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ASSOCIATION



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PROJECT 7, CONTRACTORS CONTINUE RESILIENCY TALKS



The Project 7 Water Authority held their monthly meeting on April 24. It has been recommended that, rather than one big project, the Resiliency Project be phased in with four smaller projects. Over a seven year period the estimated cost (construction, other project costs, escalation) would be between \$175,347,927 - \$184,907,234. Photo by Gail Marvel.

By Gail Marvel

MONTROSE-The April 24 board meeting of the [Project 7 Water Authority](#) was called to order by Chairman Jake Foreman. Kevin Carlson attended the meeting on Zoom; all other board members were present in person. Approximately 30 people, in person and virtually, were in attendance; however, only three were interested citizens. The March 27, 2025, minutes were approved; changes to the agenda included Item 10B changed from action to an information item.

Introductions included a new hire employee, Courtney; and LeRoy Foreman, brother of Chair Jake Foreman, who replaced Mark Hildreth as Olathe board alternate.

NOTE: A Special board meeting was held on April 17, 2025. Action taken during the April meeting reflects discussion and direction from the Special meeting.

Draft Public Comment Policy - Action

Continued pg 32

ELDERADO FINANCIAL THRIVING IN NEW LOCATION

By Steve Middendorp

MONTROSE-Elderado Financial is thriving in their new building after relocating last fall. Owner Jim Elder said the wealth management and financial planning firm outgrew the old location, which prompted their relocation to a larger building. The new location has been a useful upgrade.

"Our original building was 1,500 square feet and our new building provides us 3,000 square feet and is expandable for future needs," Elder said. "With the extra space, we are able to have multiple meetings at the same time and host events as well. The main conference room has a removeable wall for added flexibility. The move to the new building allows us to be more efficient, so hiring more staff isn't necessary. We are now able to accept more clients due to the increased capacity."

The building itself is 7,000 square feet and includes 10 units that Elder has been renting out to other local businesses. Seven of the units are currently rented. "In addition to having Elderado Financial occupy the building, we also rent to Carol Viner, an estate planning attorney, and to Attorney Brian Kidnay on the first floor," Elder said. "We currently have seven out of 10 units



With their new building, better parking, and that same funny sign, Elderado Financial has continued to thrive after 23 years of operation in Montrose. Photo by Harry Switzer.

Continued pg 3

[Red Hawks Sports Coverage](#)
By Cliff Dodge!

[DMEA Gears Up For Election.](#)
Hears Report from CEO!

[Columnist Gia Pirelli on recent 'women's space launch'—Symbolism over Substance!](#)

[Calendar of Local Events!](#)

UPDATED GUIDELINES FOR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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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 welcome community contributions and commentary! Please note, submitted content does not necessarily reflect the views of the **Montrose Mirror** or its editorial team.

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ELDERADO FINANCIAL THRIVING IN NEW LOCATION

From pg 1

to having Elderado Financial occupy the building, we also rent to Carol Viner, an estate planning attorney, and to Attorney Brian Kidnay on the first floor," Elder said. "We currently have seven out of 10 units rented on the second floor, which includes Berkshire Hathaway Home Services, DLC Video Production, Medicare Strategies, and other businesses."

Elder said the new building also provides benefits for their clients, including easy access from Townsend, plenty of parking, handicapped accessibility, internet fiber, and high visibility. The business has continued to thrive after 23 years of operation in Montrose.

"Elderado Financial has experienced solid growth over the past 23 years since moving to Montrose, due to providing quality customer service," Elder said. "One factor is our locally-famous billboard sign."

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

NINE DMEA BOARD DIRECTOR CANDIDATES ANNOUNCED

Special to the Mirror

REGIONAL-Nine cooperative members will be on the upcoming ballot for the DMEA Board of Directors Election. Three of the nine total seats are up for election, and the candidates for each seat are as follows:

District 3

Demitri Stelter
Gary Hubbell
Jacob Gray

District 4

Robert (Jeff) Hubbard
Emily Sanchez
Shelley Kelly

South Region

Jock Fleming
Ken Norris
Joseph (Joe) Simo

Detailed information about each candi-

date is available at dmea.com/board-candidates.

Voting opens on May 9, 2025. Members can vote online, by mail, or in person.

Each member is allowed only one vote, regardless of the voting method used.

For **online voting**, a "Vote Now" button will appear in each eligible member's secure SmartHub account beginning May 9. To vote online, members must log in, click the button, make their selections, and submit their ballot. Members with an email address on file will also receive a secure email link. To vote through the link, members should click it, enter the provided login credentials, and cast their vote.


For **mail-in voting**, ballots will be mailed to all members at the address on file. Members can also return their completed

ballots by mail or drop them off at any DMEA office using the secure ballot drop box in the lobby. The deadline to drop off ballots is **Wednesday, June 10 at 12:00 p.m. (noon).**

For **in-person voting**, members can vote during DMEA's Annual Meeting on **Thursday, June 12, at Hotchkiss K-8 School** (465 Lorah Lane, Hotchkiss). Voting will occur from **4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.**, followed by a brief business meeting at **5:30 p.m.**

During the meeting, DMEA will announce the election results, review the past year's activities, and host a member Q&A session.

After the meeting, members and their families are invited to enjoy free entertainment, including live music, a mystery-themed event, prizes, and kids' activities.




Where Wallflowers Grow is the coming of age story of a shy, introverted, 12-year-old girl. A 1960's latch-key kid, Gail's mom agreed to let her leave her home-alone existence and live in her grandma's boarding house.

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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 and wingedpublications.com.



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

STEM DAY CELEBRATION AT MONTROSE REGIONAL LIBRARY

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-It's the National Science Foundation's 75th Anniversary! Join us for a STEM Day Celebration at the Montrose Regional Library on May 10, 2025 from 11:30am to 1pm with fun, interactive activities for all ages about water in the Four Corners Region! Activities to make, activities to take!! Free to the public. All ages invited.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

TREE REMOVAL AND REPLANTING NEAR IT BUILDING TO SUPPORT COURTHOUSE GROUNDS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE – As part of the ongoing landscaping and maintenance efforts around the Historic County Courthouse, a small number of Chinese Elm trees located just outside the IT Building on South Townsend between South 1st Street and South 2nd Street will be removed starting Thursday, April 24 at 7:30 a.m.

After careful assessment, it was deter-

mined that the roots of these trees are extending beneath the IT Building and causing interference with the sewer system and foundation. To ensure the long-term health of the building and surrounding environment, the trees must be removed.

In their place, new trees will be thoughtfully selected and replanted as part of the overall courthouse landscaping

plan. These replacement trees have been chosen for their lower impact on nearby structures, helping to maintain both the beauty and functionality of this important public space for years to come.

During the initial phase of work, safety cones and barriers will be in place around the affected area. We kindly ask all visitors and staff to avoid the vicinity for the safety of the public and the work crews.

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IMPROVING RIVERSIDE HABITAT ALONG THE UNCOMPAGHGRE RIVER

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE—RiversEdge West is excited to announce that riverside habitat improvement efforts along the Uncompahgre River in Montrose will continue in 2025, with conservation crews working April 21 through May 2. This project is a

collaborative effort between RiversEdge West, the City of Montrose, Western Colorado Conservation Corps, and Friends of the River Uncompahgre.

Why: This restoration work supports a river that is vital to the Montrose community—socially, economically, and environ-

mentally. The Uncompahgre River corridor provides essential habitat for fish and wildlife and offers high recreational and aesthetic value to residents and visitors alike. Both agricultural and recreational uses of the river form the backbone of the local economy and community well-being.

What: Restoration activities will focus on removing invasive species like tamarisk and Russian olive and replanting with a diverse mix of native vegetation. These invasive plants negatively impact river ecosystems by reducing biodiversity, limiting access for recreation, altering river channels, degrading fish habitat, and increasing wildfire risks.

Where: Youth conservation corps members from the Western Colorado Conservation Corps will spend two weeks working along the river near the Uncompahgre Riverway Trail, just north of the Ogden Road bike path access bridge, off the Hobo's Hide Out Trail. Restoration is a gradual process and can sometimes look messy—crews may be using chainsaws, operating loud equipment, and creating piles of branches awaiting chipping. At the same time, you might see volunteers planting and watering native species or installing wire caging around young cottonwoods to prevent herbivory. Though often slow and untidy, these riverside restoration efforts contribute to lasting improvements: the return of native vegetation, enhanced wildlife habitat, and clearer views of the river.

How: Funding for this project is generously provided by the City of Montrose, Colorado River District, Colorado Water Conservation Board, El Pomar Foundation, and the Western Colorado Community Foundation. Special thanks to Secret Creek Yurts and Riverbend RV Park and Cabins for hosting the youth crews.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

SURFACE TREATMENT PROJECT BEGINS ON WEST SIDE OF US 160 WOLF CREEK PASS

Special to the Mirror

SOUTHWEST COLORADO — The Colorado Department of Transportation and contracting partner Elam Construction will begin a surface treatment project on April 29 along US Highway 160, east of Pagosa Springs, from Treasure Falls to the Wolf Creek Pass Summit. The project has an anticipated completion date at the end of October. Motorists are reminded of an additional highway improvement project taking place 20 miles west on US 160 in downtown Pagosa Springs, www.codot.gov/projects/us160pagosasprings.

The Wolf Creek Pass project will improve approximately 9 miles of US 160 from Mile Point 158.5, Treasure Falls, to MP 167.7, at the pass summit. Work will include asphalt paving and overlay, rumble strip installation, striping, guardrail and road sign replacement. Additional work will include rail replacement and deck repairs at the bridge located at MP 159.3 just east of Treasure Falls and a culvert inlet repair at MP 165.8 just west of the pass summit.

"US 160 is the major east-west route for local commuters, tourist traffic and freight across southern Colorado. The major highway, which includes Wolf Creek Pass, provides access from I-25 in Walsenburg, through the San Luis Valley, all the way to the Four Corners," said CDOT Regional Transportation Director Julie Constan. "Wolf Creek Pass is known for its natural beauty and wilderness, but it can also be a treacherous stretch of road that requires planning and attention to safety. Motorists are urged to use extreme caution due to the steep downhill grades and hairpin curves that can be challenging, especially for commercial big rigs."

Project Benefits

The new asphalt will add years of life to this stretch of highway, which saw its last significant paving 20 years ago. The resurfacing will provide a smoother road and will add durability by increasing the resistance of ruts and road damage. Other benefits of the project include installation of new guardrail that will be 31 inches high, designed to meet new safety standard requirements. The higher railing will help veering vehicles remain on the road more effectively, making the highway safer for the traveling public. The former standard height of guardrail was 27 inches.

The inlet repair is a continuation of a previous temporary repair completed when a sinkhole formed, causing damage to the existing culvert. Improvement of the culvert will accommodate higher accumulations of rainfall and lower the risks associated with flooding.


Travel Impacts

Daytime work hours are Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Traffic impacts will include:

- A speed reduction to 40 mph
- The project will maintain two-way traffic, however, motorists will encounter single lane closures and lane shifts
- A **12 ft. width restriction** is in place for the West Wolf Creek Pass project. Important note: there is a **10 ft. width restriction** through the downtown Pagosa Springs project work zone. Plan ahead!

For additional information about the US 160 downtown Pagosa Springs, visit www.codot.gov/projects/us160pagosasprings

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

CITIZENS CLIMATE LOBBY TO HOST MONTHLY MEETING ON MAY 6 AT HAP

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-Citizen's Climate Lobby will hold their monthly meeting on Tuesday May 6 at 5 at Hispanics Affairs Project Building, located at 504 N 1st Street Montrose. Nonpartisan, environmental, All Welcome, 970-765-9095.



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: COMMENTARY

PROJECT 7 STEPS BACK FROM A \$200M PROJECT THEY CAN'T AFFORD *After 20 Years of Planning, A New Direction is Recognized as Needed*

By David White

The Project 7 Board meeting last Thursday, April 24th was remarkable given its brevity as well as the direction that they, as an organization, intend to take when it comes to providing all of us with drinking water as well as a new backup water treatment plant just south of Colona near the Ridgway Dam.

Their updated mission statement is clear as it says, in part, ***"We continue to cooperatively develop a project that is affordable to rate payers and fairly allocated between governments."*** They stated that rather than being any kind of a quasi-governmental body, that they are a ***"Cost-of-Service Enterprise"*** where their revenues are derived from "service fees" vs. "taxes."

And just to be clear, they went on record at this meeting stating that ***ALL DECISIONS*** made by their Board of Directors (one person each representing the City of Montrose, City of Delta, Town of Olathe, Tri-County Water District, Menoken Water District and Chipeta Water District) will be decided with input from the local agency that they represent.

In a nutshell, they told the public that they're not a taxing district and that if their board decides to raise your water rates, you have no recourse against them. You have to go to whatever entity is providing you with your drinking water and talk to their elected officials if you don't like what they're doing, and you'll need to do it before the Project 7 Board votes on it.

Unfortunately, public notice from these respective water delivery entities isn't as transparent as would be expected. Rate increases have occurred under the guise of needing to build a backup treatment plant that had, as it's cornerstone, a plan for its construction without a real-world price tag until just recently. Now we find, as many have suspected for some time and is now being admitted by Project 7, that such a facility is simply unaffordable and the financing for such a facility is virtually non-existent.

A price difference of \$16 million dollars from what had been "internally" estimated vs. what a "design-build" contractor

was coming up with dealt the death blow to the plans as envisioned by Project 7 for years that saw the project costs balloon to almost \$200 million dollars in overall outlays for a plant that would produce less than 25% of what our current treatment plant produces.

While redundancy is an admirable goal, getting there was fraught with enormous financial, logistical and regulatory challenges. Taking several steps back, the Project 7 Board held a "retreat" on April 17th to discuss where they'd been and where they should go especially in light of the difference of opinions facing them from their respective agencies and an alarmed public. Thankfully, they came out of the retreat with a new vision and direction.

Rather than taking this project on as one giant undertaking, a new plan has emerged. The process will be driven by affordability as plans for a new plant will focus on phasing the construction process over the next several months and years as well as working to take advantage of grants and other funding opportunities that place an emphasis on components of a project such as the design and construction of raw waterlines, finished waterlines, treatment plant components, etc.

Largely at the request of John McCollum and Kathy Calkins with the Chipeta Water District, consideration has been given to the impact of current and future rates as a percentage of Median Household Income (MHI) on how funding from you and I will be impacted by the costs of this phased project.

Water and sewer rates are generally assessed as a percentage of median household income. If the average cost is less than 2.0%—or 4.0% combined—it is considered "affordable". ([Water and sewer affordability in the United States: a 2019 update - Teodoro - 2020 - AWWA Water Science - Wiley Online Library](#)) However, 10% of households face affordability issues, with the lowest income bracket spending an average of 6.8% of their annual income on these services. ([Water Affordability in the United States - Cardoso - 2022 - Water Resources Research - Wiley Online Library](#))

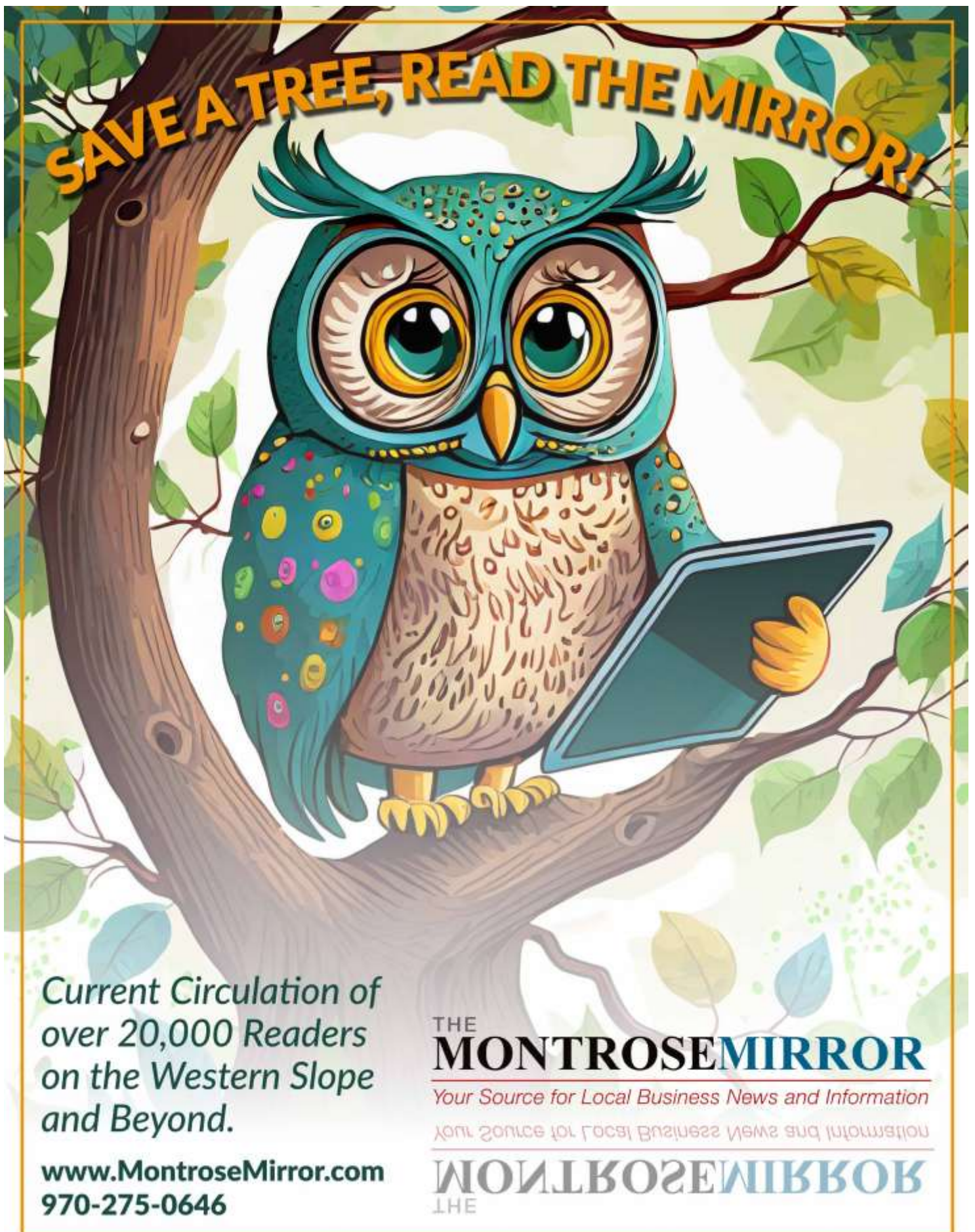
Reading these two articles, one can sur-

mise that where Project 7 was going would simply make our water too expensive for most folks, especially those on fixed incomes. Affordable water (and remember, your sewer/wastewater rates are based on your water consumption and factor into the MHI) would have been a thing of the past. One can only hope that the new direction that they're going will give us a more reliable water treatment and delivery system at an affordable price.

I firmly believe that if it weren't for the increase in public awareness as well as serious and direct input from Greg Swartz with D.A. Davidson & Company (the company that has been consulting with Project 7 on the financing of this project), that the outcome of this planned project might very well have been different.

In closing, one last thing should be noted. The Project 7 Board approved, without discussion, a new policy directed at "Public Comments" that is a mild version of ones found in other governmental organizations. While not nearly as restrictive as say the City of Montrose's, it certainly is a step toward what appears to be an attempt to limit public comments and input into the decision-making process. While I understand that some jurisdictional customers or citizens of the municipalities, represented on the Board by appointed members, get a bit long in their comments, a free exchange of information between the Board and public should not be unduly restricted. This policy does provide more latitude in that regard and yet allows the Board's business to move ahead in a timely manner. Just remember though, you've only got three (3) minutes now to state your remarks.

Mr. White is an active citizen & community leader as well as a business owner, entrepreneur, former Colorado Springs City Councilor and Montrose City Councilor as well as Montrose Mayor. He was a two-term Montrose 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 & one great grandchild.



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BOCC HEARS PUBLIC COMMENT, REVIEWS APPLICANTS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR

By Caitlin Switzer

COLORADO-The Montrose Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) convened for a special meeting on Monday, April 21. BOCC Chair Scott Mijares opened the meeting. Mijares, said, "Dennis Anderson would you mind leading us in the Pledge?" All commissioners were present.

CALL FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Mijares read the rules for public comment.

First to speak was Julie Yarnell.

"Commissioner Mijares gave public comment at this podium on March 12, 2025 at the BOCC meeting, stating his platform as county commissioner was to provide greater transparency, more citizen involvement, greater efficiency and to represent the citizens of Montrose and not the bureaucracy. His transparency has been clear as mud. Approvals and decisions made by the previous BOCC prior to Mijares' swearing in have been brought up continuously by him as being disrespectful and unfair.

"He claims staff is trying to take advantage of him because he's a new commissioner," Yarnell said. "With any new job it's imperative to work harder to get up to speed on things. Stop playing the new card and get to work; do your research and seek input if you don't have answers—you have a team of county staff to help you."

Yarnell said, "Commissioner Hansen is an excellent resource with her knowledge and board experience..." She suggested hosting some night-time BOCC meetings so that those who can't attend on a weekday morning can come and give their input. "You represent 44,000 people and they all have different opinions," she said. "So far you've only listened to a few." The BOCC efficiency is poor, especially with personnel positions, Yarnell said,

noting the recent loss of three respected, experienced personnel.

"...be a leader and not a follower...stop the shenanigans and obscure resolutions," she said. "And focus on local issues you can help implement like infrastructure planning for county growth, strengthening our economy, solutions for homelessness and affordable housing, protecting lands and water rights, and so many issues to address...you work for the citizens of Montrose County. If this were a corporate work environment, you would be put on an employee performance improvement plan because you failed to reach any of the platform standards you set. Your constituents are watching, and we expect better. Work together as a board, make good decisions, and represent all..."

Next to speak was Barbara Hulet, who thanked BOCC Chair Mijares for his transparency, "...I appreciate it a lot," she said. "Keith and Roger went out after serving eight years. Prior to that we had constituent meetings every quarter—they rotated around. That stopped when Keith and Roger and Sue came on board. We also had Tri-County, with Mesa, Delta and Montrose...once a quarter...I used to get emails and I quit getting emails..."

Hansen said the quarterly meetings have never stopped. "Are you talking about town halls?"

Hulet said that the meetings she referenced were roundtables, "So the commissioners could keep us abreast of what's going on..." Hansen said she had not heard of the roundtables.

There's a lot that goes on that people are not aware of, Hulet said. "...Until all of a sudden there's all of this going on, with the quitting and the firing...I really appreciated Emily, and she was always so good to answer my emails; if I would like to schedule a work session she made that



Julie Yarnell, above, offered comment during the April 22 BOCC meeting. Meeting screenshot.

happen. And she had the opportunity to be the interim county manager until the new board came on. It's my wonderment why that couldn't have happened. And it would have saved all of this uproar that's going on in our county."

EXECUTIVE SESSION-Montrose County Board of Public Health.

The Commissioners went into Executive Session as the Montrose County Board of Public Health, along with the Interim County Manager and Interim County Attorney, to review and receive information from the Human Resources Director/Interim County Manager regarding applications for the Director of Public Health position. There are three finalists for the position. Following the Executive Session, Interim County Attorney Julie Andress said that the board was presented with applications for the Director of Public Health. No decisions were made. Of 13 applicants only three met the requirements, one of whom was the Interim Public Health Director, who will continue in the position. "We will meet later to make a decision," BOCC Chair Scott Mijares said. The Board of Public Health reconvened as the Montrose Board of County Commissioners and approved a motion to adjourn.

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BOCC AUTHORIZES COUNTY MANAGER SEARCH

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE-With Commissioner Sue Hansen absent and both other commissioners present, the Montrose Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) convened for a special meeting on Wednesday, April 23.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

First to speak was Sue Gattis, who said that she went to Tucson for a week, and when she returned there was no County Manager and no County Attorney. Gattis was able to make her point clear despite being interrupted by her cell phone ringing, as she reminded commissioners of a "hat trick" she had learned from a wise woman. "...Remember who you represent and what you are doing when you go into a situation."

Gattis recalled walking up the steps of the old Montrose County Courthouse building to count ballots, "I took my hat off, my Republican hat, and I wore my non-partisan hat."

To do so involves strength of character, Gattis said, "I hope you will prove to me that you can do it..." Gattis offered Commissioner Sue Hansen as an example, "...I think she herself does it."

Jim Anderson spoke next. He thanked Commissioners for their hard work and dedication. "...I know these have been tough times..."

What we know is always important and what we don't know can sometimes be even more important, Anderson said, adding that this is not the first time Montrose County has dealt with change. "...Right here in this room we have good people sitting right up there..."

Anderson urged Commissioners to contin-



The BOCC convened for a special meeting on Wednesday, April 23. Meeting Screenshot.

ue the search for a county manager and to open it up both locally and nationwide. "Please consider the people right at the table because I know they're good people...we have good people in the county and if you open it up both locally and nationwide, I'm sure we'll get good applications for you to consider...this is not the first time Montrose County's made changes...it's not necessarily the 'what' that's going on, it's the 'who'...in my opinion you have every right to consider all factors in your judgment...the county manager and county attorney are direct reports in fact to the county commissioners...I just know Montrose County will do well in the future."

COUNTY MANAGER

Interim County Manager Leslie Quon had no removals or changes to the agenda.

GENERAL BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

There was one General Business item on the Special Meeting agenda, "Consideration and possible authorization

for the Board's approval to initiate a search for the County Manager position, in accordance with C.R.S. 24-6-402(3.5) of the Colorado Sunshine Law. If approved, the recruitment will open on April 24, 2025, and close on May 15, 2025."

Interim County Manager and Human Resource Director Leslie Quon said she will ensure all candidates meet the qualifications and will present the top three to five candidates to be interviewed.

Attendee Dennis Anderson attempted to comment out of turn but was reminded that the Public Comment Period had passed. "We're not in the public comment period right now Dennis, I'm sorry," BOCC Chair Scott Mijares said.

Commissioner Sean Pond said that although Commissioner Hansen was on vacation, "She is very well versed and up to date on today's agenda."

Commissioners voted to approve the search for a county manager. With no further business and no executive session, the BOCC voted to adjourn.



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COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

DEA ROCKY MOUNTAIN FIELD DIVISION LEADS MULTI-AGENCY ENFORCEMENT ACTION IN COLORADO SPRINGS

Mirror staff report

COLORADO SPRINGS—Special Agents from the DEA Rocky Mountain Division led a multi-agency enforcement operation with local and federal partners in Colorado Springs early Sunday morning. Posts on the X platform were made by the DEA Rocky Mt. Field Division on Sunday, April 27, affirming that agents had taken more than 100 illegal aliens into custody during the raid. Drugs and weapons were seized. More than 200 people were inside the Colorado Springs underground nightclub when #DEA and local/federal partners made entry around 345aMT, the X posts stated.

Prior to entering the underground nightclub, RMFD Special Agents announced their presence; 200 people were inside - at least 114 in the U.S. illegally. In addition, more than a dozen active-duty military were patrons or security guards, according to the DEA posts.

The El Paso Board of County Commissioners released a statement on Sunday evening regarding the enforcement operation: "The El Paso County Board of County Commissioners commends the actions taken by law enforcement during today's DEA-led operation in Colorado Springs. The scale and severity of this criminal



Screenshot from X post by DEA Rocky Mt. Division.

activity posed a direct threat to the safety and well-being of our community. Today's operation sends a clear message: illegal activity will not be tolerated in El Paso County. As part of today's operation, several illegal aliens connected to criminal activity were detained. We would like to thank the Trump administration for empowering the DEA and ICE to do their jobs after the disastrous Biden border policies — aided by sanctuary state policies — created threats to public safety that continue to endanger our communities.

"We are deeply grateful to the DEA's Rocky Mountain Field Division, the El Paso County Sheriff's Office, and all of our local, state, and federal partners for their coordination, professionalism, and steadfast commitment to safeguarding our community. Public safety is — and will always remain — our top priority. We remain firmly committed to supporting our law enforcement agencies and advocating for policies that keep El Paso County a safe, secure, and thriving place for all who call it home."



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

WHY AREN'T WE PRIORITIZING LOCAL PURCHASING?

Editor:

When it comes to government procurement in the City of Montrose and Montrose County, why aren't we making every effort to "Buy Local"? It should be a requirement by local government, whenever feasible, to prioritize local businesses and keep tax dollars circulating within our community.

How can we build a thriving local economy if we continue to award contracts and make purchases from outside entities that do not contribute to the economic vitality of Montrose, Naturita, or Nucla?

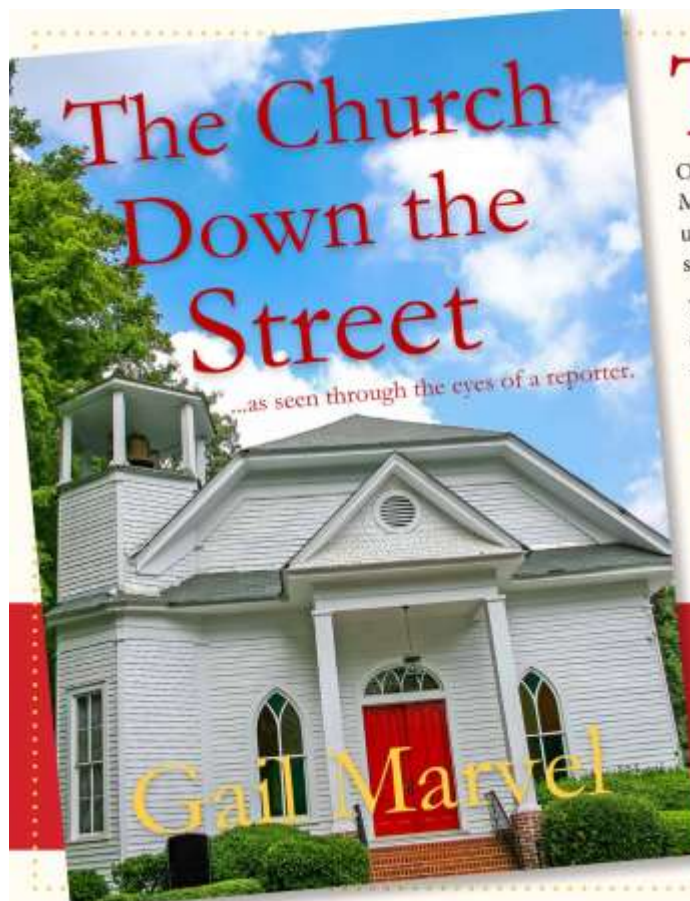
While it's commendable that our City Manager, Bill Bell's City of Montrose paid for \$85,000 GMC Denali (which is used for personal use as well as City business ALL on the City Taxpayers dime, BTW) was purchased locally from Turner Chevrolet, the vast majority of the vehicle fleets for both the City and County are sourced from outside Montrose County. Many of these vehicles come from Grand Junction, the Front Range, Utah, or even farther afield.

We should strive to ensure that all contracts and purchases, whenever possible, are awarded to locally owned businesses and suppliers whose owners reinvest their earnings in our community. This means prioritizing Montrose, Naturita, and Nucla over distant cities like Denver, Salt Lake City, or even Grand Junction.

While I understand that statutory requirements may impose limitations, the City Council and the Board of County Commissioners should explore every legal avenue to support "Buying Local." Our guiding principle should be "Montrose First," "Naturita First," and "Nucla First" to foster a robust and self-sustaining local economy.

Michael J Badagliacco, "MJB"

Citizen-Montrose, CO



The *Church Down the Street*, published pre-COVID, peers into the worship services of more than 70 churches, some of which have a weekly attendance of less than 10.

Organized in a topical format (Hospitality, Program & Source Material, Music, Meditations & Invitations, and The Message), the author uses an unbiased approach to allow readers to experience the worship service as seen through the eyes of a reporter.

The Church Down the Street contains anecdotes and stories from the actual worship services and asks thought-provoking questions that allow readers to draw their own conclusions.

Readers will:

- See strengths and weaknesses in the worship service
- Re-evaluate hospitality toward visitors
- Become more aware of source material used in the worship service
- Compare and contrast music presentations and selections
- Discern the value and content of the sermon.

Gail Marvel's book, *The Church Down the Street*, is available online at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) and [wingedpublications.com](https://www.wingedpublications.com).

GAIL MARVEL
Montrose Author & Reporter





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GONZALEZ MUNIZ EARNS SOCCER SCHOLARSHIP

By Cliff Dodge

MONTROSE-The boys high school soccer season was over and done last fall, but the sport continues to grab headlines. The Red Hawks under the direction of head coach Cassie Snyder completed a successful season with a 10-6-1 overall record and qualified for the CHSAA state tournament. The Red Hawks defeated Glenwood Springs in the initial round but were eliminated from further competition by Battle Mountain.

The Red Hawks team leader, Christopher Gonzalez Muniz, will graduate from Montrose High School this spring and will continue to play at the college level. Gonzalez Muniz on Friday signed his scholarship papers to play college soccer at West Virginia Wesleyan College. His proud parents, Francisco Gonzalez, a construction worker and his mom, Jazmin, the homemaker, brother Mateo and sister Paula watched as Christopher advanced his career to the next level.

Muniz was twice named to the honorable mention all-state team, three times all conference team, and four years as a varsity player for the Red Hawks. Muniz played striker and wing for the Red Hawks



Gonzalez Muniz on Friday signed his scholarship papers to play college soccer at West Virginia Wesleyan College. Photo by Cliff Dodge.

and will in all likelihood play the same position at the college level. Muniz enjoys lifting weights and sport medicine while in high school.

He will focus on a career in Business/Finance at West Virginia Wesleyan. His

hobbies include music, workouts and traveling.

Muniz will become a cross-country traveler in early September as he heads for West Virginia to begin his college career. Best of luck and enjoy the experience.

SELECTED RESULTS -COUGAR CLASSIC: CORONADO HIGH SCHOOL, CO SPGS

By Cliff Dodge

COLORADO SPRINGS-One of the highlights of the spring track and field competition each year is the annual Cougar Classic hosted by the folks at Coronado High School in Colorado Springs. This year a total of 41 schools participated in the event and the Montrose Red Hawks made their mark at the tournament.

Girls:

800 meter run:	7 th	Georgia Ficco
	9 th	Millie Crane
4x100 meter relay:	3 rd	Montrose relay team
4x800 meter relay:	3 rd	Montrose relay team
Long jump:	8 th	Audrey Righter
Triple jump:	3 rd	Hope Stephens

Boys:

400 meter dash:	6 th	Cutter Travers
800 meter run:	4 th	Josiah Graff
	6 th	Vash Veatch
3200 meter run:	8 th	Zach Quaid
4x100 meter relay:	2 nd	Montrose relay team
4x800 meter relay:	3 rd	Montrose relay team
Shot put:	3 rd	Eason Jessup

KALEB FERGUSON ACCEPTS BASKETBALL SCHOLARSHIP

By Cliff Dodge

MONROSE-The high school basketball season ended for the Montrose Red Hawks in early March as the charges of Head Coach Ryan Voehringer qualified for the CHSAA state tournament. The Red Hawks finished the regular season with a 17-6 record and then played three games in the tournament, defeating Thornton and Durango and then bowing to the Falcon Falcons as they fought to qualify for the Great 8 but fell short.

Senior Center/Forward Kaleb Ferguson put his stamp on the Red Hawks team beginning when he was a freshman and finished his Red Hawks career with 1,288 points and more than 600 rebounds. Ferguson played on the varsity for four years, captained the team for three years, was named State of Colorado honorable mention two years, and was named Southwestern League 1st team for his final three years.

Ferguson spoke at his scholarship signing and gave credit to his parents, his coaches, and his teammates, reminding those assembled that basketball like most sports is a team game and without the team he could not be successful.

Kaleb's dad, Kevin Ferguson, an operation specialist at Kroger, helped Kaleb from SAM in the Gym practicing, driving to practice, and doing all of the little things that make a champion. Kaleb's mom, Nicole Ferguson, had an ever more important position. She home schooled Kaleb along with Noah and Seth Ferguson. Kaleb Ferguson named math and history as a couple of his favorite subjects in high



Ferguson spoke at his scholarship signing and gave credit to his parents, his coaches, and his teammates. Photo by Cliff Dodge.

school.

In early September Kaleb will hit the road to Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa, which is located in northeastern Iowa. Ferguson noted that Wartburg lost their senior big man and he will compete for

playing time in his first year. Ferguson intends to study Mathematics and Secondary Education. His hobbies are flyfishing, chess and practicing his Christian faith. The next level of basketball beckons, and Kaleb Ferguson will answer the call.

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DMEA CEO HIGHLIGHTS DANGERS AFTER RECENT THEFTS OF COPPER WIRE

"Someone should have died in some of those..." —DMEA CEO Jack Johnston



The Delta Montrose Electric Association (DMEA) April 22, 2025, regular Board of Directors meeting was held in the Grand Mesa Boardroom. (Screen shot) During a recent trip to Washington DC, Colorado Congressman Jeff Hurd met with DMEA Staff. Photo by Gail Marvel.

By Gail Marvel

MONTROSE—On April 22, the Delta Montrose Electric Association (DMEA) Board of Directors Regular meeting was called to order at 3:03p.m. All board members were present in person.

The call to order was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, determination of a quorum, and agenda approval. During meetings the 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.

Introductions: With a large contingency of DMEA staff in attendance, Board President Stacia Cannon asked that they, as well as each board member, introduce themselves and give their titles/departments. Member Joseph McGill attended through Zoom; Shelly Kelly, board candidate for District 4, attended in

person.

General Business included Membership and Meter Report and approval of the (amended) minutes from the March 2025 Regular Meeting.

Informational Item: Committee Chair Reports

Finance, Audit & Rates – Damon Lockhart, Chair

Lockhart said, "No meeting. Nothing to report."

Engineering, Construction & Energy Services – Enno Heuscher, Chair

No meeting.

Member Relations – Kevin Williams, Chair
Williams said, "We did not meet, but we have a meeting May 12."

Executive – Stacia Cannon, Chair

Cannon said, "We met April 15th from 1 to 2:30. We discussed safety, practices, and policies."

Informational Item - CEO Report Jack Johnston.

Johnston said, "We had winter training. Snowcat and avalanche rescue. We got up to elevation to get to some snow. It was a great day out there. We're coming out of that season and now spring and summer.



Shelly Kelly, candidate for the District 4 seat, attended the April 22 Delta Montrose Electric Association (DMEA) regular meeting. Kelly will run against two others; Robert Hubbard and incumbent Emily Sanchez. Photo by Gail Marvel.

The NRCA Safety Summit, a group [staff] down there. We're excited that DMEA was spotlighted for some of our activities. We've been going through all our easements. All poles are in place and ready to be restrung. Net Metering is growing a little. Hydro is generally going well. We've had a set of bizarre events with a little disruption."

Johnston highlighted the dangers associated with the recent incidents involving the theft of copper wire. He said, "Someone should have died in some of those. It's a little bit scary that there is that much risk [cutting and stealing copper wire]. We are putting up new cameras around the substations. Cameras are good to have for general security."

Discussing pole replacement the staff reported, "Every 10 years we try to go through the whole system with replacements." Johnston continued his report, "Vegetation management. The third crew is doing well for us. Kudos to them."

DMEA continues to take cyber security seriously since the 2021 cyber-attack on the co-op. Referring to ongoing internal precautions of phishing Johnston laughed and said, "One person clicked and tried to claim their credit." When requested, DMEA continues to share their cyber-attack experience with other co-ops and organizations.

The nomination period for board candidates for the election is now closed. The slate of candidates and their bios will be available on the DMEA website.

DMEA CEO HIGHLIGHTS DANGERS AFTER RECENT THEFTS OF COPPER WIRE

From previous pg

The member satisfaction survey is not ready for consideration, but it will be available for the September strategy meeting.

The staff presented slides of the new formatting and re-designed billing statements. The re-design includes a breakdown of charges, changes in verbiage, front-page at a glance view, back page is more detailed. Previously the board asked that the new bill show "demand." However, following discussion, it was determined that trying to educate members about demand, when there are no charges associated with demand, would be problematic and time consuming. The item was removed from the draft. The roll-out for the re-designed statements will begin next month.

Johnston continued with his report. He said, "Our [telephone] answer rate is still solid. The subsidiary [Elevate], Highway 92 is live today. They have access to Elevate. Delta zones are lit up, more through May and June. We are revamping the safety manual. Financials are trending positive. Legal expenses have crept up, but it's starting to decrease."

In the area of media outreach, the Light Up the Navajo project, because it is in the US, has more support than efforts previously seen in Guatemala. Johnston said, "Colorado doesn't have anyone without power, but three western states [with reservations] do. Last year seven crews from Colorado participated [in Light Up the Navajo]."

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

Fleming aid, "We're meeting on Thurs-

day. Western United continues to have a record breaking year, as they have had in the last four or five years. The staff was given 10 percent increases [salary/benefits]"

Colorado Rural Electric Association (CREA) Report – Damon Lockhart.

Lockhart said, "We have a virtual meeting coming up. The last meeting was March 27 -28. In regard to the new building, they had another [purchase] offer that was senior to our offer. It [decision] is probably six more weeks out. They will hire a new CEO in December."

Conferences, Webinars & Meetings

Emily Sanchez, who recently tendered her resignation as an employee of Montrose County, said, "I attended an equity class yesterday." Laughter rippled through the board when she added, "Since I have a little time on my hands. It was a pretty good class."

ACTION ITEM: Other Items

Resolution 2025-3 regarding Readoption of a Nonqualified Deferred Compensation Plan

It was noted that more feedback was needed. No action taken.

Future Meetings

Regular meeting - May 27 3 p.m.

Executive Session

Confidential Corporate, Litigation and Regulatory Matters

-Capital Budget Amendment

-Deferred Tax Liability

-2024 Audit d.

-NRECA 401k Plan Amendment

Executive Session Summary – Sarah Abbott, General Counsel & Chief Compliance Officer.

In an email Abbot summarized the action

taken by the board after exiting the executive session:

"At 4:38pm, Director Sedgeley moved to enter executive session for the purpose of discussing confidential corporate, litigation, and regulatory matters, deferred tax liability, the 2024 audit, an NRECA 401k plan amendment, Board Policy 114, Board Policy 115, and confidential board governance matters. Director Fleming seconded, all voted in favor and the motion passed.

At 7:49pm, Director Fleming moved to exit executive session, Director Lockhart seconded, all voted in favor and the motion passed.

Director Sanchez moved to accept the 2024 audit. Director Fleming seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Director Sanchez moved to approve Resolution 2025-4 regarding the NRECA 401k plan amendment, Director Williams seconded, and the motion passed unanimously."

*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, ja-
cob.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*

*Dist. 9 – (South Region) Jock Fleming, 970-
275-1808, jock.fleming@dmea.com*



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PROJECT 7 WATER AUTHORITY, CONTRACTORS CONTINUE RESILIENCY TALKS *From pg 1*

Approved unanimously.

Public Comment

Citizen David White asked to see, and was given, a copy of the adopted Public Comment Policy.

Resiliency Project Background:

Generally speaking, the Resiliency Project is to build a second water treatment plant south of Montrose, which would have direct access to Ridgway Reservoir.

The Project 7 Board hired Advisor Garver in 2019. CDM Smith and builder McCarthy Constructors, a Design/Build contractor joint venture, were hired in early 2023. Raftelis, a utility rate setting firm, as well as Municipal Advisors D.A. Davidson, and Spencer Fane (bond counsel) were hired in the first quarter of 2024.

Members of the Garver team include Deputy Project Manager for Project 7 Miles Graham and Rick Huggins.

During the Feb. 27 meeting, members of the Design and Build team determined that the Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) was \$156 M. However, board member John McCollum said, "The total [project] gets increased to \$169 M. Then we'd have to address the Garver, DA Davidson, and the outside attorney. In my mind I'm seeing \$190 - \$200 M."

The board appears to be keeping the original size and scope of the project; however, they have asked the management team to break the project up into smaller pieces over an extended period of time.

Resiliency Update – Management Team Miles Graham and Rick Huggins.

In a PowerPoint presentation Huggins said, "We have updated the mission statement. This is cost of service enterprise, not taxes. The Environmental Assessment Finding No Significant Impact [FONSI] will not be on the website, but it can be requested. The [management] team halted negotiations with the Design Builder. The GMP and ICE differed by \$16M."

Huggins alluded to the Special Meeting and the board's new direction. He said, "There are options for restructuring the project. Four main options. The value of the one big project vs four smaller projects. Breaking out smaller projects may cost more, but better financing, tailoring the project, and more opportunities [exist]. The cost estimate, phases over seven years — We are turning a four year

project into a six year project. I think we can repackage and move forward."

Huggins recommended the board turn over their authority to the staff. He said, "...to empower staff to go forward. [Decisions] should be made by staff." Huggins proposed the following phasing schedule:

Summary Schedule

Cost Allocation Study
0-3 months
Rate Impact/Comparison Analysis
0-3 months
Draft Intergovernmental Agreements
3-6 months
Pipeline/Waterline Design Completion
3-8 months
Raw Waterline Construction
5-18 months
Finished Waterline Construction (A-C)
24-36 months
Water plant Construction
12-40 months
Finish Waterline (D) Construction
5 year/grant
Water plant Expansion
5 → years award

An Updated Program Cost Estimate that assumes Phasing over 7 years:

Opinion of probable project higher cost \$184,907,234.
Opinion of probable project lower cost \$175,347,927.

Some Project 7 entities are waiting for the Cost Allocation Study to be completed before they make decisions.

The financials of each entity will be evaluated to determine what cost will be passed on to them, and then to their customers.

As he had done in the March meeting, Huggins recommended moving forward on the pipeline. He said, "Having a contractor onboard will help keep our place in line on where we buy pipe."

D.A. Davidson representative Greg Swartz attended by Zoom and stated that the Cost Allocation Study would be done by Hazen Sawyer, a North Carolina accounting firm. He said, "The agreement, the scope of the work, there is not a lot of wheels that need to be reinvented. I would have like to have originated the agreement last week, but we are doing reasonably fine."

Authority Manager's Report – Adam Turner

Consumption Report – March 2025

Turner said, "We're up from the prior March. There's less snow and rain."

Cash Flow Report – March 2025

Turner said, "Water sales are up. \$120,000 for March because of the 50 cent increase. We are a little ahead of last year because of the 50 cents per 1,000 gallons increase; \$150,000 for the year. Interest income is not as good as last year [because of] buying property last year. Expenses are tracking under by about half a million."

Process Control – March 2025

Turner said, "Quality is staying pretty good."

Turner also noted that for the board's information, their board packets contained the Project 7 check register, with written checks and deposits.

Legal Update

The attorney attended by Zoom. His report included the Special meeting the previous week, the draft of the Public Comment Policy, and that the Cost Allocation Study was not to exceed \$75,000.

New Business

No new business. Meeting adjourned.

Project 7 Background:

Established on September 29, 1977, the Project 7 Water Authority is a cooperative among seven water entities that provides domestic water to the municipalities and rural areas of the Uncompahgre River Valley.

Project 7 Board meetings, the fourth Thursday of every month at 4:30 p.m., are now available to the public on Zoom.

The seven entities that represent the Project 7 Water Authority are:

The City of Montrose David Bries 970-240-1484 dbries@cityofmontrose.org

The City of Delta Mayor Kevin Carlson 970 874-7566 kevin@cityofdeltanet

The Town of Olathe Mayor Jake Foreman 970 323-5601 jacob.foreman@geocities.com

The Tri-County Water Conservancy District Vicki Ripp 970 874-5127 info@tricitywater.org

The Chipeta Water District John McCollum 970 209-5137 jmc-

collum@rvemontrose.com

The Menoken Water District Randy Meaker 970 249-5118

The Uncompahgre Valley Water Users Association (non-voting member).


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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

THE HB25-1312 ASSAULT! WHY ARE WE NOT PROTECTING OUR WOMEN AND GIRLS?

Editor:

The rise of trans-inclusive policies in Colorado, driven by advocacy efforts and legislative changes, raises concerns about the safety, privacy, and fairness affecting Colorado's women and girls. These policies, particularly in schools and public facilities, prioritize gender identity over biological sex, overlooking risks to our women and girls.

Bathrooms and locker rooms, are designed to ensure the dignity and security of individuals, especially women and girls. However, policies allowing individuals born male to access these spaces under the guise of inclusivity may undermine these protections. A 2018 Williams Institute study reported that 70% of women surveyed expressed discomfort sharing restrooms with individuals born male, citing safety concerns (Williams Institute, 2018). In Colorado, a reported 2016 incident at Florence High School in Fremont County, where an individual born male identifying as a woman was accused of assaulting a female student in a bathroom, sparked parental outrage over trans-inclusive policies.

In 2024, a case in Aurora, Colorado, involved a transgender registered sex offender arrested for attempting to abduct a child from an elementary school. While this incident did not occur in a female-only space, it highlights broader concerns about prioritizing gender identity in policy decisions.

Montrose County School District (MCSD) operates under Colorado's Anti-Discrimination Act (CADA), which includes protections for gender identity. State guidelines from the Colorado Department of Education encourage schools to allow students to use facilities aligned with their gender identity, often without parental notification. Although MCSD's specific policies on bathroom or locker room access are not publicly detailed, they likely follow these directives, prompting parental concerns about daughters' safety in private spaces.

The lack of clear local guidelines ensuring parental input or safety protocols height-

ens these fears, especially given the Trump Administration's 2025 policy recognizing only two biological sexes. Parents in Montrose County worry that state-mandated policies could expose their daughters to risks, particularly in light of safety concerns.

In April 2025, the Colorado House passed [HB25-1312](#), the "Kelly Loving Act," now under Senate consideration. This bill defines misgendering as a form of "coercive control," potentially penalizing parents who do not affirm a transgender individual's chosen gender identity, which many argue could lead to custody disputes. It also mandates that schools adopt inclusive policies for chosen names, requiring affirmation of gender identity in educational settings.

Critics argue that [HB25-1312](#) pressures schools, including those in Montrose County, to prioritize gender identity over the safety and rights of women and girls. The bill could limit our schools ability to maintain single-sex facilities or sports without facing legal repercussions, something the Montrose County School District cannot afford. Schools complying with this legislation also risk losing federal funding as has been pointed out by Montrose Citizens D.O.G.E. in a previous issue of the Montrose Mirror on April 7, straining budgets while potentially compromising student safety.

Trans-inclusive athletic policies in Colorado, including Montrose County, challenge fairness for female athletes. A [2020 Sports Medicine](#) study found that testosterone suppression may not eliminate advantages in muscle mass, strength, or speed after male puberty. In 2022, a transgender athlete in a Colorado high school track event displaced female competitors, sparking protests from parents and students.

MCSD's athletic policies, guided by the Colorado High School Activities Association (CHSAA), allow transgender students to participate in sports based on gender identity, provided they meet criteria such as hormone therapy. However, parents argue that these policies, combined with

bills like HB25-1312, undermine fairness and safety for female athletes. They cite incidents where female athletes were injured in sports like volleyball (San Jose State) or boxing due to the physical advantages of transgender competitors.

In 2024, a letter signed by over 60 Colorado school board members was submitted to the CHSAA, urging rules to prevent individuals born male from competing in female sports. These districts fear losing federal funding if they do not align with policies recognizing only two genders. The Montrose Mirror (April 7, p. 35) reported that MCSD's 2024-2025 budget includes over \$10.7 million in federal funding at risk for the 2025-2026 school year budget. However, Superintendent Dr. Carrie Stephenson disputed this, stating, "You cannot isolate a single line item from a complex public-school budget and connect it to unrelated issues." Critics argue that prioritizing gender identity in sports overlooks biological differences, compromising true competitive fairness.

The most troubling aspect of these policies is their impact on our children. Policies allowing biological males to access girls' private spaces or compete in girls' sports, often without parental consent or even knowledge, places girls in vulnerable situation. A [2019 Colorado Springs case](#), where an individual was convicted of sexually abusing a minor, underscores the need for robust child protection measures.

Colorado schools, influenced by advocacy groups and legislation like HB25-1312, are adopting policies that critics argue prioritize gender identity over safeguarding girls. This approach may compromise the safety and privacy of children who lack the maturity to navigate complex social dynamics. There is a reason children under the age of 18 are considered minors and are not allowed to legally enter into contracts, among other things. In most states, like Colorado, the drinking age is set at 21 due to the same issue: minors in general are not mature enough to make sound life-altering decisions.

Compassion for individuals with "gender

WHY ARE WE NOT PROTECTING OUR WOMEN AND GIRLS? From previous pg

dysphoria" should not compromise protections for women and girls.

Support through mental health care and respectful dialogue can coexist with policies that maintain sex-based protections. Colorado policymakers, educators, and parents must prioritize transparent policies that ensure safety and parental involvement.

In Montrose County, parents demand clear guidelines to protect their daughters in private spaces and sports.

The potential passage of HB25-1312 underscores the disregard by the Colorado Legislature to safeguard women and girls. The safety, privacy, and fairness of women and girls in Colorado must remain a priority.

Policymakers should resist advocacy-driven legislation and focus on the well-being of vulnerable groups. By balancing compassion with practical safeguards, Colorado can protect all individuals without compromising the rights and security of our women and girls.

*Michael J Badagliacco, "MJB"
Citizen-Montrose, CO*



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There has been an exhaustive search to uncover the source and authorization for this "Green Tax" but we have yet to find anywhere it has been authorized!

In fact, the employees told one patron that they could refund it... **HUH??**

What is happening in our Justice system?

Local Judge Keri Yoder puts child sex predators on probation as their consequence in Montrose.

Judge Yoder was appointed by Democrat Gov. John Hickenlooper in Feb. 2016 and serves the 7th Judicial District, which includes Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray and San Miguel counties

Montrose Citizens D.O.G.E. is a non-partisan community watchdog group reporting on things that raise eyebrows in the City and County of Montrose, CO's government fiscal expenditures and other questionable actions, holding our public officials accountable to We the People. Join our efforts...

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: COMMENTARY

COLORADO — THE NEW & PLANNED SOCIALIST-COMMUNIST PARADISE

If the Far-Left Democrats in the State Legislature Prevail, Colorado will Make California Look like a lighter shade of Purple than Blue

By David White

Boulder, Colorado has often been called the “People’s Republic of Boulder” due to their crazy, left-wing governance, regulations and freedom sucking provisions of City and County government, all notwithstanding the prevalence of the University of Colorado at Boulder’s wild “educational” history and its influence on the local community.

Today, the lunacy that had been contained within the Boulder metro area as well as within the City and County of Denver has metastasized into a cancer that has taken control of our State Legislature. Not even (on the surface) can our politically leftist millionaire Governor (Jared Polis) slow down or stop the drive to the far left which he and three (3) other millionaire/billionaires hatched as a political experiment that turned into a vendetta against what they perceived as a bigoted political system controlled by Republicans 21 years ago.

In the summer of 2004, four left-leaning wealthy Colorado “one-percenters” hatched a plot to do the Democrats’ job for them. This “secretive elite,” consisted of then Congressman Jared Polis (2025 net worth - \$400M), who made his millions selling Internet businesses; Tim Gill, creator of Quark design software (2025 net worth - \$400M); Rutt Bridges (2025 net worth - \$1.7B), who wrote software for energy exploration; and Pat Stryker (2025 net worth - \$2.3B), heir to the Stryker medical technology corporation. This group helped organize and finance a slew of leftist organizations in the state to promote “progressive” policies and candidates and to defeat conservative ones.

By the November 2006 election, the so-called “Gang of Four” and the “Roundtable” allies they brought into their orbit had flipped the trifecta (control of the State House of Representatives - 39 Democrats to 26 Republicans, State Senate - 20 Democrats to 15 Republicans & the Governorship - Democrat Bill Ritter beat Republican Bob Beauprez) to the Democrats for the first time since 1963

and constructed a political infrastructure that has so far prevented Republicans from recovering.

This Colorado machine was not in any fashion a direct descendant of the corrupt old political machines: It was not funded or influenced by gangsters or created to financially benefit its multimillionaire/billionaire creators. In place of the drive for graft, **the Colorado cabal pursued leftist ideological and policy goals instead.**

And it was remarkably successful, helping to shift control of state government and of several congressional seats to the Democrats. Over the past few years, left-leaning politicians in state government have passed legislation to regulate firearms more severely, to require more (and more expensive) “renewable” energy, to raise various taxes and fees, and to allow voter registration on election day (as prominent examples).

The 2014 documentary “Rocky Mountain Heist”, narrated by Michelle Malkin and produced by Citizens United, is a must see to understand why Colorado is outpacing California as a bastion of socialism and pseudo-Communism. (<https://youtu.be/wlv-rvja7Sc>). Having a Governor that was one of those responsible for dragging Colorado into a state of regulatory and governmental oversight of almost every facet of life and leading a political party hell bent on destroying the freedoms and liberties we who have spent all or most of our lives in this state upholding, is a sad sight to see. The machine they created, driven by a spirit of retribution against the formerly conservative population of the state, needs to be stopped before more havoc is unleashed on us.

Montrose County is one of the last counties in Colorado that has tried to stand against this onslaught from the political pawns in the Democrat Party that the Gang of Four used and continues to use to achieve its total control of the political and governmental structures throughout the state.

Given our County government’s public stand against the infringement on our

rights by our State Legislators, it is no wonder that the “noise” associated with the Commissioner’s doing their jobs the way that they were elected to do them, has come under fire.

It’s also no wonder that the “Hands Off” Rally held in Montrose on April 5th (one of over a thousand nationwide) targeted Montrose. Of the nearly 200 partners listed by [Hands Off](#), notable groups include Third Act, 50501, Indivisible, Women’s March, Move On, Democratic Socialists of America, Patriotic Millionaires, Tax the Greedy Billionaires, Color of Change and the Planned Parenthood Action Fund. Why Montrose? Why the agenda to change our community and others into their socialist model? The evidence is all here folks.

The mediocre Republicans who hold the token offices that they sit in, go along with most of the leftists that have foisted bills on us to take away our 2nd Amendment rights (this year, Senate Bill SB25-003 pretty much guts your right to purchase and own any gun with a removable magazine beginning the day the bill goes into effect next year unless held up in court as well as forces the few companies making guns or any parts associated with a gun, to leave the state).

And there’s plenty more...

SB25-086 calls for social media companies with over 100,000 members to monitor and censor any activity deemed to violate the bill. Polis vetoed it and said: “This law imposes sweeping requirements that social media platforms, rather than law enforcement, enforce state law. It mandates a private company to investigate and impose the government’s chosen penalty of permanently deplatforming a user even if the underlying complaint is malicious and unwarranted.” 16 hours later, the State Senate overrode the veto by a vote of 29-6 which many believe was the intent all along in order for Polis to take cover for not directly infringing on our free speech rights. Of course, that won’t make the news.

Then there’s SB25-270. It’s noteworthy

THE NEW & PLANNED SOCIALIST-COMMUNIST PARADISE From previous pg

because it presents a novel strategy of working around TABOR (Taxpayer Bill of Rights – a Colorado Constitutional Amendment passed in 1992) revenue limits while still allowing House and Senate Dems to fund all their various social engineering projects. Any revenue that goes into a state enterprise (a government-run business that charges fees for services rendered—such services sometimes more speculative than others) is not subject to TABOR limits. The shell game the Democrat sponsors are playing is that they are basically going to reclassify what was regular state revenue (subject to TABOR limits) to enterprise revenue (NOT subject to TABOR limits). If you think it's expensive living in Colorado now, you've seen nothing.

How about **HB-1312**, the **parental custody stripping, First Amendment killing transgender bill** is scheduled for its final public hearing in the Senate Judiciary committee this coming Wednesday, April 30th at 1:30 PM. Judging from the reactions nationally to this terrible bill, many people are expected to attend and speak at this final hearing. This bill essentially calls it child abuse to not fully affirm one's own gender-confused child's trans notions. This also applies to citizens in public places of accommodation, calling "deadnaming" (using one's legal name) an act of discrimination.

In spite of all of the rhetoric, these political elites have duped their "followers" into believing that all of this crazy legisla-

tion, from destroying our energy industry (oil, gas, coal, etc.) in the name of climate change; restricting or taking down multiple businesses in the form of cake bakers, gun makers and many others with their regulatory constraints; the allowance of undocumented aliens in our state and cities and so much more, is somehow the embodiment of "social justice" as well as the destructive forces of "D.E.I." (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) in hiring practices, is somehow good for us.

In the film, *Rocky Mountain Heist* (referenced above), a Republican political candidate smeared by the Gang of Four's henchmen, describes a "whistleblower" intern turning in documents he found after cleaning up the room used for meetings between Democrats and donors. One of their campaigns listed on a memo was called "*Educate the Idiots*" campaign and used the AFL-CIO in its efforts. A sub-heading of the "Educate the Idiots" campaign said, "*Target: minorities*" "This is how they talk about their own people," said Michelle Malkin who narrated the film.

If you want to learn more about why these four elitists and their "roundtable" friends won the day, read the excellent book by Rob Witwer and Adam Schrager titled **The Blueprint: How the Democrats Won Colorado (and Why Republicans Everywhere Should Care)**. It's available on Amazon.com and is as relevant today as it was when released in 2010.

After 21 years of virtually non-stop bom-

bardment by the Democratic majority in state government, Colorado has been reduced to a second-rate state in many areas with education being the most emblematic of the decimation that all of these social engineering efforts have brought us. It's all about the big picture folks. Too many people live life without looking into the "how and why" behind our present state of affairs. Reading headlines or listening to a 10 second sound bite isn't going to inform you. It's your civic duty to wake up and begin to change our slide into the socialist home plate that is just one pitch away from taking us down.

Sources: [Rocky Mountain Heist - The Objective Standard](#); [Colorado's Big Blue Political Machine: The Gang of Four - Capital Research Center](#); [Gaines: Colorado Democrats blew the budget and now they want your TABOR refunds - Rocky Mountain Voice](#); [LUNDBERG REPORT](#); [Colorado Senate overrides Polis' veto of social media bill](#); [The Blueprint: How the Democrats Won Colorado \(and Why Republicans Everywhere Should Care\)](#); Schrager, Adam, Rob Witwer: 9781936218004: Amazon.com: Books

Mr. White is an active citizen & community leader as well as a business owner, entrepreneur, former Colorado Springs City Councilor and Montrose City Councilor as well as Montrose Mayor. He was a two-term Montrose 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 & one great grandchild.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

GMUG FORESTS PLANNING PRESCRIBED BURN

Special to the Mirror

GUNNISON-Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison (GMUG) National Forests are planning a prescribed fire, projected to start as early as April 28, depending on weather, ground and vegetation conditions. Fire officials estimate this work to take approximately one week.

The prescribed burn will be located approximately 14 miles west of Gunnison, Colorado, and nine miles north of Blue Mesa Reservoir, between National Forest System Road (NFSR) #724–Rainbow Gulch Road and NFSR #609–Main Gulch Road along the Willow Creek drainage.

Approximately 100-600 acres are planned to be burned to stimulate or enhance aspen regeneration, protect nearby private property from the spread of unplanned wildfires and improve wildlife habitat.

The prescribed burn will be accomplished using joint-agency fire resources utilizing hand ignitions. Smoke may be visible in Gunnison, Sapinero, Cimarron, Lake City and Montrose communities for several days. Air quality will be closely monitored to mitigate smoke related impacts to communities.

Forest areas may close to the public for several days for public safety. Staff will be making personal contact with recreationists regarding any temporary closures. Signs will be placed on adjacent roads near the project area, notifying the public of the project area and closures as necessary. Watch for warning signs along roads and near all prescribed fire areas before and during burns.

Residents may experience smoke during the prescribed burns. Go to <https://fire.airnow.gov/> to find more detailed information about air quality. Fire managers have obtained smoke permits from the State of Colorado and will comply with Colorado State air quality regulations. For more information on how prescribed fire smoke may affect your health, please visit: <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/wood-smoke-and-health>.

Weather conditions will be evaluated in the hours before a burn begins. If conditions warrant, scheduled prescribed fire activities may be canceled.

Stay informed about the scheduled prescribed fires through the GMUG National Forests [website](#), the [GMUG Fire Info](#) Facebook page and [InciWeb](#), the interagency incident information system. Fire managers notify county emergency management officials when burning begins.



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

OUR TOWN MATTERS WELCOMES NEW CREATIVE DIRECTOR KENDRA DORR-CALLAHAN



Kendra Dorr-Callahan. Courtesy photo.

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE— Our Town Matters, the premier full-service marketing, events, and PR firm in Montrose, is thrilled to announce that Kendra Dorr-Callahan has joined the team as the Creative Director! With her extensive expertise in the advertising and digital landscape, Dorr-Callahan

brings a treasure trove of creativity, strategic insight, and leadership that will undoubtedly elevate our agency to new heights.

In her role, Dorr-Callahan will focus on the creative execution for our marketing retainer clients and community events. Reporting directly to Our Town Matters CEO, Tonya Maddox, the company states she will play a key role in advancing the creative direction and ensuring that OTM clients' visions come to life through impactful campaigns. Maddox states, "Dorr-Callahan is an exceptional creative talent who expertly leverages brand strategy into integrated campaigns to forge strong connections between brands and their audiences."

With over 17 years of hands-on experience in marketing, communications, social media management, and client services, Dorr-Callahan is a true powerhouse. She has mastered the art of crafting engaging content and leading successful marketing campaigns that drive growth and enhance brand visibility. Her ability to infuse creativity and strategic thinking into every project makes her an invaluable addition to our team.

Kendra's enthusiasm for storytelling

shines through in her work.

"After 17+ years of marketing madness, graphic design wizardry, social media juggling, and helping brands find their 'why' (and their fonts), I'm thrilled to join Our Town Matters and this talented crew as Creative Director. Creativity isn't just what I do—it's who I am. I've spent years making things pop, sizzle, and occasionally sparkle... all while chasing deadlines and trying not to spill coffee on my keyboard," she shares.

"But this role isn't just about pixels and punchlines—it's about people. I believe in building brands that actually mean something, engaging communities in real conversations, and using creativity as a force for connection (and maybe just a bit of controlled chaos). I'm here and ready to roll up my sleeves, brainstorm big, and help make OTM—and the amazing community around it—even stronger ... one brilliant idea (and maybe one too many sticky notes) at a time.

Maddox said, "We are so excited to have her join Our Town Matters and can't wait to see the creatively effective ideas she brings to elevate our portfolio of brands even further—creating meaningful, impactful, and innovative work!"

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ANONYMOUS CALL

MONTROSE REGIONAL CRIME STOPPERS

REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

COLORADO STATE PATROL CAUTIONS DRIVERS ABOUT UNRESTRAINED PETS

COLORADO - To many Coloradoans, pets are a part of the family and often accompany us on the road. But how many people who travel with furry friends are putting them into a harness, a pet carrier or a crate? Any activity, like petting your dog or reaching back to provide a treat to your cat, takes a driver's attention away from driving. This is considered distracted driving.

In addition, a free-roaming pet can become a deadly projectile during a crash or sudden stop. Pet parents aren't practicing safety when they allow their fur babies to roam free inside a moving vehicle.

The State of Colorado, like most states, doesn't have an explicit law that states you must restrain your pet in a vehicle or that you are prohibited from driving with a pet in your lap. However, if your pet is

obstructing your view or if you exhibit driving behaviors that would be covered under the 'careless driving statute,' law enforcement can pull you over.

"Having your pet properly restrained is important for your pet's safety and your own," explains Col. Matthew C. Packard, chief of the Colorado State Patrol. "Even the most well-behaved dog, ferret or cat can be a distraction. And, just like you, a pet can fly through the windshield, out an open window or crash into the dashboard."

If you are going on a car ride, remember to protect your pet by following these [National Humane Society](#) recommendations.

-Pets Shouldn't Roam – dogs should be in a crate anchored to the vehicle and cats should be in a carrier.

-Leave the Front Seat for Humans – airbags can cause serious injury to pets, even if they are in a carrier or crate.

-Keep Those Heads Inside – pets can be injured by debris or made sick by cold air being forced into their lungs.

-Don't Leave Your Pet Alone in the Car – heat is a serious hazard, and even 70-degree temperatures can heat your car to over 100 degrees in less than an hour. And another hazard is the possibility of someone stealing your pet while you're away.

The Colorado State Patrol is recognizing Distracted Driving Awareness Month by sharing data and tips to encourage all Colorado drivers to focus on one task: driving when they get behind the wheel. [Colorado's Hands Free law](#) went into effect on January 1, 2025. There is no lane





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MONTROSE RED HAWKS SPORTS ROUNDUP *By Cliff Dodge*

RED HAWKS VARSITY BASEBALL:

PALISADE BULLDOGS 10, MONTROSE RED HAWKS 0

As the old baseball poem started, "the outlook wasn't good for the Mudville 9 that day." The Montrose Red Hawks have been taking their lumps on the diamond this season and this week has been no exception. The Red Hawks traveled to Palisade on Tuesday and were thumped 10-0 in a five-inning game cut short by the 10-run rule.

Three scoreless innings were posted by both teams and then the fireworks began. The Bulldogs scored 6 times in the fourth inning and another 4 runs in the fifth. The Bulldogs banged out ten hits which included a double, a triple and three no doubt home runs. The Red Hawks were held hitless. Joey Benitez, Porter Smith, and Brekin Hutto pitched for the Red Hawks.

PALISADE BULLDOGS 14, MONTROSE RED HAWKS 0

Things got worse as the week moved toward the weekend. The Red Hawks hosted the Palisade Bulldogs on Friday and the result was very similar. The Bulldogs scored 14 runs and their bats cranked out a dozen base hits which included two doubles, a triple and two round trippers. Sadly, the Red Hawks were held hitless for the second straight game as Jack Pankey and Cohan Sauter toed the rubber for the Red Hawks.

The twin losses saw the Red Hawks overall record fall to 4 wins and 13 losses and 0-5 record in league action. The Red Hawks play host to the Grand Junction Tigers on Saturday with the first pitch slated for 1pm.

RED HAWKS GIRLS VARSITY SOCCER:

MONTROSE RED HAWKS 4, GRAND JUNCTION TIGERS 3

The Montrose Red Hawks girls scored two goals in the opening half of the Tuesday game in Grand Junction and still found themselves trailing by a goal when the whistle blew signaling half time. Head coach Matt Imus emphasized defense in his halftime discussion with the team and they took the message to heart.

The Red Hawks clamped on their pressing

defense in the second half and totally shut down the Tigers offense while scoring 2 additional goals to make the final score Red Hawks 4, Tigers 3. Senior Eli Duncan had a three-goal hat trick for the Red Hawks while Senior Yuliana Almanza scored the final Red Hawks tally. Both teams managed 8 shots on goal with Red Hawks Keeper Angelina Alcazar stopping five to preserve the one goal victory.

MONTROSE RED HAWKS 5, GR. JUNCTION CENTRAL WARRIORS 0

The home-standing Montrose Red Hawks treated their guests from Grand Junction Central with disdain as the home team controlled the pitch and dominated the visitors, shutting them out by a 5-0 score. The Red Hawks dominated from the opening kick-off to the final whistle, with 3 goals in the first half to set the tone for the game and then added another pair of goals to cap the win.

Senior Captain Eli Duncan scored her second hat trick this week with a 3 goal outburst. Other Red Hawk scorers included Junior Addison Shipley and senior Yuliana Almanza. All three scorers also were credited with assists. Junior Anika Harris stopped five shots to preserve the victory. The Red Hawks will hit the road on April 29 as they travel to Grand Junction to take on the Warriors of Grand Junction Central High School. First kick is scheduled for 5p.m.

RED HAWKS BOYS VARSITY LACROSSE:

FRUITA-MONUMENT WILDCATS 16, MONTROSE RED HAWKS 7

It has been a difficult season for Head Coach Preston Weaver and his young lacrosse squad. Things got no easier as the Red Hawks traveled to take on the Wildcats of Fruita-Monument on Wednesday. The Wildcats established dominance early in the contest and basically kept the pressure on until the final whistle.

The statistics were somewhat lopsided as the Wildcats handled 59 ground balls compared with 29 for the Red Hawks. The Red Hawks managed only nine successful faceoffs as compared with 27 for the Wildcats. Junior Goaltender Patrick Alvarez was attacked from start to finish as he

handled 37 shots on goal, saving 23.

Senior Zack Motley scored four goals for the Red Hawks. Junior Maverick Powers added two goals while Senior Eli Sauer added one score.

DURANGO DEMONS 12, MONTROSE RED HAWKS 10

The Montrose Red Hawks and the Durango Demons got together on Thursday at the Columbine pitch and fought tooth and nail with the Demons finally losing a well-played game 12 to 10. The game was close from the opening faceoff to the final whistle.

The Red Hawks dominated play in the contest, handling 40 ground balls as compared to 25 for the visitors. Faceoffs were in the Red Hawks favor 15 to 7. The Red Hawks Goaltender, Patrick Alvarez, handled 20 of 32 shots on goal.

The Red Hawks' offense was led by Senior Zack Motley, who scored 5 goals. Junior Maverick Powers scored three times while Senior Eli Sauer and Junior Elijah Womack each scored one goal.

The Red Hawks are in Durango for a rematch with the Demons.

RED HAWKS GIRLS VARSITY LACROSSE:

GRAND JUNCTION TIGERS 14, MONTROSE RED HAWKS 5

The young and inexperienced Montrose Red Hawks Girls Lacrosse Team ran into a buzz saw as the Grand Junction Tigers demonstrated their skills and experience by downing the Red Hawks with the score of 14 to 5 on the Red Hawks' home pitch. The Tigers established the tone of the game early on. The fielding statistics showed a wide difference between the two teams as the Tigers had 33 ground balls compared with only 6.

In the scoring department the Red Hawks were led by Junior Rachel Williams who scored three goals. Junior O. Rosentreter and Senior Maggie Cline each added a goal to the Red Hawks total. Red Hawks goalkeeper was peppered with 31 shots on goal and managed to save 17.

FRUITA-MONUMENT WILDCATS 17, MONTROSE RED HAWKS 1

The fast disappearing girls lacrosse season saw the Red Hawks hit the road to Fruita-

MONTROSE RED HAWKS SPORTS ROUNDUP *From previous pg*

Monument and another uncomfortable defeat at the hands of the Wildcats by the score of 17 to 1. The Wildcats stifling defense completely shut down the Red Hawks offense while their offense hit the gas pedal from the opening faceoff until games' end.

Senior Maddie Coca was the only Red Hawks player to dent the scoring chart. The statistics tell the story of the game as the Wildcats gobbled up 29 ground balls as compared with four for the Red Hawks. The Wildcats turned Goalkeeper Junior Abby Siegel into a rubber merchant as she handled 42 shots on goal, stopping 25.

The twin losses moved the Red Hawks overall season mark to two wins and 10 losses and they are 0-7 in league action. On April 29 the Red Hawks travel to Telluride to take on the Miners.

MONTROSE CONCERT BAND RATED SUPERIOR AT STATE COMPETITION

A total of 124 bands from all over the state of Colorado competed in the CBA Concert Festival last weekend.

Unless a school is designated as a "small school" by the Colorado Band Association, all bands compete in the same classification.



Above, soccer action. Below, Red Hawks Defend their net. Photos by Cliff Dodge

Of those 124 bands, 36 qualified for state by their score and rating. The CBA commented that compared with last year, the ratings were tougher even though the overall quality of bands was better this year. Ten bands were awarded Superior with Distinction.

Six bands were then designated as Supe-

rior.

This is the classification that the Montrose Red Hawks Concert Band was placed in. The final 20 bands were judged to be Excellent.

Congratulations to the Red Hawks Concert Band, their sponsors, their faculty members, and the musicians themselves.



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COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

DELTA HEALTH WELCOMES NEW HUMAN RESOURCES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**Executive Director of Human Resources
Katie Rice. Courtesy photo.**

Special to the Mirror

DELTA –Delta Health is pleased to announce the appointment of Katie Rice as Executive Director of Human Resources

(HR), a dedicated HR professional with over 15 years of experience in nonprofit and clinical settings.

Katie brings strategic leadership focused on enhancing workplace culture and employee experience, across the organization.

"I am deeply committed to fostering positive workplace culture and believe that people are the greatest asset at any organization," said Rice. "I am so honored to be a part of a team that feels the same way. As a Delta resident, the renewal of the Delta Health brand in the community has been exciting to see."

Katie received her Bachelor's Degree in English Communications from Western Baptist College in Salem, Oregon, before transitioning into HR in 2010. She started as an Office Manager/HR Manager at a teen recovery center in the Florida Panhandle. She also worked as the Director of Human Resources at Chautauqua

Healthcare Services in Florida. Once Katie realized her passion for human resources, she decided to further her education, earning a Master's in Business Administration in HR from Corban University.

"We are thrilled to have Katie join our leadership team at Delta Health," said Jonathan Cohee, MHA, OT, Chief Executive Officer at Delta Health. "Her experience in developing human-centered workplace cultures makes her an ideal leader to guide our HR initiatives moving forward. Katie will be invaluable as we continue to invest in our most important asset – our people."

In 2018, Katie and her family relocated to the Western Slope of Colorado, where she has continued to serve in various HR roles.

For more information about the HR department at Delta Health, visit <https://deltahealthco.org/careers/> or call 970.874.7681.



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

CONGRESSMAN HURD TALKS OUT OF BOTH SIDES OF HIS MOUTH

Editor:

Even though I am a Democrat, I was relieved when Jeff Hurd was elected to Congress last fall. Why? Because Mr. Hurd campaigned on the fact that he was not a MAGA supporter. Those of us in Colorado's Third Congressional District, including my Republican friends, had grown weary of Lauren Boebert, the MAGA buffoon who previously held this seat.

Many of us are also sick and tired of hearing Donald Trump and his MAGA supporters lie for nine years that he won the popular vote in the 2016 election "when you subtract the millions of illegal, non-citizens who voted."

In fact, the prevalence of noncitizens voting in U.S. elections is so low as to be almost nonexistent. That's because the *Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996* prohibits noncitizens in any state from voting in federal elections. Noncitizens convicted of violating this law risk being fined up to \$100,000, sent to prison for up to one year, and being deported. This law has been so successful that a recent study conducted by the Brennan Center for Justice analyzed 23.5 million votes across 42 jurisdictions in the 2016 general election and concluded that *there were only 30 instances* of noncitizens casting votes.

Yet, this didn't stop Congressman Hurd from joining MAGA Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives in passing a bill under the guise of needing to prevent noncitizens from voting. Called the SAVE

Act, this bill requires people to provide a passport or a birth certificate when they register to vote or update their registration. If this bill passes in the Senate and is signed into law by the President, the SAVE Act will place significant barriers to voter registration.

Why does Donald Trump want this legislation? Historical voting patterns suggest that high voter turnout tends to favor Democrats. Trump and his MAGA supporters believe the only way they can win elections is by suppressing voter turnout. How do they do this? Simple, by making it inconvenient, time-consuming, and expensive to register to vote. The SAVE Act does all three.

If this bill becomes law, you will be required to show proof of citizenship when you register to vote. For most of us this will mean providing a birth certificate or passport. Many people don't have a certified birth certificate. I checked the state where I was born and found it cost \$55 and takes about a week to receive one in the mail.

If you are one of the 89,000 women in Colorado's Third Congressional District who changed their name when they got married, your birth certificate will not match your current name. So in addition to your birth certificate, you will also have to provide your marriage license when you register to vote. If you don't have one, you'll have to contact the probate court in the county where your marriage license was obtained. Add another week and a few more bucks to the time and

cost of registering to vote.

If you go the passport route to provide proof of citizenship, it will cost you \$165 and take about 3 months to process. If you want to vote in the November election, you'll need to start obtaining these documents in July to have them in time to register.

As you can see, by making registering to vote inconvenient, time-consuming, and expensive, the SAVE Act's real intent is to reduce the number of U.S. citizens who vote.

Thankfully, most Americans think voting should be for all U.S. citizens, not just those who can afford to vote and have three months to gather the necessary documents. For that reason, an amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified in 1964 that prohibits the federal and state governments from imposing taxes on voters during federal elections. The SAVE Act's new requirements for voting registration violate this law by imposing costs on voters that are, for all practical purposes, taxes citizens must pay for our "right" to vote.

Congressman Hurd talks out of both sides of his mouth. On one side he claims he is not a MAGA supporter. On the other, he voted in lockstep with Lauren Boebert and her MAGA friends to pass this disgraceful legislation. My mother taught me that actions speak louder than words. Congressman Hurd's vote to pass the SAVE Act speaks volumes.

Sincerely,

Robin Smith, Paonia



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

MOB RULE IS NO MORE APPROPRIATE AT OUR COMMISSIONERS' MEETING THAN IT IS ON THE NATIONAL LEVEL

Editor:

The term “the hill you choose to die on” is an expression meaning a belief or position that one is fiercely committed to defending – even when proven wrong. It suggests a willingness to resist even when losing, rather than admitting wrong and pivoting. Americans now realize both what Democrats stand for and what they stand against, and they don't like either. The left stands against anything Trump attempts to do, regardless of the merit of his actions. Elon is almost finished building DOGE and has in a few short months exposed hundreds of billions of waste and outright theft of taxpayer dollars. Dems: against that. JFK Jr. is taking poisonous chemicals out of our food and combating big pharma. Dems: can't have that. Trump is trying to cancel WWII, while trying to reset global trade that is blatantly against American interests. Dems: Trump is a Putin stooge. Hegseth is reinstating military service members who refused mandated covid shots, and is making our military combat ready. Dems: bad idea. Trump is implementing the agenda he was elected to do and keeping his promises. Dems: Trump's a Nazi. Dems are all for defending transgenderism, even though 80% percent of Americans adamantly oppose men dominating women's sports and draw the line with transgender library story hours with eight-year-olds. Dems totally support full-term abortions up to and including the moment of birth, which 80% of voters find abhorrent. Dems bribed and shamed people into buying electric vehicles, but are now fire-bombing Teslas. Dems are all for election fraud, while the vast majority of Americans favor voter ID's and paper ballots.

Democrats want to die on the hill of criminal illegal aliens and condemn any Americans who advocate for the safety of their own families. Rather than support the millions of Americans living paycheck to paycheck, Dems initially pinned their hopes on sympathy for an illegal alien thug. When it became obvious that a violent MS-13 gangbanger, wife-beater, and potential human trafficker wasn't garner-

ing any sympathy, they shifted the narrative. It became less about protecting an innocent “Maryland father” and more about defending his “due process rights.” Ignore the fact that the MS-13 criminal already had his due process. The “due process” narrative is just another attempt to hide Democrats' real motive – to sabotage Trump's lawful, effective, and highly popular deportation agenda. The American public is not merely tolerant of deportation – they want it. They voted for it. Current polls indicate the majority of voters now favor deporting all illegal aliens. Democrats are working to derail Trump's efforts because those efforts threaten Democrats' power. The left's sudden crusade for “due process” is a political smokescreen to defend mass illegal migration. Their aim is to preserve their political benefits of mass migration by delegitimizing and undermining the very policies that voters overwhelmingly support.

Democrats weren't too concerned about “due process” when they terminated the employment of thousands of employees and members of the military for refusing to take the “jab.” I don't remember Democrat members of congress flying to Cuba to demand the release of 6-year-old Elian Gonzales when Clinton sent a SWAT team to deport him – not a wife-beating criminal illegal gang member, but a young child. They couldn't be bothered to fly to Russia or Gaza or other places on behalf of Americans held hostage. Nor could they be troubled even to fly to North Carolina or East Palestine, Ohio, to comfort their fellow Americans devastated by disasters. Supporting criminal illegal aliens over their constituents is nothing new for Dems, who voted no on the Laken Riley Act. Colorado Dem senators Hickenlooper and Bennet have joined in the defense of criminal aliens at the expense of Coloradans. Also, the Colorado state senate just passed a bill to make the state safer for illegal alien criminals. A liberal judge and his wife have just been arrested in New Mexico accused of harboring in their home an illegal immigrant suspected of being a member of the violent Tren de

Aragua street gang – and providing him with assault rifles. In Wisconsin, authorities just arrested a liberal judge accused of concealing an illegal immigrant charged with domestic battery and other crimes in her courthouse. The illegal was in court on charges of beating a guy and a girl so badly they both had to go to the hospital. The judge misdirected federal agents so the person could avoid arrest. Liberal DAs and judges no longer consider the rule of law or victims in their actions. In Minnesota, a 19-year-old woman is charged with a felony for \$7,000 of damages after keying a coworker's car, but the Soros-backed DA let a Democrat activist walk free after \$20,000 in vandalism to half a dozen Teslas. Because one is a Democrat who works for governor Tim Walz, he gets special treatment. The young woman who works for minimum wages at White Castle is not so fortunate. Meanwhile, two “Maryland men” (illegals) have been arrested accused of murdering a 23-year-old mother. Paging Democrat senator Chris Van Hollen.

When Democrats are in power, they expect everyone else to meekly accept every ridiculous thing they do. Thus, we have an addled Biden commit treason with an invasion of millions of unvetted illegals. When Dems can't win at the ballot box, they go into the “destroy and disrupt” mode and totally ignore the welfare of the electorate. Thus, we have operatives like BLM and Antifa rampaging and burning portions of cities in “mostly peaceful protests.” The Democrats bail the rioters out on the rare occasion any are arrested, while the media whitewashes the violence. If conservatives protest against an unfair election, they are branded insurrectionists, and all are mercilessly hunted down by the FBI. “Hands Off” protests organized and financed by a multitude of left-wing groups, including Soros' MoveOn organization, protest the exposure of the theft of billions of dollars of taxpayer money. The latest Dem ploy is to have leftist operatives invade and disrupt town halls led by GOP lawmakers. The false narrative they present is that Trump voters

Continued next pg

MOB RULE IS NO MORE APPROPRIATE AT OUR COMMISSIONERS' MEETING THAN ON THE NATIONAL LEVEL

From previous pg

are suffering from buyer's remorse. Given that voters know Trump is the only one defending their interests, that narrative completely failed. Trump's approval ratings soared to new heights, while the Democrats' approval tanked to all-time lows. In a few short months, Trump has renegotiated fair trade deals, secured the border, deported illegals, protected children from gender-altering procedures, brought back hostages from abroad and astronauts stranded in space, targeted damaging DEI initiatives, controlled inflation, boosted energy independence, brought back manufacturing jobs, and pursued peace. No wonder Dems are enraged and have resorted to engaging the mob.

We are seeing the same obstruction mode at our local county commissioners' meetings. Local Dem Bobbie Kuns (Mirror 4/21) seems to think our elected officials are somehow beholden to the small minority who didn't elect them. It is apparent that minority is intent on preventing our commissioners from doing the job they were elected to do by disrupting their meetings. Mob rule is no more appropriate at our commissioners' meeting than it is on the national level, and will have the same result. Democrats will continue to lose power as they lose what little respect the electorate still has for them.

Ed Henrie, Montrose

LEGAL NOTICES: CHANGE OF NAME

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County Court <input type="checkbox"/> District Court <input type="checkbox"/> Denver Juvenile Court Montrose County, Colorado Court Address: 1201 N. Grand Ave. Box A, Montrose, CO 81401	In the Matter of the Petition of: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adult Cassandra Dara-Jean Sale or <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Petitioner for Minor Child For a Change of Name to: Cassandra Dara-Jean McCauley Division: E Courtroom: 1C
---	---

ORDER FOR PUBLICATION FOR CHANGE OF NAME

The Court having read and considered the Petition for Change of Name of ☐ Minor Child or ☒ Adult finds:

☒ That the statements made in the Petition satisfy the statutory requirements.

☒ That the desired change of name is proper and not detrimental to the interests of any other person.

☒ That the Petitioner has submitted the documentation required in §15-15-101(1)(b), C.R.S. from the fingerprint-based criminal history record check or has provided appropriate certified copies of any dispositions that would constitute a felony conviction in this state or any other state or under federal law.

☐ That the change of name is in the best interest of the minor child.

☐ Individuals over the age of fourteen (14) have submitted the documentation required in §15-15-101(1)(b), C.R.S. from the fingerprint-based criminal history record check or has provided appropriate certified copies of any dispositions that would constitute a felony if committed by an adult in this state or any other state or under federal law.

The Court orders the following publication for a change of name:

1. Name of Cassandra Dara-Jean Sale
 First Name Middle Name Last Name
 is requested to be changed to Cassandra Dara-Jean McCauley
 First Name Middle Name Last Name

2. Pursuant to statute, public notice of this change of name shall be published three times in a legal newspaper published in this county. This publication is to be made within 21 days of the date of this Order.

3. Proper proof of publication shall be filed with the Court upon final publication to receive a Final Decree for a Change of Name.

Date: 4/28/25
 Judge: [Signature]
 JUDGE [Signature]

JCF 426 - 10/2019 - ORDER FOR PUBLICATION FOR CHANGE OF NAME
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County Court <input type="checkbox"/> District Court <input type="checkbox"/> Denver Juvenile Court Montrose County, Colorado Court Address: 1201 N. Grand Ave. Box A, Montrose, CO 81401	In the Matter of the Petition of: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adult Cassandra Dara-Jean Sale or <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Petitioner for Minor Child For a Change of Name to: Cassandra Dara-Jean McCauley Division: E Courtroom: 1C
---	---

PUBLIC NOTICE OF PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME

Public Notice is given on 4-15-25 (date) that a Petition for a Change of Name of a ☐ Minor Child or ☒ Adult has been filed with the Montrose County Court.

The Petition requests that the name of
Cassandra First Name Dara-Jean Middle Name Sale Last Name
 be changed to
Cassandra First Name Dara-Jean Middle Name McCauley Last Name

[Signature]
 Clerk of Court/County Clerk

SEAL

NEWSPAPER: PLEASE PUBLISH THIS NOTICE THREE TIMES WITHIN TWENTY-ONE DAYS OF THE DATE OF THE ORDER.

JCF 427 - 10/11/17 - PUBLIC NOTICE OF PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME

LESLIE GORE WITH CENTURY 21 ELEVATED PROUDLY PRESENTS



HOME FOR SALE

**3600 CHESTNUT DR
MONTROSE, CO
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This stunning custom home is a rare gem, packed with charm, thoughtful design, and top-notch features! The heart of the home is the masterful kitchen, built for both function and style. You'll love the gas stovetop, double ovens, prep sink, and two spacious islands—one even has lifted shelves for effortless access to all your favorite kitchen appliances. Gorgeous wood cabinetry, abundant natural light from big windows, looking out to the back yard, and walking path. The inviting living room is pure comfort, featuring a cozy gas log fireplace, plush carpeting, and soaring vaulted ceilings that create a bright, open feel. With three spacious bedrooms and two bathrooms,



\$659,900.00

3 bedrooms
2 bathrooms

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🌐 <https://tinyurl.com/LeslieGoreC21>



OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

THE SAVE ACT SAFEGUARDS NOTHING

Editor:

The SAVE Act, S.128/HR 22 or, the Safe-guard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) Act, safeguards nothing, undermines elections security and impedes your right to vote. Law in effect since 1996 explicitly prohibits noncitizens voting in Federal elections and with no evidence that voting by noncitizens has ever affected any election. It is already illegal for non-citizens to

register and vote in Federal and state elections. The US and all states ensure that only those citizens can register and vote, under penalty of law. Done deal.

Duplicating existing voter registration processes, the SAVE Act adds burdensome requirements for voters and election officials alike. Despite a 5th Circuit court study in Texas of 20 million votes over 10 years yielding just 2 convictions, Texas

passed a law requiring proof of citizenship to register and vote. Later, Chip Roy (R-TX) drafted the SAVE Act which undermines voter participation and election security likewise based on disinformation.

Presenting specific proof of citizenship *in person* is a burden on voters. For more than 9%, or 21.3 million American citizens of voting age, proof of citizenship isn't readily available.

About 12 million American citizens who voted in 2020 lack access to citizenship documentation and would be unable to vote if the SAVE Act passed.

Heavily impacted are seniors, military voters, tribal and rural voters, the disabled, low-income and young voters, and survivors of natural disasters. A name change would disenfranchise citizens, including 70 million married women whose birth names differ from married names. Twelve per cent of Americans move every year, mismatched addresses are problems. With military ID, 75,000 serving US military must also prove US birth or naturalization. Coincidentally, military naturalization process is more difficult since 2016. Elections offices, receiving no additional funding, will still need to process citizenship status *in person* for already-eligible voters, potentially 34,504 in Montrose County as of April 1, 2025.

We do not need a redundant Act based on false claims of non-existent non-citizen voter fraud. Senators need to hear that you see the SAVE Act for what it is: thinly-disguised voter suppression. The League of Women Voters and many other organizations actively defending your right to vote ask that you use your voice to demand an end to this and any other attempt to interfere with that right. We are a non-partisan organization, but voting is not a partisan issue - it's an American democracy issue. Speak out against the SAVE Act!

Jan Edwards, Voter Service Chair
League of Women Voters of the Uncompahgre Valley



Pahgre's
970-249-6442

Rib City
970-249-7427

Stone House
970-240-8899



Fiesta Guadalajara
970-249-2460

Alpen Confections
970-648-0609

Jimmer's Steak & BBQ
970-252-1227



Beer Barn II
970-249-5550



**WE HAVE CATERING OPTIONS:
WEDDINGS, REUNIONS,
FOOTBALL PARTIES,
RECEPTIONS, OR YOUR EVENT**

COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

MARTIN DMITRI CULVER-BARRIENTOS *December 15, 1985 — April 20, 2025*



In Loving Memory of Martin Dmitri Culver-Barrientos

1985 – 2025

MARTIN DMITRI CULVER-BARRIENTOS, 39, passed away on Easter Sunday, April 20th, 2025, in Montrose, CO. He leaves behind a legacy of fierce independence, steadfast faith, and profound love for his family. Dmitri had a remarkable gift for bringing joy to those around him. His onery sense of humor, sharp wit, and deeply kind heart left a lasting impression on everyone he met. Passionate about living life on his own terms, he spoke his mind freely

and honestly - never one to shy away from standing up for what he believed, even if it ruffled feathers.

A devoted member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Dmitri lived his faith with strength and humility. He nurtured a close relationship with God and leaned on his spiritual foundation throughout life. His convictions ran deep, and he shared them openly and sincerely. Dmitri held an incredibly close bond with his family. For many years, he worked alongside his father, Marty, building magnificent custom homes - each one a testament to their shared pride, skill, and artistry. He also cherished time spent in the garden with his mother, Lisa, as they nurtured roses, fruit trees, and their bond with every growing season. Dmitri also shared a uniquely deep friendship with his grandmother, Josie, whose enduring love and support were a continual source of comfort and light. Dmitri's compassion for animals - especially the lost and overlooked - was a beautiful reflection of his soul. Over the years, he welcomed more stray dogs than the family could count and even rescued a ferret. On one special occasion, to everyone's amazement, he brought home a stray horse! His heart truly had no limits. He found fulfillment in nature, whether fishing, hiking, or simply being present outdoors. An avid cook (and

spicy food enthusiast!), Dmitri delighted in feeding those he loved. In the kitchen, as in life, he crafted with creativity, care, and heart. A decorated high school wrestler, he carried the same determination, resilience, and competitive spirit throughout life. Always curious, he was a lifelong learner, driven by a desire to understand the world around him.

Dmitri is survived by his beloved parents, Marty Barrientos and Lisa Culver-Sharrer (spouse Richard Sharrer); his siblings, Loren Tipping (spouse Tanner Tipping), Nakai Barrientos (spouse Bryce Tobin), and Illanucci Barrientos; and his precious daughter, Chloe Brew. Though we grieve his passing, his spirit lives on in the love he gave and the faith he lived.

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted... A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace."
- Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

A celebration of Dmitri's life will be held Monday, April 28th at 10 am at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1521 South Hillcrest Drive, Montrose, CO. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you honor his memory by spending time with loved ones, enjoying the outdoors, or preparing a favorite meal in his name.

CELEBRATING LOCAL BEAUTY.



COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

RICHARD EUGENE HOBBS ***June 7, 1950 — April 19, 2025***

Retired Air Force Master Sergeant Richard Eugene Hobbs, of Montrose, CO passed away peacefully on April 19, 2025, next to the love of his life Monette.

Richard was born June 7, 1950, in Nampa, ID to Max Martin Hobbs and Lu Ceil Wing Bennett Hobbs. Richard was the fourth child of 8 siblings.

He graduated from Montrose High School in 1968. After High School he married Lavina Linsacum in Montrose, CO. They had three beautiful Children Kim, Steve, and Justin.

Richard enlisted in the Air Force on October 30, 1973. Upon completion of Basic Training at Lackland Air Force Base, TX he attended Avionics Navigation Systems Technical training at Kessler Air Force Base, MS where he was recognized as an honor graduate. Eleven Months later he was promoted to Sergeant and was on his way to Grand Rapids, ND. Richard was promoted to TSgt in May 1984, and in October 1989 he was promoted to MSgt. He was a dedicated Airman, serving with honor and distinction. He was highly recognized and awarded many medals and awards. He received his Honorable discharge from the Armed Forces of the United

States of America as Master Sergeant on February 9, 1994. Richards official retirement of the United States Airforce was February 1996.

In 2006, Richard reconnected with his childhood sweetheart Monette Major of Montrose, CO. Together they began a love story that would last 19 beautiful years. They both enjoyed each other's company, gardening, gambling, traveling, and spending time with their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. They would travel to many different towns making many wonderful memories such as going to Lake Havasu, AZ where they walked the London bridge together.

Richard will always be remembered for his contagious smile,, and the stories he would tell.

Richard is survived by his wife Monette Major, Sons Steven Hobbs, Justin Hobbs, Daughter Brandie Winter, Daughter-in-law Felisia Sprang, Sisters Jeannie Hollis, Cheryl Morgan, Kathy Hubbard, ten grandchildren, and ten great grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his father (Max), Mother (LuCeil), Brother (Steve), Sisters (Sara, Linda, and Mary), ex-wife (Lavina), daughter (Kimberly), and Grand-



daughter, (Alicia).

Richard will be laid to rest with full Military Honors on June 6, 2025, at 1pm at the The Veterans Memorial Cemetery, 2830 Riverside Pkwy. Grand Junction, CO 81501.

The celebration of life ceremony will follow the service at Holly Park Subdivision, 1453 Gemini Circle, Fruita, CO 81521.



COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

KENNETH JAMES ORVIS *October 27, 1960 — April 15, 2025*



KEN ORVIS, a beloved fixture of the Ridgway valley and an unforgettable character to all who knew him, passed away peacefully, Tuesday April 15th, in his home. He was with his family and was held in the hearts of a community that won't soon forget him.

Ken was born in Grand Junction, Colorado on October 27th 1960. He spent his childhood and the better part of his life on his family ranch in Ridgway, Colo. The Orvis Springs Ranch was homesteaded in 1876 by his Great-Grandmother, Sarah Jarvis. Ken spent his life protecting and preserving the ranch to pass down to his sons and the fifth generation of the Orvis family to call it their home.

Ken had four sons Tracy James Orvis, Walter Lewis Orvis, Marshall Joel Orvis and Hank Barrett Orvis, but he was thought of like a father to many including Guy Music, Sarah Smedsrud and Richard Weber, who he helped raise and cared for like his own.

Ken was known for his knowledge and experience working underground. Throughout his life, he worked many of the mines on this side of Colorado. Some of those mines included The Ocoola, The Pride of the West, Pittsburgh Level and The Campbird. Ken made many lifelong friends working the mines, including his

partner Lance, who he went on to operate the famous Golden Wonder Mine with. Ken always had time to have a cup of coffee at the kitchen table and tell mining stories and people would come from all around to hear them.

In 2005, Ken purchased the Orvis Hot Springs originally started by his Grandpa. Louie Orvis in 1919. It was sold out of the family in 1933. Ken took great pride in repurchasing his grandpa's business and turning it into one of the most sought out hot springs in the country.

Ken started a Wild game meat processing plant, which has ran successfully for over thirty years, and is where he met his wife, Jessie. Ken was the kind of man who could light up a room or a ranch with his booming voice, sharp wit and undeniable presence. His door was always open, and he always had a smile and a story to tell. He was always happy to help someone in need. He worked hard and cared for his family. He was a good man. He will be remembered fondly and deeply missed.

News, if unreported, has no impact.
It might as well have not happened at all.
Thank you for reading The Montrose Mirror.

COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

LESLIE JEAN GARDUNO *July 3, 1970 — April 14, 2025*



LESLIE JEAN GARDUNO (MCGUFFIN), age 54, went to be with her Heavenly Father on April 14, 2025, in Montrose, Colorado, where she was born and raised. Her passing marks the loss of a beloved wife, mother, daughter, sister, aunt, cousin, and friend whose warmth and presence touched many lives. Leslie was born on

July 3, 1970, in Montrose, Colorado. Leslie spent her life rooted in the community that shaped her. She carried with her a deep love for her hometown and the memories it held, especially those from her childhood that she often recounted with joy. Her stories about growing up alongside her brother and sister were cherished by those who heard them and served as a testament to the close bonds she shared with her family. Leslie's heart belonged to her family. Her son Mark was the center of her world. She poured endless love into their relationship and found immense pride and joy in being his mother. She also shared a devoted marriage with her husband, Ernest Garduno, whose companionship brought strength and comfort throughout their years together.

She is lovingly remembered by her father, John Bercillio, her brother Robert McGuffin and his wife Sherri; and her sister Annie Bercillio. Leslie was also a proud aunt to nephews Sean Hatch, Lee Gonzalez, William McGuffin Jr., Joseph McGuffin, and Isaiah Bercillio; and nieces Jessica Tadeo and Kaitlyn McGuffin, and

great nieces and nephews too. Each of them held a special place in her heart. Leslie was preceded in death by her mother, Teofila Bercillio.

Leslie was known for her vibrant personality and generous spirit. Leslie had a way of making everyone feel welcome. She loved cooking for those around her — a passion that brought people together over shared meals and laughter. Whether she was preparing a favorite dish or simply enjoying time at home watching movies with loved ones, Leslie found joy in life's simple pleasures. She also delighted in getting her nails done. To know Leslie was to be embraced by kindness and unconditional love. She had an infectious energy that made others feel seen and valued. Her ability to connect through conversation — especially when reminiscing about childhood adventures — was one of the many ways she brought people closer together. Leslie will be deeply missed by all who knew her. May her memory bring comfort to those who mourn her passing and continue to inspire love among those she leaves behind.

Now more than ever...

Thank you for reading

THE MONTROSE MIRROR

ISSUE 519 April 28, 2025

ART & SOL

MAGIC CIRCLE THEATRE PRESENTS 'INTO THE WOODS'

By Allyson Crosby

MONTROSE-*Into the Woods* is a musical with stunning music and clever lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and a book by James Lapine. The musical intertwines the plots of several classic fairy tales, exploring the consequences of the characters' wishes and quests.

The Narrator (John Lange) introduces the story and tells all the tales. The central narrative follows a Baker (Jonathan Heath) and his Wife (Molly Neuman) who wish to have a child but are cursed by a Witch (Spencer Crosby). To break the spell, they must journey into the woods and retrieve magical items tied to other fairy tale characters. They meet Cinderella (Rachel Blankmeyer), Jack (Cole Patterson), Little Red Riding Hood (Hannah Wieder), and Rapunzel (Sarah Crawford). The cast also includes Keele Carver as Milky White, the cow, Riley Wolf Little (yes, that is his real name!) as the Big Bad Wolf, Joni Summers as Jack's Mother, and The two Handsome Princes played by Kenny Easton and Dalyn Pearson. Cinderella's

Stepmother (Michelle Terry) and her step-sisters, Florinda (Eliana Masters) and Lucinda (Michaela Bishop) are properly obsessed with appearances!

And Cinderella's preoccupied Father, played by Steve Warner, is the epitome of cluelessness!

The first act ends with all characters seemingly getting what they want—happy endings abound. However, the second act delves into the fallout of those wishes, revealing the darker, more complicated realities that follow. Giants descend, relationships fray, and characters face grief, loss, and moral ambiguity.

We are introduced to the secret identity of The Mysterious Man played by George Crosby and find out that the curses and the fall out may just have been his fault, after all. Through it all, the musical examines themes like responsibility, parenthood, desire, and the complexity of human nature.

"Into the Woods" is known for its witty, emotionally rich lyrics and sophisticated music. It balances humor and heartache,



MAGIC CIRCLE PLAYERS
Celebrating 68 Years of Live Theatre Magic

INTO THE WOODS

Music and Lyrics by STEPHEN SONDHEIM
Book by JAMES LAPINE
Originally Directed on Broadway by James Lapine
Orchestrations by Jonathan Tunney

DIRECTED BY ALLYSON CROSBY
MUSIC DIRECTOR KENNY EASTON

MAY 2025

FRI · MAY 9 · 16 · 23 · 30 @ 7:30PM
SAT · MAY 10 · 17 · 24 · 31 @ 7:30PM
SUN · MAY 11 · 25 & JUNE 1 @ 2PM

COME *Play* WITH US

MagicCirclePlayers.com • 420 S. 12th • Montrose, CO • 970-249-7838 • mcp@montrose.net

fantasy and realism, ultimately delivering the message that "no one is alone," and that actions have lasting consequences—even in fairy tales. Co-Directed by Allyson Crosby and Kenny Easton.



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2nd Annual
**MONTROSE PRIDE
ART EXHIBIT**
A POP-UP EXHIBIT OF
2D & 3D WORKS BY
LGBTQ+ & ALLY
WESTERN SLOPE ARTISTS

MONTROSE PRIDE 2025

ART EXHIBIT

MCA is proud to sponsor the Montrose Pride Art Exhibit. A pop-up exhibit of 2D & 3D works by LGBTQ+ & ALLY western slope artists.

Exhibit is open to the public at the Montrose Center for the Arts

- Location: 205 E Main, Montrose, CO 81401
- Opening: Friday, June 6, 2025 - 4:30 - 7:00 pm
- Gallery hours: Tuesday through Saturday 10: am - 4:00 pm
- Show runs through: Friday, June 27, 2025
- Artists: Size limits are 3' X 3' in either direction for 2D work and 2' diameter for 3D work. Two submissions maximum per artist.

presented by



ART SUBMISSION DEADLINE:

May 6th 2025.

scan here for information and registration



Montrose
2025 **PRIDE**

June 7, 2025 • 3 PM – 6 PM
Montrose Rotary Amphitheater

PRIDE

Exhibit Questions?

Email dmcm2952@gmail.com / Call 303-915-1532

on behalf of MCA

Montrose Center for Arts, 205 E MAIN ST. Montrose CO 81401



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WAC. Estimated payment, rates and terms may vary based on credit history. Not all applicants will qualify. Subject to lender terms & conditions. Actual term, rate, APR, and loan amount may vary.



CARTOON BY TIM JONES

WEEKLY CARTOON

SOUR GRAPES

by Tim Jones



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970-964-7570

Ray's Corner Cafe
970-417-4340

Trattoria de Sofia
970-249-0433

Rib City
970-249-7427



Stone House
970-240-8899

Sidelines Sports Bar
970-765-0129

Amelias Hacienda Restaurante
970-249-1881

Delta: Pour Ernie's
970-546-0074



Alpen Confections
970-648-0609

Crash Burger
970-249-0825

Coffee Trader
970-249-6295
970-787-9021

Tacos & Beer
970-964-4448

Tacos & Beer on Main
970-964-4999

Pahgre's
970-249-6442

Premier Sponsor:
Montrose Farmers Market
970-249-0705

Horsefly Brewing
970-249-6889

Jimmer's BBQ,
Burgers & Beer
970-252-1227

Fiesta Guadalajara
970-249-2460

El Jimador
970-249-8990

Busy Corner White Kitchen
970-323-6215

Delta: CB's Tavern
970-399-3570



COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

MAGIC CIRCLE PLAYERS PRESENT INTO THE WOODS-MAY 9, 2025 – JUNE 1, 2025

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-Into the Woods, by James Lapine and Stephen Sondheim, with its Tony Award winning score is enchanting. Everyone's favorite fairytale characters come to life, each with a wish for....more. The Baker and his Wife, Little Red Riding Hood, Rapunzel, Cinderella, and Jack and the Beanstalk cross paths as their stories intertwine. Amidst an adventurous quest to find four elusive objects that have the power to break a curse, very well-intentioned, but flawed people have to

overcome giant obstacles. If they work together, can they fix their mistakes, and find home again? Wishes are granted, but with unexpected consequences! But, through it all, no one is alone. Directed by Allyson Crosby, Assistant Director Merrill F. Robertson. Tickets at magiccircleplayers.com. Magic Circle Players, 420 S 12th St, Montrose. Box office: 970-249-7838.

Performances:

Friday, May 9, 2025 - 07:30 PM MDT
Saturday, May 10, 2025 - 07:30 PM

MDT

Sunday, May 11, 2025 - 02:00 PM MDT
Friday, May 16, 2025 - 07:30 PM MDT
Saturday, May 17, 2025 - 07:30 PM MDT
Friday, May 23, 2025 - 07:30 PM MDT
Saturday, May 24, 2025 - 07:30 PM MDT
Sunday, May 25, 2025 - 02:00 PM MDT
Friday, May 30, 2025 - 07:30 PM MDT
Saturday, May 31, 2025 - 07:30 PM MDT
Sunday, June 1, 2025 - 02:00 PM MDT

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Office Hours: By appointment.

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

Worship Service Times: Sundays 9AM,

Sunday Worship. Wednesdays 11AM, Mid-week prayer and communion, Wednesday, Noon, Multi-denominational Community Prayer Hour.

All Saints Anglican Church is an Evangelical Anglican Church committed to the ministry 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 Sunday service. We would love to welcome you here. Following the service, join us for snacks and conversation. On the third Sunday 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
 112Main 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, Montrose, CO 81401

Office Hours: By appointment

Phone: (970) 497-4925

Email: celebrationmontrose@gmail.com

Website: <https://celebrationmontrose.org/>

Worship Service Times: 9am and 10:45am

Senior Pastor:

Pastor Brandon Mathis

Church Description/Mission: Celebration Church makes disciples that make disciples. 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'S CHURCH OF THE VALLEY

Name of Church: Christ's Church of the Valley

Denomination Affiliation: Non-denominational Christian Church/Church of Christ

Address: 10 Hillcrest Plaza Way. Montrose, CO 81401

Office hours: Tuesday & Wednesday 9am-noon and by appointment.

Contact information:

Phone: 970-249-0530

Email: CCVMontroseCO10@gmail.com

Website: ccvmontrose.org

Name of current Senior Pastor: Ken Lawrence

Worship service times: 10:30 a.m.

Mission: Christ's Church of the Valley is a loving and welcoming church whose purpose is to help people to know and grow

in our Lord Jesus Christ to the glory of God.

Description: CCV is a multi-generational church family. While we are currently predominately seniors, we are becoming more multi-generational.

Sunday School & Childcare: CCV has adult Sunday School at 9 a.m. and Youth Church during the 10:30 a.m. worship service.

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Denomination: Christ Lutheran Montrose

Affiliation: Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

Address: 1980 N. Townsend Ave., Montrose, 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 welcoming environment being comforted and encouraged 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.

COMMUNITY SPIRIT CHURCH

United Church of Christ (UCC)

Address: 504 N. 1st Street (HAP Building)

Office hours: Call or text for appointment

Phone: 970-765-7070

Email: spirit@communityspiritucc.org

Website: communityspiritucc.org

Current Pastor: Rev. Wendy Kidd

Worship service: Sundays at 11am

Mission: Our commitment to a more inclusive and accepting world is steadfast, and we will continue to work towards a future

where everyone can live freely and authentically.

Demographics: We are a small congregation of mostly adults and seniors, however, we are always ready to welcome families and children.

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. Children's Church will be offered as needed.

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 predominantly made up of older folks, but have some young blood, too.

MIRROR CHURCH DIRECTORY From previous pg

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 older 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, info@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 community, country, and world. We also encourage children and youth to grow their relationship with Christ through our children and student ministries.

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.

MIRROR CHURCH DIRECTORY From previous pg

SPIRITUAL AWARENESS CENTER

Denomination affiliation: Independent Spiritual and Interfaith Community
Address: Services 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., 2nd Sunday of each month; Chai Chats, a Wednesday morning midweek informal spiritual gathering at 10:30 a.m. at Pun Hill Himalayan Restaurant, Mont-

rose; 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. 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-](mailto:ststephensmontrose@yahoo.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).

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](mailto: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 Feb. 23 we will have a family Bible study, "Lord, Teach Me to Pray," 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 following services for a potluck brunch. Please visit <https://www.summitchurchmontrose.org/events>

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?



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The Satisfied Woman

SYMBOLISM OVER SUBSTANCE: HOW A RECENT “WOMEN’S SPACE LAUNCH” UNDERMINED REAL PROGRESS

In a spectacle that garnered headlines and hashtags, a group of elite and extremely wealthy women were recently launched to the edge of the atmosphere. Many regret they can’t be sent back. Others wonder if it even happened, given the pristine condition of the little capsule. This farce was hailed as a triumphant moment for gender equality—a symbolic victory for women everywhere! Except, it wasn’t. Because these women weren’t astronauts. They were passengers, strapped into a glorified amusement park ride, swaddled in designer jumpsuits, with perfectly flat-ironed hair, red carpet makeup and freshly polished nails.

Dripping with PR buzzwords, fake fanfare and photo ops, this grotesque display was a stark reminder of how much money the super rich are willing to blow in an instant, on marketing, vanity and false perception, rather than using it to actually help anyone, anywhere with anything. The “crew” floated briefly in low gravity before descending back to the reality they seem painfully oblivious to. Gayle King literally went to the ends of the earth to improve her sagging ratings. Katy Perry actually plugged her set list from above



By Gia Pirelli.
Courtesy photo.

and her new album upon landing, banging on about how she realized we all are “connected.” To what, we don’t know. One small step for mankind, one giant faceplant for women.

Lets’ be clear: calling yourself an astronaut because you’ve bought a ticket to space—or were given one—is like calling yourself a master carpenter because you once bought a dresser from Ikea. It’s a mockery of the discipline, grit, and years of rigorous training undergone by the real pioneers of spaceflight.

Women like Sally Ride, who became the first American woman in space in 1983. She didn’t just pose in a sexy jumpsuit and post inspirational drivel. She studied physics at Stanford. She trained with NASA for years and she earned her seat.

She was a total badass. The women in this recent launch are emblematic of a growing cultural epidemic: the elevation of symbolism over substance.

They didn’t break barriers, they capitalized on them. They weren’t astronauts, they were influencers in orbit. And instead of inspiring young girls to study astrophysics or pursue engineering, they reinforce the illusion that success is more about the optics than the effort.

Welcome to the Instagram era—where anyone can cosplay significance with the right filter and enough followers. Authenticity is optional. The image matters more than the reality. This “space mission” wasn’t a scientific milestone; it was a marketing campaign for Jeff Bezos, and he used his trophy wife to do it. It was a

branding exercise for Blue Origin, or, perhaps more appropriate, Blue Orifice, which did more to flatter egos than to further progress.

This is not an attack on the idea of celebrating women’s achievements. On the contrary, it’s a defense of real achievement. When symbolic gestures are substituted for genuine accomplishment, we lose the plot.

And, worse, we send a damaging message to the next generation of women: that approval, influence, money and perception are the new qualifications and an adequate substitute for hard work and merit.

The satisfied woman, the truly empowered one, doesn’t need to broadcast her value. She doesn’t need to collect likes on Instagram. She’s too busy doing the work. She’s grounded in reality, not fantasy. She knows what real fulfillment is and that it doesn’t come from exaggerated titles, fleeting fame, or public perception via social media portals. It comes from mastering something real, something difficult. From building, striving, failing and trying again. And then turning around and teaching others, not merely “influencing” them.

Let’s stop rewarding illusion. Let’s start honoring substance. Because when the lights fade out and the hashtags die, it’s the quiet weight of real work—not theatrics and performance—that leaves a lasting legacy. And that is where the real progress comes from. That’s where we make our mark, as a gender, as a collective and as humans.

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SAVE THE DATE! LOCAL EVENTS CALENDAR

ONGOING-

COLUMBINE QUILTERS meet at Welcome Home Alliance Warrior Resource Center, 4 Hillcrest Plaza Way Montrose. 1st Saturday except for July at 9 am.

FRIENDSHIP QUILTERS meets at the Montrose County Events Center, 4th Thursday Jan - Oct, 3rd Thursday Nov - Dec, 9am.

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.

MONTHLY

May 6-Citizen's Climate Lobby monthly mtg Tuesday May 6th at 5 at Hispanics Affairs 504 N 1st Street Montrose Non-partisan, environmental, All Welcome, 970-765-9095.

May 10-It's the National Science Foundation's 75th Anniversary! Join us for a STEM Day Celebration at the Montrose Regional Library on May 10, 2025 from 11:30am to 1pm with fun, interactive activities for all ages about water in the Four Corners Region! Activities to make, activities to take!! Free to the public. All ages invited.

May 13--On Tuesday, May 13. SW CO Trafficking Task Force Meeting. Cedar Creek Church, 222 S. Townsend, 6-8 p.m. Come find out about the various kinds of trafficking that are going on in our own area, what to look for, and how you can help keep our community safe. The Beyond Trafficking team from Texas will be presenting.

Sept. 13-14-The highly anticipated Tribute to Aviation, Montrose Regional Airport's signature event, is officially scheduled for Sept. 13-14, 2025. As one of the largest static aircraft displays in the western United States, Tribute to Aviation will showcase both military and civilian aircraft. For more information, please contact Vendla Stockdale at vstockdale@montrosecounty.net or 970-964-2479 or visit www.tributetoaviation.com

MIRROR IMAGES: OUT & ABOUT



With comfortable (wood, not metal!) seating, excellent service, and delicious drink specials like the cucumber sour pictured at left, the bar at the Rathbone Hotel is a bright and welcoming spot in Downtown Montrose.



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