



ONLINE NEWS
ASSOCIATION



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BOARD OF EDUCATION LOOKS AT FINANCIALS, FACILITIES

Board President Sarah Fishering says former Passage Charter School building, "has been owned by the city forever, actually," - but building was donated to School District when school closed in 2018, then transferred to City while Fishering was on school Board

Story and Photos by Michael Badagliacco

MONTROSE— The Montrose County School District RE-1J (MCSD) Board of Education [convened on May 13, 2025](#), at 6:30 pm in the MCSD Boardroom, addressing key initiatives to advance student success, community engagement, and fiscal responsibility, led by Board President Sarah Fishering with Secretary Alice Murphy. Directors Neisha Balleck, Jody Hovde, and Ted Valerio were all in attendance. Treasurer Tom West and Vice-President Stephen Bush were not in attendance. The meeting featured recognition, financial updates, and approvals to enhance educational opportunities.

STUDENT AND EDUCATOR RECOGNITION

A highlight of the evening was the recognition of Olathe High School Freshman **Sawyer McCall**. Sawyer shared his journey in the National History Fair, where he secured first place at the regional contest at Colorado Mesa University and the state competition in Denver. He is now preparing to compete at the national level in Washington, D.C., showcasing the district's commitment to fostering academic excellence. Fundraising efforts are underway to support his travel. You can [contact Olathe High School](#) to help Sawyer offset

[Continued pg 12](#)



OHS Freshman Sawyer McCall (with mom, above) won 1st place in the state National History Fair competition and qualified for the National event in Washington, DC. Photo by Michael Badagliacco.

LOCAL HOUSING AND FOOD RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE FOR SENIORS

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE- Rising prices affect people of all ages, but for senior citizens the impact can hit especially hard, depending on the individual's circumstances.

According to the [Colorado Coalition for the Homeless](#), "among unhoused single adults, the percentage older than 50 increased from 11 percent in the early 1990s to 37 percent in 2003 and approximately 50 percent in 2020."

With almost 30 percent of the population in Montrose age 65 and older, resources for services and housing play a vital role. The average price of a single-family home in Montrose County is up by 6.4 percent over last year at this time and has increased

[Continued pg 9](#)



Region 10 helps to fund a number of programs that benefit local seniors. Photo by B. Switzer.

[Congratulations to the Class of 2025!](#)

[Dr. Lauren Hall Ruddell, PhD: Your Brain on Nature: Imagination!](#)

[Gia Pirelli Column: The Satisfied Woman!](#)

[Weekly Cartoon by Tim Jones!](#)

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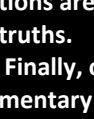
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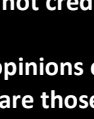
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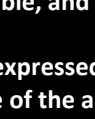
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**Thank you,
Caitlin Switzer,
Montrose Mirror Editor**

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

STOP BLAMING ANY PAST ADMINISTRATION--IT IS ALL ON TRUMP RIGHT NOW

Editor:

One of your "Letter to the Editor" writers, who seems to be published every week, needs to find his blame elsewhere. In his latest tirade he used Biden's name ten times and the Democrats eleven times, primarily blaming the two of them on any current woes with our country.

It has been over 100 days since Donald Trump was re-elected. Biden and the Democrats are no longer in charge. Stop the blame. It is all on Trump and the Republicans right now. It is the past. Nobody cares to play the blame game. If there is a problem Trump and the Republicans need to fix it.

Of course how has that been going since Trump regained the office of president again? He is whittling away at Due Process. Yet the reason he was able to avoid prosecution between presidencies was based on him being given Due Process. He pardoned 1500 rioters at our Capitol that desecrated this hallowed halls of Congress and ATTACKED police officers. He is willing to accept a bribe of a \$400 million plane from Qatar (Attorney General Bondi, who worked as a lobbyist for Qatar, says it isn't a bribe or even a gift to Trump) who has helped to fund Hamas. Trump visits Mohammed bin Salman, the Saudi Arabian ruler who was involved in the hideous murder of Jamal Khashoggi, a US based journalist, and treats him like a long lost friend.

What did Trump promise us that he can't

blame on Obama or Biden? On Day One he said he alone would end the war in Ukraine. Russia is still killing civilians. Ukraine did NOT start the war, Russia did.

He said prices would go down. Instead he illegally enacted tariffs on basically everyone, including penguins, and is causing prices to go up in America. He attacked our best friend and neighbor, Canada. Unbelievable.

He is deporting immigrants left and right (again many without Due Process) and then brings in Afrikkanners from South Africa he says were being persecuted and going through a genocide? What colour is their skin?

Trump and America are now a laughing stock to the rest of the world. Our allies are now seeking to trade with other countries. We have a Cabinet full of dunces. Firing as many Federal workers as they can, while making sure Elon Musk benefits financially. The blame is on Trump and his administration and the Republican Congress that refuses to assert their authority under our Constitution. Our liberties are being taken away one by one. Freedom of speech can get you deported if it is not compatible with Trump's views. Law firms and former prosecutors are being "black balled" because they went after the J6 Rioters or worked on cases that affected Trump. Soon we will see our Social Security benefits, Medicaid and Medicare, Veterans

Affairs to be affected adversely. Environmental regulations protecting our air, water, soils, wildlife will be gutted solely to allow big business to make more money. This includes once again allowing "forever" toxic chemicals to be used and taking away protections under the Endangered Species Act. Then there is the plan to give away Federal lands to the states so they can sell them off.

Trump, who said he knew nothing about Project 2025, is sure following their playbook. So stop blaming any past administration. It is all on Trump right now. No more blame games on others.

My last comment. That same "Letter to the Editor" writer a couple of weeks ago wrote that he was pleased at, "Having a president and VP who ... are able to actually speak coherently."

Take a look at any speech Trump has made recently. He cannot complete a paragraph let alone a sentence. He rambles. In the Middle East, he talked of lumberjacks, then Biden being the worst president, then jumped to some other thought in his mind. In the meeting with the Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, He made up numbers, he lied that the US hardly even traded with Canada (happens to be our number one trading partner), and then he again and again stated that Canada should become the 51st state. Wow!

Is this what you voted for?

Jon Sering, Canadian border

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Smarthub: To access your electronic ballot, log in to your account and click the 'Vote Now' button, cast your vote, and submit.

Mail: Mailed ballots must be received by June 10, 2025.

Drop off: Drop ballots off at your local DMEA office by June 10th at 12pm.

Paid for by Montrose County Republicans

REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

COFFEE WITH A COMMISSIONER - SUE HANSEN

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-Enjoy coffee and a chance to connect with your County Commissioner! On Thursday, May 22, come have a cup of coffee with Commissioner Sue Hansen at The Busy Corner White Kitchen (318 Main St. in Olathe). Don't miss this opportunity to ask questions or just to say hi. Everyone is welcome and coffee is on us!

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LOCAL HOUSING AND FOOD RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE FOR SENIORS From pg 1

increased by 12.1 percent this year to date, according to statistics from the Colorado Association of Realtors. The average sales price for a single-family home in April of 2024 was 468,680, compared to \$525,203 in April 2025.

When it comes to elder housing in Montrose, Volunteers of America offers some solutions, such as the Cimarron Village Apartments, with acceptance by application for those over age 62.

The Monroe Group runs the San Juan Apartments, also for those age 62 and older, and CASA of the 7th Judicial District has spaces for people over age 62 who are at risk of losing their current residence; units are located in The Village on San Juan, which offers supportive housing. For meal service, Volunteers of America's

Senior Community Meals is available in both Montrose and Delta counties.

Elisia Blair of Senior Community Meals said that those who need meals or meal delivery can call 970-212-7568. The screening process includes a nutritional assessment, and applicants are placed on a route based on the results of the screening and on their overall health needs.

The Shepherd's Hand non-profit, located at 505 South Second Street in Montrose, works with individuals of all ages; there is a day shelter open on weekdays that serves two meals a day, breakfast and lunch.

For individuals over 50, The Shepherd's Hand offers referrals to other non-profits that can help. The Shepherd's Hand prepares meals for delivery on Monday,

Wednesday and Friday--for information on their meal delivery service, call them at 970-275-7215.

"People can eat here, and when they are older we try to do some outreach," Executive Director Miriam Cardenas said. "We usually refer them to Region 10."

The Region 10 League for Economic Assistance and Planning administers funds through the Older Americans Act, and helps to fund a number of the meal programs in West Central Colorado through the Area Agency on Aging (AAA), which also publishes an online Resource Directory and links to essential services, including transportation providers.

The Montrose Pavilion Senior Center no longer serves a congregate meal, but offers other activities and opportunities.

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION OF "THE GOLDEN RULE IN POLITICS"

Dear Editor:

The next Unify Montrose event will be a round table discussion of "**The Golden Rule in Politics.**" It will be held at the Bluecorn Cafe and Mercantile, 1842 S Townsend Ave. Montrose, from 5:30 to 7 PM on Monday, May 19.

How can we show up with kindness, respect, and integrity in today's divisive political climate? What would it look like to actually apply the Golden Rule—*do unto*

others as you would have them do unto you—in our civic lives?

We'll explore questions like:

-Do you assume good intent when talking to those with whom you disagree?

-What makes that difficult?

-What might change if we all led with curiosity and respect?

Expect a casual, welcoming space where listening matters more than debating, and connection takes priority over consensus.

No prep is needed, just bring yourself.

Some food will be provided!

Please join us and have your opinions heard in a congenial, multi-demographic setting.

All viewpoints are welcome and appreciated. Civility is expected!

It should be an lively and interesting discussion!

Rick Bleier

President, Unify Montrose



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Or did it?

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??**

Montrose County Residents!

Ladies and Gentlemen, lend us your ears!

Do you live outside the Montrose City Limits and order items from **e-tailers**? You may be paying City Tax?

If so, **Check your receipts** from your online order from e-tailers such as Amazon, Target, Nordstrom, etc.... You may be paying **City Sales Tax** that you are entitled a refund by the City of Montrose.

If your Tax line on those receipts say you are paying more than 4.65%...

Make your way down to **Montrose City (Tajma) Hall** and ask for your refund! You are entitled to it, but they do not advertise it!

IT'S YOUR MONEY, NOT THEIRS!

Did you know?

The previous BOCC approved two Capital Building Projects, the Historic Courthouse AND the New North Campus, even AFTER the County finance Department told them it was not fiscally sound to do so because we do not have the money to complete both?

Now, the only remnant of the old BOCC, Commissioner Hansen says "we need to check with finance", when Sheriff Gene Lilliard is asking to move his department from the Colorado Retirement Association (CRA) plan to the Fire Police Pension Association (FPPA) to enhance the Department?

WHY? FPPA will help MCSD to attract more deputies and move from the current level of staff (0.6 per 1,000 residents (just 30% of recommended levels, to the proper ~2.0) which would bring MCSD to FBI standards!

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...

BOARD OF EDUCATION LOOKS AT FINANCIALS, FACILITIES From pg 1



The Montrose County School District RE-1J Board of Education gathered on May 13. Directors Bush and West were not present; all others were in attendance. Photo by Michael Badagliacco.

his expenses for the trip to Washington D.C., which are expected to be approximately \$4,000.

Two educators received the **Altrusa May Apple Awards**:

-Ashley Leimer, co-facilitator at Outer Range, was honored for her compassionate approach, fostering a safe and joyful learning environment for kindergarteners.

-Kathleen Jole, Peak Academy, was recognized for her leadership in the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and innovative hybrid teaching model.

Both teachers received certificates and \$50 from the Altrusa Foundation.

FINANCIAL AND BUDGET UPDATES

Finance Director Emily Imus presented the second-quarter financials (January–March 2025), projecting a **\$17.6M general fund balance**, \$1M above budget due to higher taxes, staff vacancies, and at-risk funding. The **student activities fund** is expected at \$1.5M, slightly below budget, prompting a **standardized \$15 tech fee** for all students next year, with waivers for free/reduced lunch students. The board approved a **\$118,000 fund balance allocation** for student activities via Resolution 04-2025.

The **2025-2026 budget** anticipates a 3% increase in state funding despite an ongoing decline in enrollment. Priorities include student achievement, mental health, safe facilities, and competitive staff compensation. Board member **Jody Hovde** noted the “*lack of a specific plan to achieve academic goals*,” sparking discussion. The budget presentation is set for June 10, with adoption by the end of June.

BOARD ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Board Secretary Alice Murphy provided an update on the meeting of District Advisory Committee (DAC). Attendance was sparse; committee members provided feedback for the **MCA Charter School Application**, and reviewed activities at District Schools. Pomona held its annual Camp Readmore. The sewer system at Olathe will be fixed.

District F Director Jody Hovde discussed the Facilities Committee. Hovde and District D Director Tom West met with the Maintenance team. New Facilities Director Matt Smith has been familiarizing himself with district facilities, “Just kind of getting familiar with things before he jumps in with both feet.” Hovde discussed various maintenance issues, including that a building at Pomona will be turned into a facility for the Step Up to Life program, “They’re doing some significant work there...”

Superintendent Carrie Stephenson said that the former Step Up to Life Building is owned by the City, which wants to take back the space to use it for an employee childcare facility. *(Editor’s Note—When the former Passage Charter School closed several in 2018, its lease for City owned land was ended and Passage gave the building, which they owned, to RE-1J schools. The school district then gave the building to the City under the previous Superintendent.)*

Hovde said, “That’s good information because a lot of people are asking...when I was at Camp Readmore, people were asking why they are losing part of their building to that program.”

Despite the fact that she was serving on the Board of Education when the Passage



RE-1J’s Step Up to Life program will relocate to Pomona Elementary School, as its current building, above, will become a daycare for the City of Montrose. Photo by B. Switzer.

Charter School building was given to the City, Board President Sarah Fishing said authoritatively, “It’s been owned by the City forever, actually.”

KEY APPROVALS

The board approved consent agenda items, including Personnel Report.

The following items were initially pulled from the consent agenda to engage in further discussion.

-Chromebook Purchase: Up to \$450,000 for Chromebooks for grades 2-8, transitioning from iPads to enhance curriculum integration and reduce maintenance costs;

-Bus Camera Infrastructure Upgrade: Up to \$80,000 for server and network enhancements to support new high-definition bus camera systems, bolstering student safety;

-Mobile Device Management: Up to \$90,000 to Jamf for managing the district’s Apple devices, ensuring security and efficiency.

-Educational Plans and Assessments: Approval of the 2024-2025 ECC Self-Assessment and Improvement Plan and the three-year IDEA Federal Application Narrative Summary for 2025-2028, supporting students with disabilities.

After discussion concluded and all board members present were satisfied, the remaining Consent Agenda items were approved.

DISTRICT UPDATES

Ms. Imus discussed the **enrollment numbers** for May, “including Vista [Charter School] is 5,942... **157 students lower than**

BOARD OF EDUCATION LOOKS AT FINANCIALS, FACILITIES *From previous pg*

this time last year."

The **District Accountability Committee (DAC)** reviewed the Montrose Classical Academy (MCA) application, with special board meetings scheduled for May 20 and 27 to consider it further and consider public input.

Superintendent Dr. Carrie Stephenson highlighted ongoing negotiations for

the Master Agreement and a productive DAC review. The board also approved the 2024-2025 ECC Self-Assessment and the 2025-2028 IDEA Federal Application Narrative to support students with disabilities.

Additionally, Dr. Stephenson reported back on the results of the **PRISM Challenge**, a competitive grant that was ap-

plied for on behalf of Johnson, Pomona, Oak Grove and Olathe elementary schools and which focused on the teacher role and its evolution in how the teacher can adapt. "It is a huge honor for us to be selected," Stephenson said. "The grant will provide up to \$1,000,000 in technical assistance from Empower Schools and Teacher Powered Schools as well as \$650,000 in startup resources for things such as professional development, opportunities to visit other highly effective schools around the country, learning visits expenses for high quality instructional materials and the like."

Community Engagement

No Community members had signed up to provide input.

Executive Session

The board ended the regular session and entered an executive session to discuss Superintendent Stephenson's evaluation and potential property matters involving the Fieldhouse at 25 Colorado Avenue.

Upcoming Events for May 2025

MCSD will celebrate graduations for:

- Step Up to Life
- Peak Academy
- Olathe High School
- Montrose High School
- Black Canyon High School

There will be a Special Board Meetings at the MCSD Boardroom on May 20 and May 27 to discuss the Montrose Classic Academy (MCA) Charter School application.

Next regular board meeting is scheduled for June 10 and 24 at 6:30 pm in the MCSD Boardroom.

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

THE COLORADO WILDLIFE AND BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION ACT ENDANGERS MONTROSE COUNTY AND RURAL COLORADO. JUST SAY NO!

Editor:

The proposed 2025-2026 #82 ballot initiative, The Colorado Wildlife and Biodiversity Protection Act, poses a grave threat to Montrose County and rural Colorado, where agriculture, ranching, and open land form the bedrock of economic and cultural life. Currently under review by the Colorado Legislative Council, this initiative would establish the Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation Commission (WECC), **a nine-member body with unchecked authority over agriculture, energy, and land development.** For Montrose County, with its thriving cattle ranches and fruit orchards, and other rural counties across the Western Slope and Eastern Plains, the initiative's implications are catastrophic, decimating local economies and the heritage of hardworking communities.

By prioritizing wildlife over balanced land management, it risks exacerbating wildlife overpopulation, further straining rural resources. The WECC's structure, funding model, and disconnect from rural realities signal an overreach that could dismantle the way of life for farmers, ranchers, and landowners throughout Colorado's rural heartland.

In Montrose County, where over 60% of land supports agriculture and grazing, the WECC's composition is deeply troubling. **Appointed by universities, environmental groups, and policy institutes,** not by those impacted by this dangerous proposal, commission members must have no ties to agriculture, energy, or development, industries that sustain Montrose's economy and those of rural counties like Delta, Moffat, and Yuma. The commission is detached from the realities of managing land where ranching and farming are legacies. The WECC's unilateral power could force Montrose landowners to remove livestock fences, ban herding dogs, or dismantle barns in wildlife corridors, with steep fines for noncompliance. Such restrictions, coupled with the initiative's failure to address wildlife overpopulation, could worsen existing issues. Overpopulated deer and elk herds in Colorado, par-

ticularly in Montrose and counties like Routt and Rio Blanco, already damage crops, overgraze rangelands, and increase vehicle collisions, costing farmers thousands annually. By prioritizing wildlife corridors without supporting herd management, the WECC could intensify these pressures, threatening agricultural productivity and rural livelihoods statewide, from the San Luis Valley to the Northern Plains.

The initiative's funding model heightens these concerns. **The WECC would rely on penalties, fines, and impact fees, incentivizing aggressive enforcement over genuine conservation.** In Montrose County, where agriculture generates millions annually, and in rural counties like Weld and Logan, where farming drives economic stability, this self-funded system could impose crushing financial burdens. Critiques note that the initiative prioritizes revenue over stewardship, undermining collaborative efforts, such as those with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Montrose or water management partnerships in the Arkansas Valley. With wildlife overpopulation already straining resources, additional WECC restrictions could force ranchers to absorb losses from crop damage or reduced grazing capacity, further eroding economic lifelines without taxpayer accountability.

Colorado's experience with Proposition 114, the 2020 wolf reintroduction, underscores the dangers. Despite Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) deeming it ill-advised, the measure passed with out-of-state funding, ignoring rural voices.

In Montrose, where ranchers manage predation from coyotes and mountain lions, and in counties like Rio Blanco, where livestock losses are constant, wolves added without local input sparked outrage. Initiative #82 follows this pattern, sidelining rural expertise for urban-driven narratives and ignoring wildlife overpopulation risks. Its sloppy drafting, criticized in a 19-page Legislative Council review for errors and vagueness, reflects a lack of understanding of Montrose's and rural Colorado's ecological and economic systems, from irrigation

needs in Otero County to grazing practices in Routt County.

This initiative aligns with a trend of environmental overreach, like Oregon's IP 28, which seeks to criminalize animal processing. In Montrose County, Initiative #82 could restrict livestock management or land use, potentially criminalizing practices essential to agriculture, mirroring IP 28's impact. If the WECC deems ranching activities incompatible with wildlife corridors, ranchers might face penalties, exacerbated by overpopulated herds damaging their lands. Across rural Colorado, counties like Weld, Logan, and Rio Blanco could face similar disruptions, with regulations prioritizing environmental ideals over practical realities. Ranching, farming, and hunting, central to rural identity, could be curtailed, eroding traditions. Such measures dismiss agencies like CPW, favoring centralized commissions over local knowledge. With the Front Range's priorities drowning out rural voices, #82 risks flooding the 2026 ballot with policies devastating rural communities. Critiques suggest proponents are far removed from Montrose's working landscapes or Kit Carson County's fields, disconnected from sustaining agriculture.

Residents and elected officials of Montrose County, along with farmers, ranchers, and landowners across rural Colorado, must act to stop this infringement on property and land-use rights. The WECC's unchecked power threatens property rights, economic stability, and cultural heritage. Montrose residents, through organizations like the Montrose County Farm Bureau, and those in counties such as Garfield and Prowers, through local cooperatives, must unite to oppose this initiative. By engaging in public forums and amplifying their voices, rural Coloradans can protect their communities. The stakes are too high to ignore, and the future of Montrose County and rural Colorado depends on immediate action to ensure local voices prevail over external environmental agendas.

Michael J Badagliacco, "MJB"
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MONTROSE RED HAWKS GIRLS SOCCER ROUNDUP

By Cliff Dodge

MONTROSE-The Montrose Red Hawks girls soccer team finished their season in excellent fashion winning their final three games and qualifying for the Colorado High School Activities Association (CHSAA) state playoffs. Let's not get ahead of ourselves and examine the final three regular season games, two with Grand Junction Central and one final game with the Crested Butte Titans.

MONTROSE RED HAWKS 5, GRAND JUNCTION CENTRAL WARRIORS 0

The last few days of the regular season gave the Red Hawks a full measure of confidence as they shut out the Warriors of Grand Junction Central by the score of 5-0 at the Red Hawks home pitch. The Red Hawks came out of the gate with a rush, scoring three goals in the first half of action. The second half saw the defense step up and shut down whatever offense the Warriors were attempting.

Senior Ellie Duncan led the Red Hawks offense with three goals and an assist. Senior Yulana Almanza and Junior Addison Shipley scored the other two goals for the Red Hawks. Junior goalkeeper Anica Harris stopped the only five shots the Warriors managed to put on goal.

MONTROSE RED HAWKS 7, GRAND JUNCTION CENTRAL WARRIORS 1

The Montrose Red Hawks really broke loose against the final game vs the Warriors of Grand Junction Central High School as they exploded for 6 goals in the first half of action on Tuesday of last week. The Red Hawks led by the score of 6-1 after the first 40 minutes. The Red Hawks added one additional goal in the second half of the contest as their defense smothered the Warriors offensive efforts, shutting them out in the second half.

Senior Ellie Duncan led the Red Hawks in scoring as she potted 4 goals and added an assist to her total. Other goal scorers included Senior Soro Wilson, Junior Mayce Oberg and Sophomore Kynsleigh Maestas. The Red Hawks peppered the Warriors goal tender with 23 shots on goal while sophomore Angeliana Alcazar handled 2 of the 3 shots that made it to the Red Hawks net.

MONTROSE RED HAWKS 3, CRESTED BUTTE TITANS 1

The final regular season game saw the Red Hawks board their bus and travel to Crested Butte for a final match with the Titans. The Red Hawks, true to form, jumped out to a lead during the first half of the match, scoring a pair of goals in the first half. The second half was a 1-1 draw which made the final score the Red Hawks 3, the Titans 1.

As usual the Red Hawks scoring offense was once again led by Senior Ellie Duncan with one goal and one assist. The other Red Hawk goals were scored by Freshman Jordyn Dew and Sophomore Liliana Almanza. The Red Hawks goalkeeper, Sophomore Angelina Alcazar stopped five of the six shots the Titans managed to get on the Red Hawks goal.

The Red Hawks regular season ended with an overall record of 8 wins, 5 losses and 2 ties. Their league record stood at 4 wins, 4 losses and 2 ties.

COLORADO HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION SOCCER PLAYOFFS (4A)

RIVERDALE RIDGE RAVENS 3, MONTROSE RED HAWKS 1

The Montrose Red Hawks drew the Riverdale Ridge Ravens as their initial opponent in the CHSAA playdowns. Riverdale Ridge is in Thornton, Colorado and sported a record of 11-4-1 as they hosted the Red Hawks at their home pitch. The game was a tight, defensive affair as the Ravens managed to outscore the Red Hawks 3-1. The Red Hawks dominated the field of play and outshot the home team by a wide margin. The Red Hawks put 15 shots on the Ravens net while the Ravens managed only 6 shots on the Red Hawks net. Unfortunately, only goals that go into the net count for anything in soccer and the Ravens scored 3 goals to only a single goal for the Red Hawks. The Ravens take on the Durango Demons in their next match.

THE FUTURE:

Head Coach Matt Imus sees eight varsity players graduating from this year's squad. Still, the future looks bright for the Red Hawks. Eleven underclassmen will be returning as will the entire junior varsity squad which numbers 17 sophomores and freshmen. So the cupboard is not bare and hope springs eternal as girls soccer will roll around next spring.



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ANONYMOUS CALL

**MONTROSE REGIONAL
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MONTROSE HOSTS 27 TEAM TRACK/FIELD COMPETITION

By Cliff Dodge

MONTROSE-The Montrose Red Hawks track and field team hosted 27 high schools at the annual Montrose Invitational at the stadium last weekend as a tune up for the Colorado High School Activities Association's State Track Meet which will be held at the Jefferson County track facility next weekend.

Girls:

100 meter dash:	1 st	Emarie Simpson
	6 th	Zuri Balleck
200 meter dash:	2 nd	Emarie Simpson
	3 rd	Tala Alvord
	4 th	Hope Stephens
400 meter dash:	5 th	Zuri Balleck
800 meter run:	9 th	Georgia Ficco
1600 meter run:	4 th	Millie Crane
	6 th	Naomi McGarry
4x100 meter relay:	1 st	Montrose
4x200 meter relay:	2 nd	Montrose
High Jump:	2 nd	Bella Johnson
Long Jump:	3 rd	Audry Righter
Triple Jump:	4 th	Hope Stephens
Discus:	4 th	McKenna Cline

Boys:

100 meter dash:	1 st	Deklan Woodden
200 meter dash:	2 nd	Deklan Woodden
4x100 meter relay:	2 nd	Montrose
4x200 meter relay:	2 nd	Montrose
4x400 meter relay:	3 rd	Montrose
4x800 meter relay:	2 nd	Montrose
Discus:	4 th	Gavin Jessup
Shot Put:	2 nd	Easton Jessup
	3 rd	Kayden Huggett



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

COUNTY SERVES UP COFFEE WITH COMMISSIONERS

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE— The Montrose County Board of Commissioners is pleased to introduce a new initiative aimed at strengthening community engagement: Coffee with Commissioners. This series of informal meet-and-greet events invites residents to meet with a commissioner in a relaxed, local coffee shop setting—far from the formality of traditional board meetings.

These casual gatherings are designed to give community members a convenient and approachable way to discuss local concerns, ask questions, share ideas, and learn more about county services and upcoming projects.

The events will rotate through various coffee shops in each district to ensure accessibility for residents throughout the east and west ends of Montrose County.

The first event took place on Saturday, May 10, at Blondie's in Nucla, hosted by Commissioner Sean Pond. Coming up next, Commissioner Scott Mijares will meet with residents on Thursday, May 15, at Toasty in Montrose. Commissioner Sue Hansen will hold her first coffee on Thursday, May 22, at the White Kitchen in Olathe.

All "Coffee with Your Commissioner" events are free and open to the public. Complimentary drip coffee will be provided.

To view the full schedule with upcoming dates, times, and locations, visit the county website at www.montrosecounty.net/coffee

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

COLORADO'S ECONOMIC REPORT IS IN; OUR STATE JUST FLUNKED EVERY SUBJECT

Editor:

Colorado Democrats have become indistinguishable from their partners-in-crime in California. Colorado was once a state with everything going for it and was pretty well run. Unfortunately, Colorado Democrats, like their counterparts in California and Washington, DC, are increasingly dominated by the extreme left, and that party has dominated the state general assembly since 2018. They now hold the Senate and House by a two-to-one margin. Colorado is now dominated by its leftist population centers and what they want, they get.

So, how's that working out? Colorado's economic report is now in, and our beloved home state just flunked every subject. Before 2018, we were third in the nation for personal income growth. We are now 39th. Before, we had a regulatory burden in the lower half of all states. We are now the 6th worse. We were tied for the second-lowest unemployment rate. We are now 2nd highest. In job growth, we were regularly in the top ten. We are now 43th in the nation. We were a top-10 destination for people moving in from other states. We are now in the bottom ten.

Dems are hard at work "improving" our state. We are all familiar with the constant stream of anti-liberty gun control laws coming from Colorado Democrats. Beginning in 2019, they have destroyed energy production – a major Colorado export – at the expense of the state's economy and blue-collar workers. They are now working on new fee hikes (taxes) onto our auto insurance payments to the tune of \$20 million – pretending their "fee" hikes will magically reduce our insurance payments over time. Colorado is one of only seven states with sales taxes higher than 11%. Across every other measure – schools, housing, crime, homelessness, drug addiction, abortion rates, illegal immigration – the numbers all go the wrong way. The dictatorship of the majority is clearly failing in Colorado.

It's too bad Colorado doesn't have a Donald Trump to do amazing things for Colorado like our president is doing for this nation (in spite of Democrats' continual, unconstitutional, and preposterous lawfare, including shopping around for crooked judges who will do their bidding.) With each passing day, Democrats are adding credence to the belief that they hate America and are offering nothing good or positive to the American people. They seem to have forgotten that they are representatives of a large number of American citizen voters who expect their party to make their lives better, not worse. Instead, they are destroying a once-great party over their hatred for one man. A prime example this week is the Democrat party's reaction to Trump's very positive and long overdue actions to bring down drug prices. Most Americans were appalled to learn that prescription drugs in the U.S. are so much higher priced than they are in other nations (including other wealthy nations), sometimes five to ten times more expensive for the same drug, manufactured in the same plant, by the same company. Trump is now forcing Big Pharma to charge their American customers the same price as the lowest price they charge their customers elsewhere in the world. So, Democrats are celebrating falling drug prices, right? Of course not. Because Trump is doing it, they are outraged that Trump's efforts will have a negative impact on *pharmaceutical* stocks. Rather than joining Trump in celebrating something that makes American lives better, they are outraged over what *Pfizer's* shareholders might lose. If you were not certain who Democrats (and most RHINO Republicans) work for, you can wonder no longer. It is somewhat amusing to see how the President has forced Democrats to stick up for their real constituents: Big Pharma.

When Trump announced his tariff and trade blitz, Democrats had an absolute meltdown and predicted total catastrophe. Instead, Trump got concessions from

China at the bargaining table, and another stock market rally. That followed a breakthrough trade agreement with Great Britain, and other countries lining up to negotiate new trade agreements favorable to this country, plus a cascade of companies announcing new billion dollar investments in the U.S. Gas prices are down significantly, inflation is the lowest in four years, grocery prices are down, jobs are bursting, and prescription drug prices are going to drop significantly. Our southern border is now closed. Don't expect Democrats to join with the rest of America in celebrating Trump's successes in repairing some of our country's major problems – problems Democrats created. Don't expect them to lose the hatred and do something themselves to lower prices. Don't expect them to do something to lower the crime rate, or rid the country of illegal criminals, or help the poor and blighted neighborhoods in their cities. Trump is making great strides in digging America out of the abysmal Biden/Harris/Obama crater, but don't expect Democrats to get on board in making life better for the American people. They are too busy imploding, undermining the constitution and the rule of law, and getting themselves arrested to do anything positive to make their constituents lives better.

If I were a Democrat, I would be demanding that the Democrats I helped elect do something positive to make my life better – you know, like what Trump is doing. It's time for Democrats to admit to themselves that their party is on the wrong side of everything remotely beneficial to the American people. This week, I am certain that they will find "reasons" to resist Trump redirecting illegal immigrant housing funds to help America's homeless veterans instead.

I am reasonably certain that if Trump cured cancer, Democrats would condemn him and bitch about putting oncologists out of work.

Ed Henrie, Montrose

LESLIE GORE WITH CENTURY 21 ELEVATED PROUDLY PRESENTS



This beautifully updated 3-bed, 1.5-bath home in Garnet Mesa is a must-see! Nearly everything is new, including the kitchen (cabinets & appliances), bathrooms, doors, floors, blinds, and fresh paint inside and out. The smart layout features upstairs laundry, and an enclosed front porch ideal as a mudroom or summer sleeping area.

The home is move-in ready, clean, and efficient, with windows replaced 15 years ago. Enjoy a fenced front yard, detached garage with concrete floor, low-maintenance gravel yard, and HOA-provided irrigation water. Close to schools, medical facilities, and all that Delta offers—ask about the Seller Concession offer.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

TOMBOY ROAD CLOSED UNTIL SEPTEMBER

Repair timeline dependent on numerous factors, including funding

Special to the Mirror

SAN MIGUEL COUNTY --- After consulting with engineers, San Miguel County officials have announced that due to the severity of the damage and the complexity of the repairs to Tomboy Road (County Road K68/Forest Service Road 869), vehicular access, including motorcycles, to Imogene Pass from the Telluride side this summer will likely be closed until at least September.

The repair project is currently out to bid and will involve the construction of a retaining wall with a drainage feature and a water crossing (Twin Falls descends from above on this portion of the road). The Board of County Commissioners recognizes the impact that last summer's severe washout will have on local businesses and back country enthusiasts. Bicycle and foot

traffic will be permitted until construction begins later this summer.

"We are acutely aware of the disappointment the four-wheel drive community is feeling with the closure of Tomboy Road for what will likely be the summer season," said County Manager, Mike Bordogna. "We are pursuing not only contractors to perform the repairs, but funding opportunities to augment what the County is able to provide."

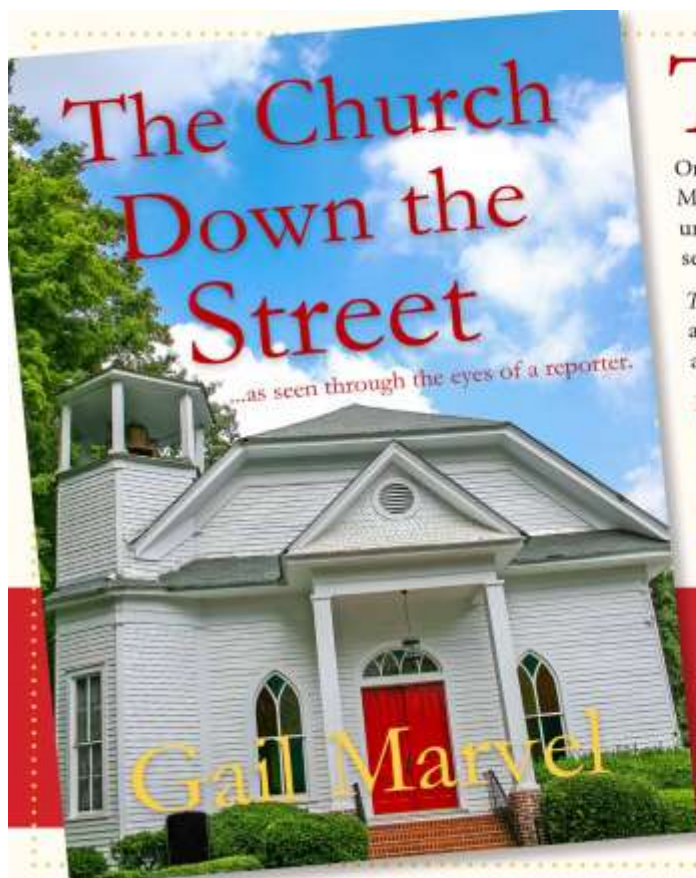
With the U.S. Forest Service reeling following federally mandated cuts, and the County's Road & Bridge department's limited budget, funding for the project will be a community effort. User groups and other stakeholders interested in making a tax-deductible contribution can email Bordogna for more information.

The mining roads that are laced through-

out the surrounding high country are generally unimproved roads, a feature that is attractive to four-wheel drive enthusiasts, motorcyclists and other recreationists. Winter conditions further ravage the roads, leaving maintenance challenges for County Road & Bridge crews, and U.S. Forest Service workers.

Earlier this spring, a major rockslide left Camp Bird Road in Ouray County impassable. Camp Bird Road, which also connects to Yankee Boy Basin and Imogene Pass, is maintained by Ouray County Road & Bridge.

Repairs to the hilfiker (wire mesh) retaining wall following blasting of massive boulders are underway with further rock clearing also anticipated. Ouray County officials are expecting to ascertain a timeline on that work later this week.



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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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

PUBLIC SAFETY SALES TAX, RESISTANCE TO FPPA ADOPTION AND THE BOCC

Editor:

Recent events highlight a troubling pattern of misinformation, fiscal mismanagement, and disregard for legal obligations concerning the Public Safety Sales Tax (PSST), the Sheriff's Office funding and the proposed adoption of the Fire and Police Pension Association (FPPA) plan.

Sheriff's Office Pension Plan Proposal

Sheriff Gene Lillard has repeatedly urged the county to join the FPPA, a defined benefit pension plan established under Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) Title 31, Article 31, to replace the current Colorado Retirement Association (CRA) plan. The FPPA, which serves over 29,000 Colorado first responders, offers stable retirement benefits, pooling assets to reduce market volatility risks.

Lillard argues that FPPA affiliation would enhance recruitment and retention, as Montrose County struggles to compete with neighboring jurisdictions like the Montrose Police Department, which contributes 14% to FPPA while officers contribute 12%. The County contributions would be just 6% with matching deputy contributions also at 6%.

Sheriff's Office Staffing Crisis

Currently, Montrose County has just 0.6 deputies per 1,000 residents. FBI statistics show the proper amount of coverage is 1.8 to 2.4 per 1,000 residents. Thus, we are only at 30% capacity with our Sheriff's Office personnel. This issue needs to be corrected quickly. The Sheriff's Office faces a recruitment crisis due primarily to the county's budget allocation being inadequate. The General Fund, which should fully fund the Sheriff's Department, appropriates only about 15% of its total to the Sheriff's Operating budget while many counties allocate as much as 40% to their Sheriff Departments, which is supposed to include Capital Improvements, after revenues are diverted to other funds. This forces the Sheriff's Office to rely primarily on the Public Safety Sales Tax (PSST), a 0.75% tax approved by voters in 2007 to supplement, not replace, General Fund contributions.

Misuse of Public Safety Sales Tax Funds

The PSST, codified under Montrose County Resolution 47-2007, mandates that at least 70% of its revenue be allocated to the Sheriff's Office for operational growth, with the remaining 30% at the commissioners' discretion for public safety-related expenses. The resolution explicitly states that PSST funds are supplemental to General Fund contributions, which should cover the Sheriff's Office's core budget. However, since 2008, successive Boards of County Commissioners have used PSST as the Sheriff's Office's primary funding source, violating the resolution's intent. Most egregiously, the previous board, including current Commissioner Sue Hansen, misallocated \$7.9 million in PSST funds to renovate the county jail, a capital project explicitly prohibited under the PSST's legal framework. The resolution restricts PSST use to operational expenses like salaries and equipment, not infrastructure. This misuse depleted funds intended to grow the Sheriff's Office, exacerbating staffing shortages. The Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S. § 30-11-107) grant counties authority over budgets but do not permit diverting voter-approved taxes for unauthorized purposes, rendering this action arguably illegal.

Commissioner Concerns and Fiscal Priorities

During the May 5, 2025, work session, Commissioner Hansen expressed skepticism about adopting the FPPA, citing the need to consult the finance department. This stance is disingenuous given her role in the jail renovation and the last board's exuberance to fund both the renovation of the historic courthouse on North First Street and the New North Campus across from the Justice Center, which proceeded despite finance department concerns. Hansen and other commissioners have also raised issues about the Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR), which limits multi-year fiscal obligations without voter approval (Colo. Const. art. X, § 20). However, FPPA representatives have clarified that TABOR may not apply, as the FPPA is actuarially sound and assumes responsibility for unfunded liabilities.

FPPA Legal and Financial Framework

The FPPA, authorized under C.R.S. § 31-31-101 et seq., has been fully funded since its inception in 1980, with assets of \$7.4 billion as of 2021. A 2022 legislative amendment (House Bill 22-1034) allows county sheriffs to join the FPPA, making Montrose County eligible. The FPPA's defined benefit structure ensures stable retirement benefits, unlike the CRA's defined contribution plan, which exposes employees to market risks.

Broader Fiscal Mismanagement

The previous BOCC's fiscal decisions compound the Sheriff's Office's challenges. In addition to the jail renovation, the board approved renovations of the historic courthouse and North Campus, ignoring financial advisories. These projects, while valuable, further strained the county's budget, limiting funds for critical public safety needs. Commissioner Hansen's reluctance to embrace the FPPA, despite its proven benefits and legal backing, reflects a pattern of prioritizing discretionary projects over statutory obligations.

Final Thoughts

Montrose County needs to align its budget with legal and voter-approved mandates. Since Commissioner Hansen has shown her inability to do so, it will be up to Commissioners Mijares and Pond to ensure the ship's course is corrected. The Sheriff's Office requires full General Fund support, with PSST funds used as intended: to grow the department above the 2008 baseline. Commissioners should approve the Sheriff's request for FPPA affiliation to address the recruitment crisis, leveraging the plan's stability and state authorization. Citizens should demand accountability, reject misinformation, and support policies that prioritize public safety over political posturing.

By adhering to C.R.S. Title 31 and Montrose County Resolution 47-2007, the county can restore fiscal integrity and ensure the Sheriff's Office has the resources to protect our community. The time for excuses and misallocated funds is over.

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

COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

COLORADANS DROPPED OFF OVER 841,000 GALLONS OF UNUSED PAINT FOR RECYCLING IN 2024 THROUGH PAINTCARE 2,808 gallons were dropped off at three drop-off sites in Montrose, Colorado

Special to the Mirror

DENVER— **PaintCare**—the nonprofit organization that operates Colorado's paint stewardship program—just announced through its latest annual report that 841,412 gallons of leftover paint were collected from Coloradans in 2024, an increase from the year prior. In Montrose County, 2,808 gallons were dropped off at three drop-off sites in the area. Since 2015, PaintCare's Colorado program has helped ensure leftover paint is managed according to "highest, best use," meaning that as much paint as possible is reused, recycled back into paint, or put to some other beneficial use.

It is estimated that about 10 percent of all household paint purchased in the United States goes unused and is available for reuse or recycling. "The paint we collect is processed into recycled-content paint products, offered for immediate reuse, or used as fuel to give new life to what used

to be a common waste product," said Sonya Hansen, PaintCare's Colorado program manager. "2024 was a record year for paint recycling in Colorado. Not only did we collect the largest amount of paint to date, but 86 percent of the latex paint collected was recycled back into paint."

Additional statewide highlights from the 2024 PaintCare Colorado annual report include:

- 212 year-round drop-off sites located across the state.
- 97.5% of Colorado residents live within 15 miles of a drop-off site mainly located at hardware stores, paint stores, and household hazardous waste (HHW) facilities.
- PaintCare provided 260 large volume pickups from households and businesses.
- 86% of latex paint collected was made into recycled-content paint, the highest percentage to date.
- PaintCare held 11 paint drop-off events

across the state, welcoming more than 990 participants who dropped off leftover paint.

Sites in Montrose County that participate in the PaintCare program and accept leftover paint for recycling include Rocky Mountain Paint and Design, Sherwin-Williams and Nucla Co-Op County Store. For more information about the drop-off sites visit <https://www.paintcare.org/states/colorado/>. PaintCare drop-off sites accept all paint brands, regardless of when or at which store in Colorado it was purchased. Items that can be dropped off for recycling include most house paints, primers, stains, sealers, and clear top coatings (varnish and shellac). Find a detailed list of accepted products at www.paintcare.org/products. While there is no charge to drop paint off for recycling, a nominal fee is added to the price of all new paint sold in Colorado to fund all aspects of the program.



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

ANDERSON'S "CRITIQUES" ARE OFTEN PERSONAL, ALWAYS UNPROFESSIONAL

Editor:

Dennis Anderson's recent opinion piece in the *Montrose Press* misrepresents the Montrose County Republicans' May 2025 meeting, casting a distorted image of its leadership and objectives. As an attendee, I aim to correct Anderson's narrative with factual clarity, addressing claims that prioritize self-promotion over truth.

Anderson's removal from the meeting was not an attack on press freedom, as he claims. Montrose County Republican Central Committee meetings are private, member-only gatherings, just like the Democrat Party meetings.

The presence of public officials does not make them public under Colorado law.

The Colorado Open Meetings Act, C.R.S. § 24-6-401, applies to public bodies, not political party meetings. Anderson's assertion that the meeting was public lacks legal basis and disregards the committee's right to conduct internal business privately.

Anderson accuses Chair Monty George of misusing the term "slander" in reference to Anderson's writings about a board member.

George's complete statement was as follows; *"Before we do the invocation and pledge of allegiance tonight, I would like to address a really important issue. And I'm going to ask Dennis Anderson to leave the room. He's not a member of Montrose County. He's not a registered Republican. He's using his platform to libel not only our executive committee, but some of our elected officials."* George continued; *"Our Republican Party here is very unified. We have a few problems, and people that have a platform such as Dennis are creating a lot of hubbub about nothing. There's been libel and slander occurring to even members of one of our subcommittees. We were kind enough to let him stay last meeting and in hopes that you can see that we're not a bunch of crazy maniacs. We're a united Republican Party."* The transcript, Mr. Anderson, does not support your selective recollection.

Anderson's columns consistently target Republican commissioners with inflammatory, unsubstantiated rhetoric. His vague claim of "attacking" commissioners with "a spotlight and the truth" lacks credibility, as his critiques are often personal and unprofessional. George's request for Anderson to leave was to maintain a productive meeting environment, not to suppress dissent.

Anderson's portrayal of the meeting's tone is also misleading. His mockery of a delay caused by a vehicle mishap is a trivial jab irrelevant to the meeting's purpose. His sarcastic reference to a "pesky Democrat" infiltrating the meeting is typical of Mr. Anderson and reveals his bias, painting Republicans as exclusionary while ignoring the committee's focus on party strategy and candidate support. The committee's bylaws, available at montroserepublicans.org, emphasize assisting Republican candidates and monitoring elections, not staging public spectacles for Anderson's benefit. Contrary to Mr. Anderson's perception, there was no smattering of applause, it was a hearty roar of applause from the entirety of those in attendance, all of which who agreed with George's decision to remove Mr. Anderson due to his ongoing attempts to smear the Republican Party and its elected officials.

Anderson misrepresents Commissioner Sean Pond's actions, suggesting Pond, who greeted him earlier at the Horse Fly restaurant and again in the meeting itself, should have defended his presence based on Commissioner Pond's strong stance on Constitutional Rights.

But Anderson's expectation of Pond "protecting the freedom of the press" is misguided. His quip about Pond drawing the line at "freedom of the press" is a cheap shot without substance, akin to an immature outburst. Anderson's "Press Credential" does not entitle him to attend a private meeting, just because public officials present.

Regarding the public health director, An-

derson oversimplifies a nuanced decision. The Board of County Commissioners' initial vote for Mr. Mirza Ahmed was reversed due to a legally flawed process. As noted in an April 14, 2025, Op-Ed in the *Montrose Mirror* (titled "[COMMISSIONER MIJARES MOVING TO BRING BACK CREDIBILITY TO BOCC](#)" (p. 14), [C.R.S. § 25-1-508](#) requires the "County Board of Health", not the County Manager or the Board of County Commissioners in their capacity as County Commissioners, to hire the public health director. The initial hiring violated this statute. The decision to reopen hiring was not a "self-inflicted" blunder, as Anderson claims. His dismissive "cold feet" remark ignores legitimate legal concerns that required the board to correct the error.

Anderson's praise for Commissioner Sue Hansen is expected, as he has taken every opportunity, warranted or not, to cast Commissioner Hansen in the best light possible, but it is usually used to unfairly criticize the Republican committee and her fellow Commissioners as has been noted in this authors previous Op-Ed's. His claim that *"she had been run through the wringer the previous few months by her own party"* is disingenuous.

Criticism of Hansen stemmed from her actions as a RINO (Republican In Name Only) and the criticism was noted by many who used to support her prior to her shift from being a Conservative Republican to abandoning her conservative values to cater to the likes of Colorado's US Senator, extreme leftist Michael Bennett. Her switch to Unaffiliated status, was done in secret, and was seen as a betrayal by party members and the Central Committee. George's comment about her reelection acknowledged past party support. Anderson's attempt to frame this as partisan overreach is misleading, especially since he acknowledges that party labels matter less in local politics. Anderson's columns rely on petty quips and half-truths.

**Michael J Badagliacco, "MJB"
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UNITED STATES NEWS BRIEFS

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE REMINDS CUSTOMERS TO CHECK AND MAINTAIN THEIR MAILBOXES DURING NATIONAL MAILBOX AWARENESS WEEK

Special to the Mirror

COLORADO-With National Mailbox Improvement Week (May 18 - May 24), the U.S. Postal Service is encouraging customers to inspect, maintain, and upgrade their mailboxes to help ensure safe, secure, and efficient mail delivery.

"Customer's mailboxes are the first point of contact for receiving birthday cards, letters, and important documents," said Acting Postmaster and CEO Doug Tulino. "A well-maintained mailbox helps to ensure that every package and parcel makes it to its intended destination safely and efficiently." Each year, USPS designates the third week of May as Mailbox Improvement Week to encourage customers with box-on-post-delivery to examine and, where necessary, improve the appearance of their mailboxes. Through regular mailbox maintenance efficient mail delivery, enhanced neighborhood curb appeal, and improved postal service operations are better ensured.

Mailbox care tips

The Postal Service annually calls attention to Mailbox Awareness Week because of the wear and tear that occurs to mailboxes throughout the year. Some of the typical activities homeowners may need to do include:

- Replacing loose hinges on a mailbox door.
 - Repainting a mailbox that may have rusted or has started to peel.
 - Remounting a loosened mailbox post.
 - Replacing or adding house numbers
 - Keeping security top-of-mind
- USPS partners with the U.S. Postal Inspection Service to keep postal employees, the mail stream, and the American public safe, prevent incidents through education and awareness, and enforce the laws that protect our nation's mail network.

Tips to secure your mail include:

Promptly pick up your mail: Try not to leave letters and packages in your mailbox or at your door for any length of time.

Report mailbox vandalism: If you see someone actively tampering with a mailbox, immediately report it to the police.

If you know of someone who committed an act of mailbox vandalism, report it to Postal Inspectors at [1-877-876-2455](tel:1-877-876-2455).

LEARN MORE: [How to Set Up & Mount a Mailbox](#)

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

MONTROSE REGIONAL HEALTH RECOGNIZED NATIONALLY FOR PATIENT EXPERIENCE AND SAFETY

Award-winning hospital adds to its growing list of national honors, reinforcing its role as the hospital of choice for the Western Slope

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE— Montrose Regional Health (MRH) has been named a recipient of the 2025 Healthgrades Outstanding Patient Experience Award™, placing the hospital among the top 15 percent nationwide for patient satisfaction and compassionate care. This distinction follows MRH's recognition earlier this year with the 2025 Patient Safety Excellence Award™, making it one of only 66 hospitals nationwide, and the only hospital on the Western Slope, to receive both awards in 2025. The Outstanding Patient Experience Award™ is based on patient survey responses, and the Patient Safety Excellence Award™ is based on clinical outcomes. The awards highlight MRH's ongoing commitment to safe, respectful, and responsive care.

"Our patients deserve the very best, and we work hard every day to deliver on that promise," said Jeff Mengenhausen, CEO of Montrose Regional Health. "These awards reflect the dedication of our caregivers

and providers. More importantly, they represent the trust our community places in us. We are committed to being the health system of choice for the Western Slope."

Within the past year, Montrose Regional Health has received a range of national recognitions that demonstrate excellence not only in clinical quality, but also in patient experience, cleanliness, and workplace culture:

Gallagher Best-in-Class Employer (2024): Recognized for outstanding performance in employee engagement, compensation and benefits, and overall organizational wellbeing.

Becker's Hospital Review Cleanliness

Recognition (2025): Named among 374 hospitals nationwide to receive a 5-star cleanliness rating from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), based on patient feedback collected through the HCAHPS survey.

Chartis Top 100 Rural & Community Hos-

pitals (2025): Named by The Chartis Center for Rural Health as one of the nation's leading rural hospitals and a nine-time honoree on its Top 100 list

U.S. News & World Report High Performing Hospital (2024–2025): Received national "High Performing" ratings in Heart Attack Care and Patient Experience, the publication's top recognition in those categories.

With more than 100 providers across 27 medical specialties, MRH continues to expand access to high-quality care for residents throughout Montrose County and the surrounding region. Whether patients are coming in for routine checkups, specialized treatment, or urgent care, they can count on a team that prioritizes safety, comfort, and individual needs. MRH is proud to live its promise of caring for you like family.

To learn more about MRH's services and recognitions, visit

www.MontroseHealth.com.

CASB ANNOUNCES STUDENTS CHOSEN TO JOIN THE 2025 STUDENT LEADERSHIP ACADEMY PLANNING TEAM

Special to the Mirror

DENVER— The Colorado Association of School Boards is pleased to announce the selection of an outstanding group of student leaders to join the 2025 Student Leadership Planning Team.

Planning Team members will play a crucial role in designing and leading the Student Leadership Academy program during CASB's Annual Convention, taking place December 11-13, 2025 at the Broadmoor hotel in Colorado Springs.

The Student Leadership Planning Team provides students with the opportunity to enhance their leadership skills, collaborate with their peers, and make a tangible impact on the future of public education in Colorado.

Chosen from a competitive pool of applicants, the selected students were recognized for their dedication to service, creativity, teamwork, and passion for positive change.

"CASB's Student Leadership Academy is Colorado's premier student program, where students come together to develop skills in advocacy, communication, and school board engagement, said Leslie Bogar, CASB's Deputy Executive Director. "The program is led by our Student Leadership Planning Team—students who invest their time, creativity, and collaborative spirit into shaping and delivering this impactful experience. Designed by students, for students, the Academy reflects the vision and leadership of those selected as CASB Student Leaders."

The students selected for the 2025 team are:

Aidan Gallegos – Harrison High School
Anna Johann – Lyons Middle Senior High School
Annabelle Rusco – Roosevelt High School
Gavin Schafer – Harrison High School
Iris Alderete Garcia – Snowy Peaks High School

Lucas Adaro-Martin – Snowy Peaks High School

Mark Durden – Legend High School
Rachael Woodard – Brighton High School
Sophia Rodriguez – Valley High School
Trevor Leidig – Thompson Valley High School

The 2025 planning team will hold their first meeting on April 29, 2025 and will start meeting biweekly in August to organize this year's Student Leadership Academy.

CASB's Student Leadership Academy is a statewide interactive leadership conference for high school leaders.

The Academy is open to all students in grades 9-12 and typically sees over 150 students in attendance.

For more information about the 2025 Student Leadership Planning Team, please contact Mikayla Unruh at munruh@casb.org or via phone at 303-302-3801.


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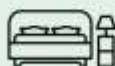
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UNITED STATES NEWS BRIEFS

DEA RELEASES 2025 NATIONAL DRUG THREAT ASSESSMENT

Special to the Mirror

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration has announced the release of the 2025 National Drug Threat Assessment (NDTA), DEA's comprehensive review of the threats posed to the United States by deadly illicit drugs and the violent domestic and international drug trafficking organizations responsible for producing and trafficking the drugs poisoning our communities.

For more than a decade, DEA's NDTA has been an integral resource for informing drug policies and laws.

It remains a trusted resource for law enforcement agencies, policy makers, community leaders, and prevention and treatment specialists, while also serving as a critical tool to inform and educate the public.

"This year's report indicates progress in the fight against fentanyl and also outlines the increasing challenges we face with the changing landscape of the synthetic drug crisis. The adulterating of fentanyl with highly potent, dangerous chemicals reminds us that this fight is far from over," said DEA Acting Administrator Robert Murphy. "DEA and our federal, state, and local law enforcement partners must continue to adapt and work together to attack global drug trafficking organizations at every level. By joining forces to reduce supply and demand, we can destroy the drug trafficking networks and achieve a safer and healthier future for all Americans."

In addition to highlighting current trends and emerging threats, this year's NDTA includes overviews of the cartels and criminal organizations that were designated as Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTOs) and Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs), including the Sinaloa Cartel, Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG), Northeast Cartel, the New Michoacán Family, Gulf Cartel, United Cartels, Tren de Aragua (TdA), and Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13).

Other key findings of note:

Drug overdose deaths decreased by more than 20% in 2024. October 2024 was the eleventh consecutive month in which CDC reported a reduction in drug related deaths. This is positive momentum in this fight to save lives; however, with more than 80,000 Americans still dying from drug poisonings and overdose deaths, the synthetic drug threat remains grave.

DEA laboratories are reporting a downward trend in fentanyl purity. This should not be mistaken for street-level fentanyl being any less dangerous. While purity levels are decreasing, the mixing of fentanyl with animal tranquilizers and other synthetic opioids is on the rise, which results in people not knowing the exact composition of what they are consuming or selling.

The mixing of illicit substances, known as drug cocktails, is becoming more common. Recent data from the National Forensic Laboratory Information System (NFLIS) indicated one in four submissions of co-

caine and one in eight submissions of methamphetamine also included fentanyl. This is another indication that the drug landscape is as dangerous as ever.

Veterinary tranquilizer xylazine remains the top adulterant found in fentanyl powder; however, a more powerful veterinary anesthetic, medetomidine, has emerged in the fentanyl supply – a dangerous development in the fight against fentanyl. More than four million youth and young adults (ages 12-20) reported vaping marijuana in the past year.

Chinese transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) dominate the domestic cultivation and distribution of marijuana, with most grow sites located in states where the cannabis industry is "legal." These Chinese TCOs are producing the most potent form of marijuana in the history of drug trafficking, with a THC content averaging 25-30%.

This edition of the NDTA is dedicated to DEA Special Agent Enrique "Kiki" Camarena, who was brutally murdered in Mexico in 1985.

In February 2025, the United States secured custody of Rafael Caro Quintero, the man charged in the United States with the torture and murder of Special Agent Camarena. He will now face justice in the United States for his alleged crimes committed on behalf of the Guadalajara Cartel.

The 2025 National Drug Threat Assessment is available to view or download on [DEA.gov](https://www.dea.gov).



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FULL US 550 CLOSURE BEGINS AT 7:30 A.M. SAT., MAY 24, BETWEEN PURGATORY AND SILVERTON — ALLOW FOR EXTRA TRAVEL TIME DUE TO WORK ZONE DELAYS

.Special to the Mirror

SOUTHWEST COLORADO —To accommodate the annual Iron Horse Bicycle Classic, the Colorado Department of Transportation will close US Highway 550 to vehicle travel for six hours on Saturday, May 24, between Purgatory Ski Resort and Silverton. Motorists are urged to seek alternate routes between 7:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m., or travel through the closure points before 7:30 a.m.

Motorists traveling north to Silverton early Saturday morning are urged to allow ample travel time to make it past Purgatory before the closure begins, leaving Durango no later than 6:45 a.m. The closure point at Purgatory Ski Resort is located 25 miles north of Durango and is an approximate 35 to 45 minute drive from Durango. Additionally, motorists should plan for full

stops and up to 20-minute delays at Deer Creek (Mile Point 59.3), a CDOT rockfall mitigation construction site located approximately 10 miles north of Purgatory Ski Resort. The CDOT work zone will have traffic signals in place 24/7 with full stops and alternating single-lane traffic in both directions. Please note that no work activity will happen over the holiday weekend, Friday through Monday, but the light signal will be operational.

During the race, motorists headed south between Hermosa and Durango will be detoured from US 550 onto County Road 203 at Hermosa Creek to Animas View Drive. Northbound traffic from Durango to Purgatory will proceed along US 550 following traffic control personnel, signage, and cones set in place. Motorists must obey all traffic control signage and person-

nel.

Motorists will also experience brief delays and traffic impacts Saturday morning in Durango, along North Main Avenue, as several waves of cyclists are set to depart from 33rd Street & 2nd Avenue. The first group of 600 professional cyclists will depart at 7:15 a.m., followed by approximately 2000 cyclists at 8 a.m.

With multiple bicycle events taking place over the busy holiday weekend, drivers are reminded and urged to watch for cyclists and drive safely. For the past several weeks, CDOT maintenance crews have been maintaining and sweeping the highway to clear the road of debris, such as gravel and rocks.

For more information about the Iron Horse Bicycle Classic, visit www.ironhorsebicycleclassic.com.



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GAIL MARVEL

Montrose Author & Reporter

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OPINION/EDITORIAL:LETTERS

GREAT MINDS DO TEND TO THINK ALIKE

Editor:

The recent article Commissioner Pond put in the Mirror shows his lack of observation skills. But it also shows I am camped out in his head. After all there is lots of room in there. And he makes it so easy. He mentioned observing me and commissioner Sue Hansen talking outside the BOCC meeting with coffee cups from the same café. I suspect that his wife wrote the article. But FYI my cup was from McDonalds drive trough. While me and Sue are friendly towards one another we are not friends. We do not spend time together; we only see one another at public functions like the BOCC meetings. But we do make a point to be seen talking to one another at these events because we know it is a way to get into the empty heads of two very thin-skinned ego maniacs. Me and Dennis Anderson do the same thing. There is nothing we enjoy more than having two incompetent commissioners accuse us of the very thing they are doing (collusion). As for my comments about the Basin clinic that were just two intelligent people making the same observation. While Pond and Mijares want to spend

Montrose County, into insolvency to placate to approximately 1500 residents on the west end. Me and Sue are aware of other options and other funding sources. The residents on the west end need to stop looking to the government to solve their problems. After all it was the government who decided to shut down coal fired power plants. And with the shutdown of the power plant that led to the shutdown of the coal mine that was feeding the power plant. And the loss of jobs was devastating to that small community. The citizens on the west end should look to themselves to solve their economic problems. Because with government assistance comes government interference and incompetence.

Now to clarify my association with Sue Hansen, Kay Heinschel and Dennis Anderson. I was part of the vacancy committee that appointed Sue Hansen as commissioner after Glen Davis resigned. As chair of the central committee, I started the process to remove Kay Heinschel as 2nd vice chair. I later withdrew that motion because it was seriously dividing the central committee. Me Sue and Kay butted

heads over them trying to appoint Scott Damion to two different positions that he didn't meet the minimum requirements for. So, we have been adversarial at times to say the least.

Me and Dennis Anderson have gotten along with one another most of the time. However, I chastised him a little over a year ago about how the Daily Press printed a lot of articles that were very liberal, most of them written by writers from other news organizations. Last year I submitted an op-ed that Dennis tried to print but was later overridden by upper management they wanted to interview me instead. I declined because they wanted to make it their story. The op-ed was about the corruption in the republican party in allowing the state party chair and the Montrose County chair to run for office in a contested primary in violation of the bylaws. So, while we are friendly to one another we do not hang out together. Nor do we collude with one another in our attacks on Pond and Mijares. Our opinions are our own. However great minds do tend to think alike.

RAY LANGSTON, MONTROSE



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MONTROSE— Mirr Ranch Group is proud to announce the listing of Glen Haven Ranch, a lush, irrigated plateau between Telluride and Crested Butte with stunning views of Colorado's San Juan Mountains. This 284-acre property presents a bucolic setting with proximity to Telluride, Crested Butte, Montrose, and the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park.

Amidst this breathtaking backdrop, Glen Haven Ranch is an irrigated hay-producing powerhouse, with nearly 70% of the property under irrigation. The ranch averages approximately 700 tons of hay annually, making it a top-tier property for producers seeking reliable output and efficiency.

Beyond its agricultural prowess, Glen Haven Ranch offers exceptional recreational value. The near-by Black Canyon property attracts hundreds of elk at a time, and resident herds of mule deer and elk are frequently seen on the ranch. As such, the property is eligible for Colorado landowner hunting tags, adding value for sportsmen or conservation-minded buyers. Its proximity to Montrose means visitors to the ranch are never far from modern amenities, restaurants, healthcare, and a regional airport.

"This offering represents a very compelling opportunity to own one of the most beautiful slices of the American West in a prime location close to town, as well as two world class resort communities," says broker Mike McGarry. "It's a combination of attributes that is rarely seen in this area at this price point."

Glen Haven Ranch features:

- A private setting adjacent to Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands
- Remarkable elk and mule deer hunting and viewing opportunities
- Revenue streams that include hay production, rental homes and excellent hunting
- Property buildings that include a main home, 1920s ranch home, hay barn and more
- Excellent development potential with no covenants or conservation easements

For photos, [click here](https://www.mirranchgroup.com/). For more information, please visit <https://www.mirranchgroup.com/>.



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COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

BARBARA (JOAN) DEINES TOFFLEMOYER

March 15, 1940 — May 12, 2025

BARBARA (JOAN) DEINES TOFFLEMOYER, 85, of Montrose, Colorado, passed away on May 12, 2025, surrounded by her loving family.

Born on March 15, 1940, Joan was raised by her parents, Henry and Irene Deines, alongside her six siblings: Bob, Betty, Bill, Donna, Patsy, and Dick Deines. Her early years were filled with the laughter and closeness of a large, devoted family.

Joan was first married to Bill Wilson, with whom she had three sons: Mike, Rick, and Ron Wilson. She later found lasting love with Dick Tofflemoyer, her husband of 35 years. Together, Joan and Dick built a joy-

ful and bustling family that grew to include 21 grandchildren including great-grandchildren—with one more on the way.

Joan lived a full and vibrant life. She found enjoyment in reading, gardening, and dancing, and she never passed up a good shopping trip. She cherished time spent camping, four-wheeling, and, most of all, being surrounded by her family. Her warmth, sense of humor, and feisty spirit left an indelible mark on everyone who knew her.

A celebration of Joan's life will be held on Monday, June 9th, at 1 p.m. at Rivers

Church in Delta, Colorado. All who knew and loved her are welcome to attend.

Joan will be dearly missed and forever remembered for the joy

and strength she brought into the lives of so many.



TERRY JAY LUTZ

July 14, 1938 — April 12, 2025



In Memory of Terry Jay Lutz

TERRY JAY LUTZ, 86, passed away peacefully on April 12th, 2025. He was born July 14th, 1938, in Montrose, Colorado.

Throughout his life, Terry was known for his steady presence, strong work ethic, and sense of humor. A gifted storyteller, he delighted family and friends with tales of a life well lived and creating cherished memories for all who knew him. A devoted husband, father, grandfather and friend. Terry's love and wisdom will be deeply missed.

He was preceded in death by his wife Betty and youngest son David. His older son Larry resides in Parker, Colorado with his wife Linda.

Larry and Linda have four children, Shane, Shelley, Angie and Travis.

Shane and Lynn have two girls, Mackenzie and Sydney. Shelley has four children, Lucas, Josie, Ryan and Jack. Angie has two boys, Kyle and Brandon. Travis and Veronica have one daughter, Jacqueline. David and Terri have one son, David.

Terry was the son of the late Jay and Grace Lutz, and brother to Virginia Simmons, Dixie Fangman, Glenn Lutz (deceased), Sharon Beardslee and Stan Lutz.

A celebration of Terry's life will be held on July 11th at 10 AM at Crippin Funeral Home. All who knew and loved him are invited to attend and honor his memory.

CELEBRATING LOCAL BEAUTY.



COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

MARIA ELENA GORDILLO-ALEJANDRO

May 28, 1983 — May 10, 2025



MARIA ELENA GORDILLO of Montrose, CO passed away on Saturday, May 10, 2025. She is survived by her husband of 28 years, Jesus Damian, her two sons: Luis Damian Gordillo and Alexander Damian Gordillo, her daughter Sallury Damian Gordillo and her daughter-in-law Tiffany Damian Gordillo along with many loved ones.

JUNE FIELD

July 10, 1935 — May 9, 2025

JUNE FIELD was born in Montrose, Colorado on July 10, 1935, to John J Bertorello and Ora E (Koch) Bertorello.

She graduated from Montrose High School in 1953. She was in the band and played clarinet. She spent time in her father's machine shop that was a block away from her childhood home. She learned much about welding from her father. She loved to spend time at a family farm each summer in the Westcliff area.

June met George W Field Jr at Western State College in Gunnison, Colorado in 1954, where they shared the love of music and sports. They eloped to Raton, New Mexico on May 6, 1955. George then joined the Navy, and they moved to Jacksonville, Florida, where Mark was born in September 1956. They returned to Gunnison for George to finish college. Michelle was born in Montrose in January 1960. George began teaching at Montrose Junior High, while June worked at a local insurance company.

June loved performing with the Montrose Magic Circle Players in the late 60's and early 70's and she enjoyed singing with friends and family throughout her life.

June returned to Western State College in the early 1970's to get her teaching degree, after which she began teaching

business classes at Olathe High School. She was the sponsor of the yearbook staff, FBLA and Knowledge Bowl. She fostered a vibrant classroom environment and maintained lasting connections with her students long after their graduation. A fellow teacher noted recently that several students who attended her classes have obtained good jobs.

She loved to entertain and cook. The house was always full of family, friends, and students. She established traditions that continue to be cherished by her family. George and June attended as many of their children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren's events as possible. You could hear both in the stands cheering with enthusiasm.

George and June lived in Garden City, Kansas for a brief time and returned to Colorado where they settled in Aurora. She continued to teach business at TH Picken Community College until she retired in 1998.

She played cards with friends before becoming blind in 2020, she also faced the challenges of Alzheimer's disease. Throughout this time, she held onto a Curious George monkey that she called "Georgie," a companion that provided comfort in the absence of her beloved husband, George, whom she missed dearly.

ly. Georgie never left her side.

Her husband, George W Field Jr, predeceased her in death on February 17, 2013. An infant daughter passed on July

5, 1964. Her brother, Johnny Bertorello, sister Peggy Kauffman and nephew Kenny Bertorello died prior to June's death.

She is survived by son Mark Field, his wife Vicky, daughter Michelle Field and her spouse, Mike Stuehm, Mark's children, Hilary Seymour her husband Aaron and their children River and Hunter, Kevin, his family Jess, Lily and Weston, Chris and his son Kaizen, Natalie Satterwhite and her son Robbie, June's daughter Michelle's children, Briana (Achey) Moden her husband Chris, their sons Brecken, Tristan and Caden, son Brenton Ashcraft and his fiancé Courtney Murphy and nieces Dorothy (Bertorello) Caperton, Donna Bertorello and great nephew Dusty Bertorello.

A Memorial Service will be at the Montrose Christian Church on Tuesday, May 27th at 11 am.



COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

GEORGE GLEASON

July 6, 1944 – May 5, 2025



GEORGE GLEASON, beloved husband, father, friend, pharmacist, pilot, and purveyor of perfectly timed punchlines, passed away peacefully on May 5, 2025, with his loving wife Mary and Son Brian by his side. He was 80 years old, though his wit remained sharp and his jokes ever-recycled right up to the end.

George lived a life as expansive as the skies he loved to fly. A dedicated pharma-

cist by trade, but outside the white coat, George was a man of motion and curiosity—soaring as a licensed pilot, exploring the world as an avid traveler with his wife Mary of 35 years and son Brian.

Always sharing his encyclopedic knowledge as a respected speaker and expert on the Battle of the Little Bighorn (a topic he could cover from all angles—and then a few more).

He was also a proud member of The Bridges community in Montrose, Colorado—a town he cherished and called home most of his life. And while his golf game was, let's say, "aspirational" (especially around the greens), he approached every round with the same optimism he brought to life: that today just might be the day he'd sink that chip shot.

And then there was the gym. George was there five to six days a week, tackling every class with the intensity of a 25-year-old—or maybe just trying to survive one more spin session under the supervision of the meanest instructor in 27 counties. Of course, that instructor also happened to be his wife Mary. But he never missed a class. Not even the early ones. The man

was committed—to fitness, yes, but most likely due to the fact that Mary might not bake his favorite dessert that week, a cherry crisp.

George's true superpower, though, was making people laugh. Whether you were meeting him for the first time or the hundredth, you were bound to hear his signature line—"Would you look at the time"—delivered with a theatrical tap on his watch and a grin that made you forget you'd heard it yesterday (and probably the day before that). He repeated stories and jokes not out of forgetfulness, but because they were like old friends—always welcome, always worth sharing again.

He had a laugh that made you feel lighter, and a spirit that made any room feel a little brighter.

George's life was full of love, joy, and adventure, and though his passing came far too suddenly, his legacy is one of deep affection and unforgettable charm.

He was one of one, and well, as George would put it, "Would you look at the time..." Rest well, George.

You will be missed.

DARRELL GILKS

July 28, 1948 — May 8, 2025

DARRELL GILKS, 76, passed away peacefully after a long battle with cancer with his family by his side on May 8, 2025. Darrell was born in Fredrickton, New Brunswick Canada on July 28, 1948. He was preceded in death by his father Lyman Gilks and mother Joyce Gilks (Hovey). Darrell is survived by his wife Cindy; daughter Michelle, son in law Brad; granddaughter Sophie all from California; son Brian from Telluride; brother Gary Gilks (Karen Ann); sister Sharon Counsil (Noel) all in Ontario, Canada, and brother Les Gilks in Alberta, Canada as well as numerous nieces and nephews. His father was sent to Colorado Springs to work at NORAD in 1965. Darrell went to High School there in Colorado

Springs and met his future wife, Cindy Burnett. They went together for three years and got married in 1969. They would have been married 56 yrs this July. They moved back to Canada but only stayed for six months. He often said that Canada was beautiful but that Colorado was God's country. They moved back to Colorado Springs and stayed for three years and then to Oklahoma City for five years. They moved to Montrose where they have been for 47 yrs. Darrell worked in construction and in 1983 started a Guide and Outfitting Business and had that for over 40 years. Between hunting seasons he built homes and sub-divided and was in real estate and appraisals.

Darrell had an engaging personality with a huge laugh and smile. He didn't know a stranger and made friends everywhere he went. He was known for his story telling and for his teasing. He loved to hunt and fish and loved being in the mountains. He loved to spend time with his friends and family.



ISSUE 522 May 19, 2025

ART & SOL

YOUR BRAIN ON NATURE – IMAGINATION



By Dr. Lauren Hall Ruddell, PhD.

Greetings Mirrorites!

When I was a kid, I engaged in tons of pretend play with neighbor kids. Our favorite role-playing scenarios were not cops and robbers or cowboys and Indians, but animals and zookeepers. I never wanted to be the keeper, but always an animal of some kind. In the words of the main character in *Anne of Green Gables*, for me, playing an animal outdoors left 'much more scope for the imagination.' There is a complex body of research that supports the importance of perspective taking called Theory of Mind, which all children (and adults) engage in when they are immersed in role play modes.

Theory of Mind (ToM) is critical in early childhood development and starts to develop ages 4-5 when children really start to understand other people's thoughts and emotions. ToM continues to develop after age of five years when children learn



Non-structured play in nature can have more benefits than soccer! Photo courtesy R. Collins.

how to predict how another person (or animal) may feel or what they might be thinking. When children struggle with ToM, they may have difficulty understanding abstract language usage like puns or figures of speech, have trouble making friends, engaging in conversation, or understanding characters' perspectives in stories. Although ToM or 'mentalizing' is an important life skill and overlaps somewhat with empathy, it is a process that is controlled by different areas of the brain than empathy. Both are important parts of healthy childhood development, and both require a sturdy imagination at an early age.

I mention this tidbit of developmental psychology to illustrate the importance of imagination in humans. Lack of imagination has a tremendous downside in life that is easy to underestimate. Lack of imagination can actually be life-threatening or financially ruinous. A fun article in [Forbes](#) (2025) illustrates this from a pandemic standpoint. "A lack of imagination when preparing for a crisis can crater a company's brand, create a media firestorm, expose the organization and its leaders to civil or criminal charges, and potentially lead to injuries or deaths." Anthropologists surmise that this capacity was sharpened in hominids about 50,000

Continued next pg

YOUR BRAIN ON NATURE – IMAGINATION From previous pg

years ago. This made living in tribes larger than one's own family possible by fostering cooperation and reducing conflict. It is every bit as important now as it was then, perhaps even more so. But as we spend less and less time in nature as children, we seem to be losing this capacity. The template is there, but it is not being nurtured through exposure to imaginative and unstructured free-play time in nature.

[Robin Moore](#), an expert in the design of learning environments, has written that natural settings are essential for healthy brain development because they stimulate all of the senses and integrate imagination into relaxing activities. According to Moore, multisensory experiences in nature help children build "the cognitive constructs necessary for sustained intellectual development," and stimulate imagination by supplying both children and adults with the free space and materials for what he calls "architecture and artifacts." He also emphasizes that "natural spaces and materials stimulate imaginations and serve as the medium of inventiveness and creativity." There is unfortunate evidence that children in the US are becoming less imaginative and that this has been occurring for several decades.

[In a 2010](#) study of about 300,000 creativity tests going back to the 1970s, Kyung Hee Kim, a creativity researcher at the College of William and Mary, found creativity has decreased among American chil-

dren in recent years. Since 1990, children have become less able to produce unique and unusual ideas. They are also less humorous, less imaginative, and less able to elaborate on ideas. Besides lack of access to nature, this has been blamed on standardized American teaching and testing modes, and excess screen time from an early age, including television. But to repeat myself, it's not necessarily a brain change, but rather a lack of brain-building materials that seems to be causing this.

For adults whose thinking feels constrained and stagnant, time in restorative natural environments can be a quick answer. As mentioned in earlier articles, time in pleasing natural settings reduces arousal levels, and through the magic of soft fascination, kicks the brain into the Default Mode Network. This series of neural links and regions is the seat of daydreaming, mind-wandering, and much divergent and creative thought. Here is the place where we can imagine other solutions, other worlds, and even other selves. The regions within the DMN often activate during periods of relaxation and when engaged in perspective taking and constructing self-narratives. In this space imagination in the form of divergent thought can romp unrestrained. The mind wanders as it will, without effort, prompted by memory, anticipation, and association (Andrews-Hanna et al., [2018](#)), especially when enjoyed without company or other social or digital distractions. Three

core processes of imagination can be engaged—simulation, mental time travel, and perspective taking—which form the basis for useful mind-wandering, autobiographical narratives, counterfactual thinking, fantasizing, comprehending narratives, and producing intentional fictional constructs. I love me some fictional constructs and my walks with goats have been responsible for plot line breakthroughs for my mystery books.

The scope for the imagination is even better for children when natural 'affordances' such as sticks, pinecones, rocks, and plants are available. One Brooklyn [preschool educator](#) with access to nearby nature found that, "When taken to the more open, natural setting in the park, the children's pretend play was dramatically more complex and sustained than when they were taken to the nearby playground.

Children's conversations were richer, the groups of children playing together were larger, play scenarios were more sophisticated, and were sustained over multiple days. The children collaborated, negotiated, and created complex scenarios and characters together."

The moral of this story is to get those kiddos outdoors as often as possible for healthy brain development and an abundance of creative juices through imagination, and get yourself out there as well!

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

ARCHAEOLOGIST GLADE HADDEN OF PARADOX TO SPEAK IN NORWOOD MAY 21 AT 6 PM

Special to the Mirror

NORWOOD- *Stories & Poems* will host archaeologist Glade Hadden of Paradox on Wednesday, May 21, at 6 p.m. at the Lone Cone Library.

"Glade's work revealing the amazing history of Eagle Rock Shelter in Delta County made him a superhero for those interested in Colorado archaeology," said Talking Gourds director Art Goodtimes. "Plus, he's as accomplished a storyteller as he is a researcher. This will be an evening not to miss."

After more than 30 years as a professional archaeologist, Hadden moved to Paradox Valley in 2018 to be close to the archaeology he loves. He's been leading archaeological tours in the region through Naturita Public Library. A former area archaeologist for the U.S. Bureau of Land Management's Uncompahgre Field Office in Montrose (CO), he started as a seasonal "dig-bum" for the National Park Service and the BLM before becoming a private consultant.

A Registered Professional Archaeologist, Hadden's creds include membership in of the Society for American Archaeology, Colorado Archaeological Society, the Colo-

rado Council of Professional Archaeologists and former membership in the Montana Archaeological Society as well as the Utah Professional Archaeology Council.

The *Stories & Poems* free series happens on the third Wednesday of each month. Our featured guests will give a 15-20 min. presentation each, followed by a short question and answer period after the presentation. Then there's a passing of the gourd, where community members are encouraged to share stories or poems.

For those who like prompts for stories or poems, this month's prompt is: Ruins.

A collaboration of the Lone Cone Library and the Telluride Institute's Talking Gourds poetry program, *Stories & Poems Norwood* is free and open to all ages, thanks to the generosity of the library, a Town of Telluride CCAASE grant, private donors and Talking Gourds' Fischer & Can-

For more information, text 970-729-0220

or email Goodtimes at art@tellurideinstitute.org. To visit the website: www.tellurideinstitute.org/



Glade Hadden at Turtle Rock. Courtesy photo.

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Thank you for reading The Montrose Mirror.



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

MONTROSE STUDENTS MAKE SNHU SPRING 2025 DEAN'S LIST

Special to the Mirror



MANCHESTER, NH -- It is with great pleasure that Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) congratulates the following students on being named to the Spring 2025 Dean's List. The spring terms run from January to May.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.500 to 3.699 for the reporting term are named to the Dean's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.


Jazmine Erwin of Olathe (81425)

Joseph Walk of Montrose (81401)


Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) is a private, nonprofit, accredited institution with a 92-year history of educating traditional-aged students and working adults. Now serving more than 200,000 learners worldwide, SNHU offers approximately 200 undergraduate, graduate, and certificate programs, available online and on its 300-acre campus in Manchester, NH. Recognized as one of the "Most Innovative" regional universities by U.S. News & World Report and one of the fastest-growing universities in the country, SNHU is committed to expanding access to high quality, affordable pathways that meet the needs of each learner.


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🌐 laurenhallruddell.com

✉ agescapesnow@gmail.com

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Email for more info.

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 don@allsaintsmontrose.org](mailto:pgor-

 don@allsaintsmontrose.org)

Worship Service Times: Sundays 9AM,

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

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

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

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Sunday 10:30 a.m.

Sunday 6 p.m.

Wednesday Bible Study/Prayer 7 p.m.

CELEBRATION CHURCH

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

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

Office Hours: By appointment

Phone: (970) 497-4925

Email: celebrationmontrose@gmail.com

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

Worship Service Times: 9am and 10:45am

Senior Pastor:

Pastor Brandon Mathis

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

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

Demographics: Multi-generational

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

Student (middle & high school) at 9am.

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

CHRIST'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. Mont-
 rose, 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 Law-
 rence

Worship service times: 10:30 a.m.

Mission: Christ's Church of the Valley is a
 loving and welcoming church whose pur-
 pose 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 pre-
 dominately 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 Syn-
 od

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

Contact: 970-633-0226

Website: www.montroselutheran.org

Email: montroselutheran@gmail.com

Pastor: Tim Onnen

Worship: Sundays at 9 AM

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

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

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

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 inclu-
 sive and accepting world is steadfast, and
 we will continue to work towards a future

where everyone can live freely and au-
 thentically.

Demographics: We are a small congrega-
 tion 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 Satur-
 days. 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 pre-
 dominantly 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 den-tures.

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?

The Satisfied Woman

LET THEM. HOW TWO SIMPLE WORDS MAY BE THE KEY TO HAPPINESS, LOVE, SUCCESS AND INNER PEACE

Lately I keep hearing about this book called *The Let Them Theory*, by bestselling author and motivational speaker, Mel Robbins. I'm sure you have too. So I decided to check it out. I've received countless recommendations from clients, friends, acquaintances, yoga students (I teach yoga by the way) and even a sales clerk at Marshalls. It's practically a movement.



By Gia Pirelli.
Courtesy photo.

So what is it? What does she mean by "Let Them?" In this book, Robbins offers a deceptively simple, life-altering mindset shift in just two words: Let Them. This book is about releasing the toxic habit of control—and finding deep emotional freedom in the process.

What began as an incidental insight on one of her podcasts, quickly grew into a concept resonating with millions of people exhausted by the effort of managing everything and everyone. Let Them is a deep dive into one of the most liberating yet counterintuitive ideas of our time: letting people do what they want—and not making it about you.

At its heart, Let Them is about surrendering the illusion of control. Robbins' central theory, known simply as the "Let Them Theory," is straightforward yet profound: "If they want to leave...let them. If they don't invite you...let them. If they say the wrong thing, think the wrong thing, vote

the wrong way, or live differently than you...let them."

Because in truth, you can't stop them anyway.

This isn't passivity; it's power. It's giving yourself permission to stop reacting to what others do and instead focus on what you can control: your actions, your boundaries and your energy. Nothing new, really. The Buddha said it. Jesus said it. Elsa in *Frozen* even sang it (over and over and over) but perhaps the way in which it's delivered here, or the current timing of it, makes it more impactful.

But the theory isn't just about them. It's also about you. That's where the second part of the equation comes in:

"Let Me."

Let me take care of myself. Let me decide what I tolerate. Let me protect my peace.

This dual framework—Let Them, Let Me—is the heart of the book.

Robbins shares personal stories, straightforward examples, and sharp emotional insight, exploring the painful cost of trying to control people and outcomes. By releasing the grip we have on people and situations that were never ours to hold in the first place, we make the conscious shift toward contentment and peace.

Ultimately, The Let Them theory is about emotional liberation. It's about realizing peace isn't found in fixing others, it's found in letting them be who they are—and choosing to protect your own mental and emotional space in the process.

Robbins expands her theory into a wider social landscape, observing how the need to control narratives, values and identities

has contributed to the polarization of society and a collective emotional burnout. We see the divide between generations, the hostility in our politics, the disconnection in our relationships. All because we can't allow someone else to be who they are without trying to make them who we want them to be.

When we stop trying to fix or change others, we stop feeding the conflict. And what we gain instead is presence—a clearer focus on our own values, behaviors, and boundaries. This shift is not only empowering; it's healing.

By letting others go their own way, you return to yourself. And in that return, you'll find the key to real love, success, confidence, and contentment. Letting go doesn't mean you don't care enough to keep it. You care enough about yourself to choose peace over conflict, presence over obsession, and acceptance over resistance. By no longer trying to fix, change, or force outcomes, we create space for authenticity—both in ourselves and in others. And when we stop wasting our energy on the uncontrollable, that energy is reclaimed for self-growth, creativity, presence, and purpose.

Letting them doesn't mean you don't care, it means you care wisely. You allow people their journey—even if it diverges from yours. And in doing so, you reclaim your peace.

Let them misunderstand you.

Let them judge you.

Let them choose differently.

Let them go.

And you? Let yourself live freely.

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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 21-Have you ever wondered how archaeologists record, document and visualize the cultural landscape? Please join us to hear Greg Munson (Society of Cultural Astronomy in the American Southwest) discuss the process including dynamic panoramas, 3D modeling, astronomical cycles and much more. May 21 at 7pm at the United Methodist Church 19 S Park Avenue Montrose. Chipeta Archaeological Society. Free.

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

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