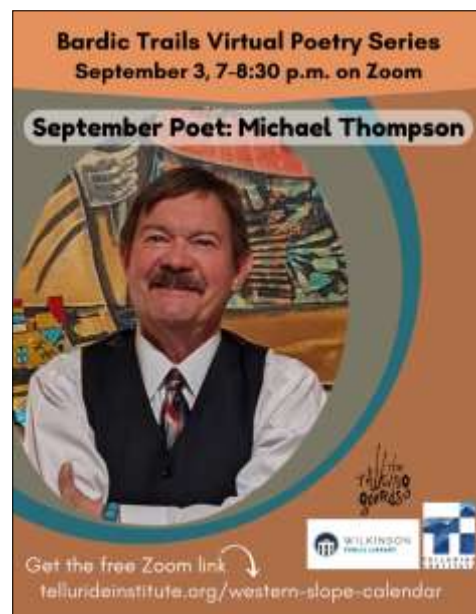
has contributed to the following publications: *Fertile: An Anthology of Earth Poems & Prose*, Fourth Corner Press (2023); *Satchel: Story Objects*, Art Juice Studio Press (2022); *Transforming Diné Education*, University of Arizona Press (2022); *The Diné Reader: An Anthology of Navajo Literature*, University of Arizona Press, "Resources for Readers" (2021); *WET: An Anthology of Water Poems & Prose*, Sharehouse Press, Co-editor (2021); *Trickster* (a graphic anthology) "Rabbit and the Tug of War," Fulcrum Books (2010); *American Indians and the Urban Experience*, AltaMira Press (2001).

Bardic Trails has undergone some recent changes.

Talking Gourds is now solo hosting the virtual zoom series on the first Tuesday of each month, although the Wilkinson Public Library will continue as a collaboration partner and fiscal agent. Also, San Miguel County Poet Laureate Joanna Yonder will continue to assist Goodtimes in facilitating the zoom. Joanna recommends "The Turn" as the prompt for this month for those who want one.

[Nota Bene: The volta, or turn, is a rhetorical shift or dramatic change in thought and/or emotion. Turns are seen in all types of written poetry.]

No longer needing to register with the



library, participants are encouraged to visit <<https://www.tellurideinstitute.org/western-slope-calendar>> to get the zoom link each month, if they aren't already on our mailing list.

Bardic Trails is a project of the Telluride Institute's Talking Gourds Poetry Program in collaboration with the Wilkinson Public Library.

For more information, visit the website: <https://www.tellurideinstitute.org/western-slope-calendar>.

SEE SOMETHING - SAY SOMETHING



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ANONYMOUS CALL

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with Nurse Anna
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the adventure of
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Warner
through the
Black Canyon

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MIRROR CHURCH DIRECTORY

ALL SAINTS ANGLICAN CHURCH

Address: 2057 S. Townsend, Montrose, CO 81401.

Office Hours: By appointment.

Contact Information: (970) 249-2451
<https://www.allsaintsmontrose.org/> Rec-
 tor: The Rev Preston Gordon, [don@allsaintsmontrose.org](mailto:pgor-

 don@allsaintsmontrose.org)

Worship Service Times: Sundays 9AM,

Sunday Worship. Wednesdays 11AM, Mid-
 week prayer and communion, Wednes-
 day, Noon, Multi-denominational Commu-
 nity Prayer Hour.

All Saints Anglican Church is an Evangelical
 Anglican Church committed to the minis-
 try of Word, Sacrament, and Spirit. Our
 music is a combination of traditional
 hymns, contemporary, and modern songs.

We invite kids preschool and up to join
 our kids worship time during the 9am Sun-
 day service. We would love to welcome
 you here. Following the service, join us for
 snacks and conversation. On the third Sun-
 day of the month we celebrate a potluck
 meal together.

Vision: We see Jesus Christ restoring
 hope: in us and in our world.

BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH

Independent Baptist
 112 Main St.
 P.O. Box 262

Olathe, Co 81425

Tuesday-Friday Phone: 970-808-1021
www.biblebaptistchurcholathe.com
 Pastor Gabe Skillo

Sunday School 9:15 a.m.

Sunday 10:30 a.m.

Sunday 6 p.m.

Wednesday Bible Study/Prayer 7 p.m.

CELEBRATION CHURCH

Denomination: Southern Baptist Church
 (SBC – Southern Baptist Convention)

Address: 2900 Sunnyside Road, Mont-
 rose, CO 81401

Office Hours: By appointment

Phone: (970) 497-4925

Email: celebrationmontrose@gmail.com

Website: [https://
 celebrationmontrose.org/](https://celebrationmontrose.org/)

Worship Service Times: 9am and 10:45am

Senior Pastor:

Pastor Brandon Mathis

Church Description/Mission: Celebration
 Church makes disciples that make disci-
 ples. Our core values include the Scrip-

ture, discipleship, community, service,
 prayer, love, and unity.

Demographics: Multi-generational

Celebration Kids: (age birth to 5th grade)
 programs offered both services.

Student (middle & high school) at 9am.

Adult -Discipleship classes 8am and
 10:45am.

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Denomination: Christ Lutheran Montrose
Affiliation: Lutheran Church Missouri Syn-
 od

Address: 1980 N. Townsend Ave., Mont-
 rose, CO 81401

Contact: 970-633-0226

Website: www.montroselutheran.org

Email: montroselutheran@gmail.com

Pastor: Tim Onnen

Worship: Sundays at 9 AM

Sunday School and Adult Bible Class at
 10:15 AM; Women's Bible Study Fridays at
 9 AM. At Christ Lutheran Montrose you will

find friendly people gathered in a welcom-
 ing environment being comforted and en-
 couraged by the forgiveness and love of
 Jesus, and sharing that with one another.

We are a small congregation of seniors
 and middle-aged, sprinkled with young
 children and teenagers.

COVENANT HEBRAIC FELLOWSHIP

Denomination affiliation. No affiliation

Address Office hours N/A

Contact: 720-951-9941,
office@ccfmontrose.net,
www.ccfmontrose.net

Name of current Senior Pastor. Led by
 elders

Worship service times. Noon on Saturdays
 (Potluck on 1st, 3rd and 5th shabbats)
 Covenant is a Hebraic roots community
 that studies the Torah as well as the rest of

Scripture. We learn about the Hebrew
 roots of the language and believe that the
 Lord's feasts are for today. We are pre-
 dominantly made up of older folks, but
 have some young blood, too.

Sunday School and childcare: None

FIRST CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

Denomination: Church of the Nazarene

Address: 705 South 12th Street

Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 9 am-
 Noon and by Appointment

Contact Information: Office Phone 970 249
 -9213, mncfirst@gmail.com,
www.montrosenazarenechurch.org

Pastor: Buddy Cook

Services Sunday: Worship 10 AM, Adult
 Bible Study 11:30 AM Worship includes age-
 appropriate children's ministry during
 adult worship.

Wednesday: Prayer Boot Camp - 7 PM
 Mission Statement: *Montrose First Church
 of the Nazarene exists to make Christlike*

*disciples in Montrose Colorado and around
 the world.*

Demographics: Our church consists of old-
 er and younger people. We have younger
 families with children and young teens and
 older adults as well. We also support the
 work of Calvary Ranch Colorado and its
 addiction recovery ministry.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH MONTROSE

Affiliation: Presbyterian

Address: 1840 E Niagara Rd. Montrose
 CO. 81401 **Office Hours:** M-Thu 9AM -
 12PM

Contact: 970-249-4732, in-
form@fpcmontrose.com,
www.fpcmontrose.com

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Jesse G. Mabanglo

Worship Service times: 9:30AM,
We strive to encourage, challenge and

*support one another through spiritual
 growth, worship, and service in our com-
 munity, country, and world. We also en-
 courage children and youth to grow their
 relationship with Christ through our chil-
 dren and student ministries.*

MIRROR CHURCH DIRECTORY From previous pg

HILLCREST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Denomination affiliation: United Church of Christ
Address: 611 South Hillcrest Drive, Montrose, CO 81401
Office hours: By appointment
Contact information:

Phone number: (970) 249-9047
 Email address: office@montroseucc.org
 Website: montroseucc.org
Current Pastor: Rev. Wendy Kidd
Worship service times: Sunday, 10 a.m.
 Hillcrest Congregational UCC is a welcoming, open and affirming church, open to all no matter who you are or where you are

on life's journey.
 Church demographics: HCUCC welcomes all ages to worship with us. (predominately family, youth, seniors, singles)
 We offer inter-generational worship with a children's "prayer-ground" and activity packets. A cry room is also available.

MONTROSE MISSION OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

Affiliation: Orthodox
Meets: 2057 S. Townsend, Montrose, CO

81401 and Cimarron Creek Clubhouse.
Worship Services: The Montrose Mission of the Orthodox Church meets every Saturday night at 7 PM at All Saints Anglican

Church for Vespers, and we currently meet only on the third Sunday of each month for Divine Liturgy in Montrose at 9:30 AM at the Cimarron Creek clubhouse.

MONTROSE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Denomination Affiliation: United Methodist
Address: 19 S. Park Avenue Montrose CO. 81401
Office Hours: M-Thu, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Contact Information: 970-249-3716, office@montroseumc.org, [mont-](http://montroseumc.org)

montroseumc.org
Current Senior Pastor: Rev. Kevin Young
Worship service times:
 8:30 a.m. Sanctuary & Virtual
 9:45 a.m. Christian Education & Fellowship
 11 a.m. Sanctuary
Montrose UMC is a leader in being fully inclusive, loving, and just servants of

Christ. Our church family welcomes people from various cultural and faith backgrounds: single, married, remarried, with or without children, from diapers to dentures.
Wherever you are on your spiritual journey we invite you to come discover hope, joy, peace, purpose.

ROSEMONT BAPTIST CHURCH

Affiliation: Southern Baptist
Address: 1598 E. Niagara Road, Montrose, CO 81401
Office Hours: Tues-Thurs, 9am-4pm
Contact information:
 Phone: 970.249.4887
 website: www.RosemontBaptist.org
 email: office@rosemontbaptist.org
Senior Pastor: Rolland Kenneson
Worship Service Times: Our engaging and relevant Sunday Worship Service is at

10:45 AM. We also have Bible Study for All Ages Sunday mornings at 9:15 AM. We provide a professionally-staffed nursery throughout both.
Rosemont Baptist's desire is to passionately bring people face-to-face with the life-changing power of Jesus Christ.
We are a multigenerational church from different walks of life who love Jesus, love each other, and love our community. Everyone comes dressed in whatever is comfortable. We love meeting new people no

matter what stage of life they are in.
Children's services: We have a fun Sunday School for children from four years old through youth. We provide Children's Church during the Sunday Worship Services where children four years old through 9 years can learn to be worshippers of Jesus.
We provide a nursery for children under four years old with paid staff providing excellent care during Sunday Morning Bible Study and Worship Service.

SPIRITUAL AWARENESS CENTER

Denomination affiliation: Independent Interfaith
Address: Meeting at Lions Park Community Building, 602 N. Nevada, Montrose
 Office hours: Tues-Fri, 9 am to 4 pm, **Home Office** – 970-252-0908
Contact information:
 Rev. Dr. Arlyn Macdonald,
 970-252-0908,
arlyn@spiritaware.org,
www.spiritaware.org

Name of current pastor: Rev. Dr. Arlyn Macdonald, Senior minister; Rev. Ruby Salaz, Assistant Minister. Spiritual Counseling available. **Worship service times:** In-person Sunday Unity Service at 11 a.m., (Social Time begins at 10 a.m.); Quiet Meditation at 10:30 a.m. Virtual Afternoon Service on Zoom at 2:00 p.m.; Chai Chats, a Wednesday morning midweek informal gathering at 10:30 a.m. at Pun Hill Himalayan Restaurant, Montrose; Thursday Empowerment Circle at 10:30 a.m. on Zoom. Everyone is

welcome. *The Spiritual Awareness Center is an interfaith spiritual community welcoming spiritual seekers and people of all faiths, providing a safe place to explore and nurture the individual's unique connection to the Divine through Unity services, classes, family and community projects, including the Great Community Giveaway and Wellness Fair.* People of all ages are welcome. There are currently no Sunday School or nursery services provided but craft supplies are available for youth.

ST. STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

Denomination: Anglican-Reformed Episcopal Church (REC)
Address: 2405 Sunnyside Road, Montrose 970-249-4868
Contact: [ststephensmont-](http://ststephensmontrose.com)

rose@yahoo.com
www.ststephensmontrose.com
Rev. Dec. Garrett Agajanian
 St. Stephen's is a community of caring Christians rooted in the godly traditions of the past, focused on the challenges of the

present, hopeful for the future, continuing in the Faith once delivered to the saints, using the 1928 Book of Common Prayer.
Sunday: Holy Communion 10 am.
 Fellowship following service.
 Children's nursery available (unstaffed).

MIRROR CHURCH DIRECTORY From previous pg

SUMMIT CHURCH OF MONTROSE:

Denomination affiliation: Southern Baptist
Address: 10977 60.75 Rd. Montrose, CO 81403
Office hours: Varies
Contact information:
email: summitchurchmontrose@gmail.com
website:
www.summitchurchmontrose.org
Senior Pastor: Interim Pastor

Worship service times: Sunday Worship is at 9 a.m. followed by a time of fellowship and snacks.

Beginning Sept. 8 we will have a family Bible study, "Who's in Charge?" following fellowship from 10:45-11:30 a.m. All family members are welcome.

During the Sunday sermon we offer teaching for children ages birth to kindergarten, in a kid-friendly room called Base

Camp.

We have communion on the first Sunday of each month and meet later in the day for a potluck dinner at 5:30 p.m., followed by a prayer session at 6:30 p.m.

Please visit <https://www.summitchurchmontrose.org/events> for more information.

Summit Church welcomes people of all ages!

VICTORY BAPTIST CHURCH OF MONTROSE

Denomination Affiliation: Independent Baptist
Address: 2890 N Townsend Ave., Montrose, CO 81401
Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8am-12pm
Contact Information: Phone (970) 249-

6874; email at info@vbcmontrose.org; website: vbcmontrose.org

Current Pastor: Roland Kassales

Worship Service Times: Sunday School at 9:30am, Sunday AM Service at 10:30am, Sunday PM Service at 6pm, Wednesday Night Service at 6:30pm (all services include childcare)

Victory Baptist Church exists to exalt God, edify saints, and evangelize the lost.

Demographics: Victory Baptist serves everyone with age-appropriate classes, groups, and activities. Families with children make up the majority of VBC with young adults, singles, middle-aged couples, and seniors comprising the rest.

Church Directory

Mirror Editorial Staff

MONTROSE-As a way of serving the faith community in Montrose, the Montrose Mirror is in the process of establishing a Church Directory. If your congregation or fellowship would like to be included in the directory, please supply the following

information to the Montrose Mirror:

Name of church

Denomination affiliation

Address Office hours

Contact information (phone number, email address, website)

Name of current Senior Pastor

Worship service times

Please give a one sentence description of your church and its mission in the Montrose community.

Brief description of your current church demographics (predominately family, youth, seniors, singles).

Do your church services include Sunday School and childcare?

Local Immunization Providers



Visit www.montrosecounty.net/immunizations for updated information on immunization providers.
Questions? Call (970) 252-5011

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SENIOR STRINGS

I SENTENCE YOU TO TEN DAYS IN THE COUNTY TIN CAN



The west wall of the Montrose County Jail built in 1885, and still standing, shows the steel mesh screens that were used in place of windows and bars. The jail was known for years as "The Tin Can Jail." Photo by Bob Cox

By Bob Cox

MONTROSE-From almost the day it was built in 1885 the Montrose County Jail was the subject of ridicule. Escapes were commonplace, but it was more than 50 years before a real solution was actually addressed. Some of the escapes provide for some interesting history.

In November of 1905 Pierce Gingrich and L. Bartlett were found guilty of larceny. The facts of the case are somewhat vague, but the pair was sentenced to 30 days in the county jail. According to a short article in the November 10, 1905 edition of the *Montrose Press*, Sheriff George Truesdale followed the sentence and locked the thieves up on a Monday evening. When he returned the following morning with their breakfast, they were gone. It seems they took a leg off of a table and beat the lock off the door. They left a short message: "Goodbye George, keep the change." The *Press* opined, "The Montrose County Jail is a misnomer - a jail being a building so securely constructed as to hold prisoners longer than they care to remain." There are many more stories of escapes. A perusal of the records revealed some poignant stories.

While the sheriff was not present when Gingrich and Bartlett left, such was not the case in 1916, when a young man named McCumber simply walked away while a deputy was close by. In that case the design of the jail, with the possible exception of the coal and wood heating, had little to do with the escape. The deputy took two prisoners out to get coal and kindling. He became distracted and, according to the account in the *Montrose Enterprise*, "McCumber, supposedly on his way with the kindling, failed to locate the door of the jail..."

The jail building itself has been well-documented, largely due to its inclusion in the Montrose County Historic Landmarks listings, but some of the escape stories prove to be interesting, if not downright humorous, and often embarrassing. The building was condemned in 1921, and rumors were that it would soon be replaced. That did not happen for several years.

In November of 1921 Lemuel Hecox, the watchman at the Cashin Mine near Bedrock, was murdered. Ben Myers was one of the suspects arrested. In the early morning hours of January 3, 1922 Meyers

and his cellmate, Bill Hodges escaped. An article in the *Montrose Daily Press* on that date stated, "The jail break was made possible by using one of the metal legs from one of the bunks with which they beat off one lock and one hasp on the door." It is somewhat interesting that the report of the Gingrich and Bartlett escape in 1906 indicated that a table leg was also used by them to beat the lock off the door.

Both Meyers and Hodges were captured in Cimarron a few days later by Ouray County Sheriff Baird, but not before Meyers managed to pass a bad check at the Cimarron Mercantile. The short check charge seemed minuscule in light of the murder accusation. Myers and some of his accomplices were convicted of charges related to the Hecox murder. Stay tuned for more on that in an upcoming issue of *The Montrose Mirror*.

In January of 1922, the county commissioners announced that a new jail was a possibility, and that it could be built in conjunction with the new courthouse. It did not happen. In early June of that year, yet another escape, one that left some residents with a heightened concern. Here is part of the article that appeared in the *Montrose Daily Press*:

W. E. Johns of Delta, who has been confined in the Montrose County jail for several weeks on the charge of rape against a 14-year-old girl, made his escape from the jail sometime Sunday night. Someone from the outside sawed away a corner of the lattice door and made a hole some 14 by 16 inches thru which Johns crawled. No reference to Johns' recapture was found in the available archives.

On August 1, 1922, Lyle Griffith escaped from the jail. He was later captured in Santa Rosa, New Mexico. He left behind an escape route for Pedro Gonsales (sic), who escaped using the roof hole created by Griffith. The flowery language in the *Montrose Enterprise* reveals some of the disbelief of the recurring problems at the jail. This, in part is what was printed in the September 30, 1922 edition of that newspaper: *The Montrose County Jail, which is becoming quite famous for not holding prisoners, which knew Pedro Gonsales yesterday and until an early morning hour*

Continued next pg

I SENTENCE YOU TO TEN DAYS IN THE COUNTY TIN CAN From previous pg

this morning knows him no more, at least for the present. In other words, Pedro, who hales from Old Mexico, decided that the Montrose County jail was no place for a son of Old Mexico, and following that notion, he took his leave through the hole in the roof made by Lyle Griffith who departed from the jail...

The article went on to point out that the hole had been repaired, but not adequately.

On April 11, 1925, Henry Hendrickson, who was being held at the jail on a charge of cattle rustling, escaped. The attempts to recapture him proved to be a tragic example of the inadequate condition of the jail. In early June, information received by the sheriff indicated that Henry and his brother Frank were working on a ranch owned by Paul Craig near Mesa Creek, not far from the Utah border. The best ac-

count of what ensued is found in the June 6, 1925 edition of *The San Miguel Examiner*. Here is the main part of the article: Henry and Frank Hendrickson, brothers, were killed Wednesday by a sheriff's posse at Mesa Creek, 30 miles from Naturita, within four or five miles of the Mesa County line; the posse composed of Sheriff Sam Phillips of Montrose, Sheriff VanAken of Delta and two deputies. The posse left Montrose early Tuesday morning, having information that Henry Hendrickson, who escaped from the Montrose County jail on April 11, where he had been placed by Sheriff VanAken on a charge of cattle rustling was in that section. About 9:30 o'clock Wednesday morning the posse came to the ranch of Paul Craig near Mesa Creek where haying was in process. Craig was on the haystack and the Hendrickson brothers were in the field loading hay.

When the brothers saw the officers, Frank, who was carrying a gun opened fire. The officers also started a fusillade. The result was that the two Hendrickson brothers were mortally wounded, dying within 20 or 30 minutes. Frank emptied his revolver in the gun battle. None of the officers were wounded. Mr. Craig communicated with Deputy Coroner G. C. Pond, who with Deputy District Attorney Earle Bryant, left at 2 o'clock for the scene of the shooting.

While several improvements were made over the next decade, the jail remained a problem. A short article, headlined "FIXED UP TIN CAN JAIL," in the *Daily Journal* (Telluride) on FEBRUARY 9, 1926 pointed out that confessed murderer Ralph E. Baird, who had been held in a more secure jail in Delta, was returned to Montrose after several improvements were made to the jail.

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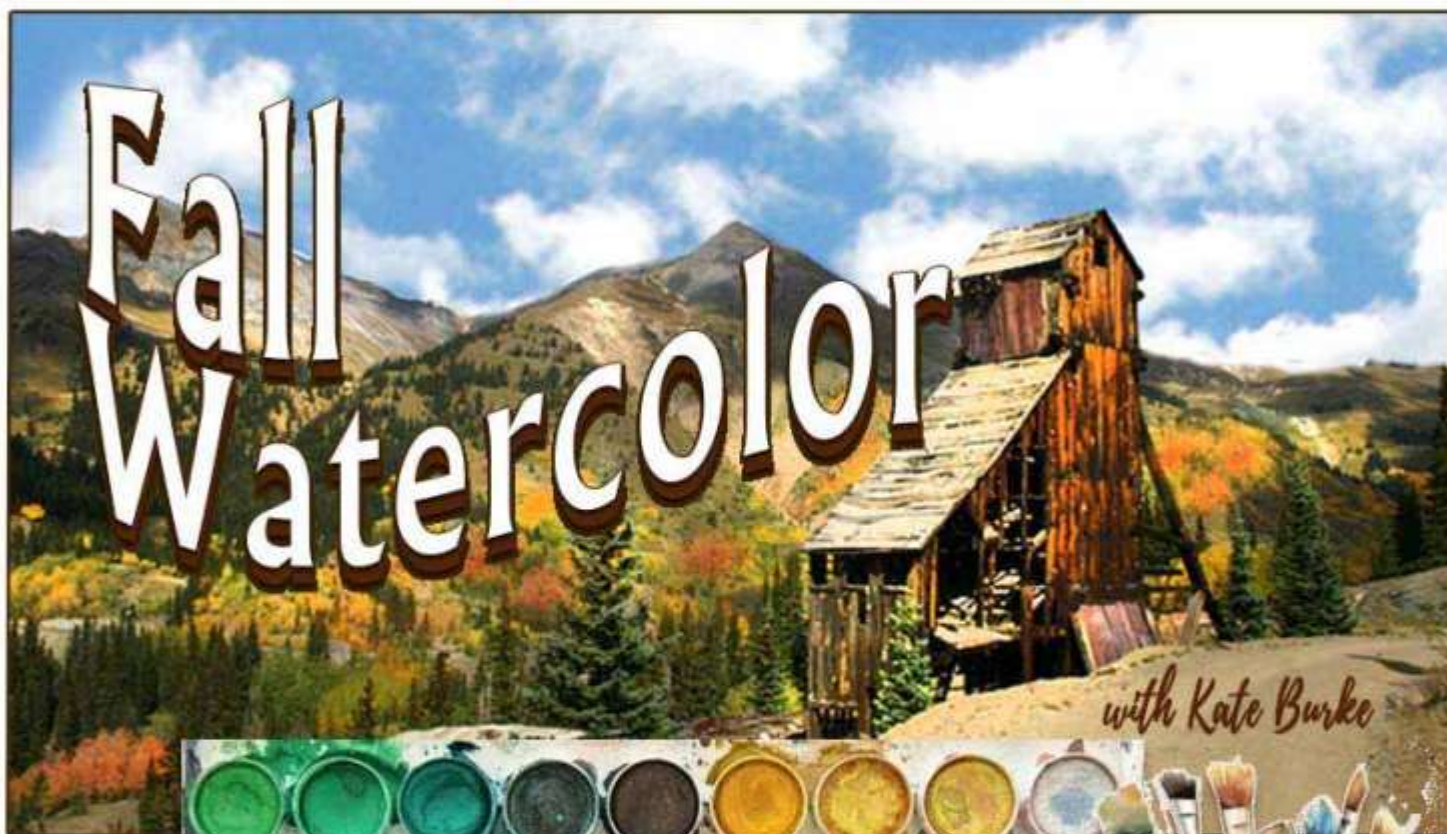
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SAVE THE DATE! LOCAL EVENTS CALENDAR

ONGOING-

TRUE GRIT WALKING TOURS-June and August in Ridgway-Every Friday 3 pm guided free True Grit walking tour departs the gazebo in Hartwell Park. Arrive 15 minutes early. The one-hour tour covers downtown locations where True Grit was filmed. **July in Ridgway**-Every Friday 3 pm and Monday 10 am. Guided free True Grit walking tours depart the gazebo in Hartwell Park. Arrive 15 minutes early. The one-hour tour covers downtown locations where True Grit was filmed. Call 469.682.9710 to arrange a custom tour for \$10 per person at a time of your choosing.

HEALING COLLECTIVE OF WESTERN COLORADO-Every 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month from 12-1pm the Healing Collective of Western Colorado meets at 220 N Stough Ave. It is open to all wellness providers in the area who would like to collaborate with and learn from other local practitioners.

MONTROSE FARMERS MARKET (970) 249 0705 Centennial Plaza, 433 S. 1st St. Montrose, CO 81401

www.valleyfoodpartnership.org. Year-Round Farmers Market, Saturdays 9am-1pm (Summer), every other Saturday 10am-1pm (Winter). Accepts SNAP and Double Up Food Bucks.

MONTROSE CENTER FOR ARTS FIRST FRIDAY-New Art Exhibit opening with featured artists.4:30 - 7 pm First Friday of every month. 11 S Park Ave., Montrose. Free Admission. For more information: 970-787-9428 or info@mc4arts.com

MONTROSE ALTRUSA-1st Tuesday of the month Program meeting; 2nd Tuesday of the month committee meeting; 3rd Tuesday of the month Business meeting. Meetings are held at the Field House on the corner of Colorado Avenue and Rio Grande Avenue at Noon.

FREE THINKERS meet 1st Sunday of the month for information call 970 417-4183

BOSOM BUDDIES BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP, Wednesdays noon-12:45, 645 S. 5th Street

MONTROSE HISTORICAL SOCIETY meets 1st Wednesday of the month @ Montrose Events Center, 1036 No 7th Street 7 pm (970) 249-2085 www.montrosehistory.org

MONTROSE AREA WOODTURNERS Montrose Area Woodturners meet second Saturdays 9 am. Chapter of the American Association of Woodturners. For location and information contact: Al Head 970-209-0981 or aheadaviation@outlook.com

NURSE FAMILY PARTNERSHIP-Breastfeeding Support Group on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of every month. An infant scale will also be available to check your baby's weight. Breastfeeding Support Group (Bring your questions and your family!) Montrose County Event Center (1036 North 7th Street Room 3) 10am - 12pm. Questions? Please call 970-252-5015.

BINGO EVERY FRIDAY, SATURDAY, SUNDAY at 7pm at the American Legion Post 24 Olathe doors open at 5:30. Sunday Bingo will start at 1:30pm. More info call Tom 970 260 8298.

THE MONTROSE GENEALOGY CENTER at 700 E. Main St. is now open Wednesday and Thursday afternoons, 1-4 p.m. or call for an appointment: 970-240-1755. Free help and resources for your family history research." (The center is sponsored by the non-profit organization, Fore-Kin Trails Genealogical Society.)

MONTHLY

Sept. 3-Tuesday Sept. 3 at 5pm at Montrose Safety Complex mtg rm (police 434 S1st) Citizens' Climate lobby meets to promote a climate action plan to mitigate carbon emissions. Nonpartisan, National Environmental. All Welcome info 970-765-9095.

Sept. 4-We now have four Museums in Town. What a great way to meet one of the Museums through this presentation of long-time Docents of the Museum of the Mountain West. They will give updates and stories about the museum. Open to everyone and free on Sept.4th starting at 7 pm at the Montrose County Events Center.

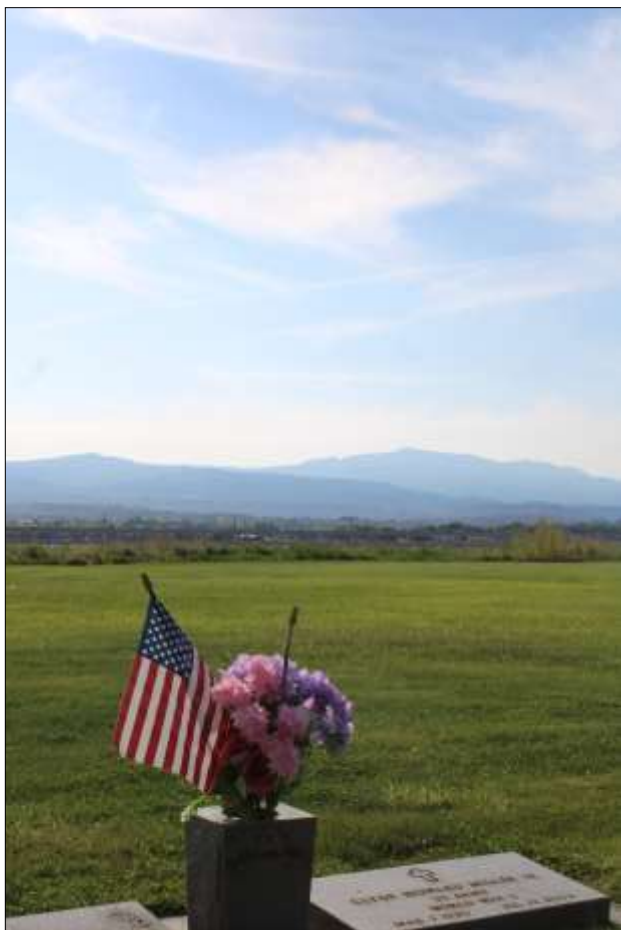
Sept. 21- Lake City hosts the Uncorked Wine and Music Festival.

Sept. 21-Uncompahgre Pow-Wow | Montrose, CO [Ute Indian Museum](http://UteIndianMuseum.com) | Sept. 21, 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Join the Ute Indian Museum for its first Uncompahgre Pow-Wow! Hosted by the Western Slope Native American Resource Center and the Ute Indian Museum, the event offers visitors a chance to enter a dance contest, enjoy local food, and more. Over \$14,000 in prizes will be awarded with drawings for up to \$4,500 in prizes for all dancers who do not win first, second, or third in each of the dancing categories. Please note that parking at the museum is limited but a free shuttle will run every 15 minutes from the Target parking lot from 10:30 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Sept. 22-Karaoke at Magic Circle Theatre Sunday, Sept. 22 -- 7:30 PM 420 S 12th St, Montrose, CO. 970-249-8738

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