



ONLINE NEWS
ASSOCIATION



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TEL-SKI STRIKE, CLOSURE COULD IMPACT MONTROSE DESPITE DIVERSE DOWN VALLEY ECONOMY

By Caitlin Switzer

REGIONAL-After contract negotiations for higher ski patrol pay were unsuccessful, the Telluride Professional Ski Patrollers Association announced Dec. 23 that it would stop work at the Telluride Ski Resort as of Dec. 27. Shortly thereafter, the Telluride Ski Resort announced that on Dec. 27 it would cease operations.

Tel-Ski's announcement stated, "Due to the Ski Patrol's unfortunate choice to strike, we have made the difficult decision to close the resort on Saturday, December 27th. Currently, we have no idea how long their strike will last so we will continue to work on a plan that allows us to safely open again as soon as possible."

As the chaos at Tel-Ski unfolds, Montrose City Councilor Judy Ann Files has had a front row seat. Files serves not only on the City Council, but on the boards of the Montrose Regional Airport Advisory Committee and the Colorado Flights Alliance (CFA).

Both CFA and the Montrose Regional Airport Advisory Committee have been paying attention and have discussed the issue, Files said. Local municipalities are also watching.

Continued pg 13



Logpile run at TelSki. Mirror file photo by B. Switzer.

RED HAWKS BOYS RETURN TO DOMINANCE

By Cliff Dodge

MONTROSE-There is nothing like a three-day basketball tournament hosted on your home court to shake off a so-so start to energize players, coaches, and fans. Such was the case last weekend as the Red Hawks hosted the second annual Timberline Bank/Black Canyon Classic Tournament.

Eight teams came to Montrose to participate in the affair; four

boys teams and four girls teams did battle on Thursday through Saturday for bragging rights. In addition to the Red Hawks, the Pagosa Springs Pirates, the Pueblo Central Wildcats, and the Glenwood Springs Demons played a round-robin schedule as they prepared for the Christmas holidays.

The Montrose Red Hawks got off to a less than spectacular start in a couple of pre-season tournaments as they entered the Black Canyon event with three wins and three losses. The Red Hawks defeated Weld Central, Steamboat Springs, and the Wheat Ridge Farmers. The losses occurred at the



Chace Oberg battled for a rebound versus Pueblo Central. Photo by Cliff Dodge.

Continued pg 6

The Barefoot Laureate:
with West Slope Poet Laureate Wendy Videlock!

MHS RB Elijah Womack Named
Offensive Player of the Year!

Gia Pirelli Column:
The Satisfied Self!

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Dear Readers:

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

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

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

RULE 3. Please limit repetitive mud-slinging to avoid bumping up against Rule 1. Also, in the case of those writing to intentionally discredit a public official or candidate for public office, please provide a link to the source of your allegation if possible. Unsourced, unproven allegations are not credible, and could in fact be untruths. Finally, opinions expressed in letters and commentary are those of the authors themselves, and do not reflect the views of the *Montrose Mirror* or editorial staff.

*Thank you,
 Caitlin Switzer,*

the
Montrose Mirror



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

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Holiday Closure

The Library will close at 12 Noon
New Year's Eve, December 31 and
will be closed, January 1.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

CHRISTMAS TREE CLEANUP TO BEGIN MONDAY, JAN 5

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE— The City of Montrose is pleased to announce its annual Christmas tree pickup service, which starts Monday, Jan. 5, and continues through Thursday, Jan. 15.

Residents can schedule tree pickups from Jan. 5 to 15 by contacting the Public Works office at 970.240.1480. Following the request period, Public Works crews will conduct a street-by-street, city-wide sweep that will conclude on Jan. 15.

For collection, Christmas trees must be placed behind the curb in front of residences.

Trees that are collected will be mulched or donated to local farmers for animal feed, therefore, artificial trees, as well as natural trees decorated with artificial snow, ornaments, or tinsel, will not be collected.

This service is provided free of charge to City of Montrose residents. For additional information or to schedule your tree pickup, please reach out to Public Works at 970.240.1480.

For information about the City of Montrose, visit CityofMontrose.org.

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

IS THE CITY OF MONTROSE IN A "SOLID FINANCIAL POSITION"?

Editor:

I received my City Beat Newsletter with my Montrose utility bill for December. City Manager Bill Bell included a message on the 2026 budget. Under the heading "Financial Position," he wrote:

*The city is in a **solid** financial position, and we are optimistic that our economic situation will remain **steady** throughout 2026.* [Emphasis added.]

It states on the Montrose's website that "The City of Montrose Charter establishes a legal debt limitation of 5% of the assessed valuation of taxable property in the City." The current assessed taxable property valuation is \$533,325,924. Five percent of that is \$26,666,296.20. This means that our City is allowed to have almost 27 million in debt. The monies that are not included as official debt are two lease purchases, a Public Safety Certificate of Participation (COPS)* and a Public Works Certificate of Participation, equaling almost \$80 million in debt not subject to limitation.

Often Colorado municipalities have rules regarding how much debt they can incur. When the City of Montrose states that its debt is "not subject to limitation," it means that there are no legal restrictions on the amount of debt it can incur. This applies to bonds and loans. Also, our City can borrow as much as they want for projects without needing voter approval or adhering to state-imposed limits. This is financially risky, because it can lead to higher debt which, in turn, can degrade our City's financial health.

Ten years ago, the City of Montrose had **ZERO** long-term debt. I hope you are good at math, but even if you aren't, you should be able to see the problem. Though Bill Bell told me at the September City Council meeting that the City is in excellent financial shape (after I voiced concerns about taxpayers' monies being spent on a childcare center for only city employees' kids) and has the \$850,000 to build it, I was disturbed by the fact that no one outside of the City "family" would

have access to it, but that's another opinion editorial.

When I look at Montrose City's Combined Debt Summary, I feel as though a shell game is being played. Instead of creating municipal bonds for city projects which allows Montrose voters to approve them, City Manager Bell and the City Council have been circumventing "we the people" and making financial decisions that are irresponsible and literally "taxing" on the people of Montrose. For example, in order to pay for the COPS, all of our water, garbage, recycling and sewer fees, food and restaurant taxes and others have increased considerably, and will continue to do so.

On a side note, though not unrelated, Montrose voters approved the lodging/restaurant tax increase in November 2024. I believe that voters thought that this tax would only affect tourists. We had already approved a 0.58% sales tax increase in 2015. By the way, why are we paying any sales tax on food? When asked, Mr. Bell used the excuse that 23 Colorado counties are charging sales tax on food. That is NOT a viable reason. That is the same logic as asking Jimmy why he jumped off the barn, and he said he did it because the other boys did.

High taxes are an issue, but the larger issue is how they are being spent: a high-end SUV for Mr. Bell (\$84,721), four million for Facade Renovation Grant Program, the Kitchen Grant Program, Asbestos removal, Site improvement, horizontal improvements, property improvement, to name a few. Many of these are for hand-picked businesses for individuals who have favor with our City leadership. They receive taxpayer dollars to improve their businesses. What about the other Montrose businesses that have to struggle to pay for their improvements? Why this favoritism?

Montrose City's end of 2024 financial audit states that Total Revenues were a little over 49.3 million, and Total Expenditures were almost 54 million. That means

we were in the hole by almost five million. Under the Net Fiduciary Funds, liabilities **exceeded** assets by almost 100%. [<https://tinyurl.com/55emcdew>].

Enough said...we need more accountability in our City. Mr. Bell said *that our economic situation will remain **steady** throughout 2026*. Let's hope it will **NOT** remain as it is.

We want a Council that will **NOT** rubber-stamp every project the City Manager presents to them. Hopefully, there will be better choices for City Council candidates, because we need to clean house and be more fiscally responsible with OUR money.

Leah Vandersluis

A Concerned Montrosian

For more information on the lack of municipal liability using Revenue Bonds, see https://colorado.public.law/statutes/crs_31-35-408

*Certificate of Participation (COPS) are an alternative to municipal bonds (which require voter approval) in which an investor buys a share in the improvements or infrastructure the government entity (City of Montrose) intends to fund. Collateral for some of the COPS were from the City's Water Fund reserve account, the historic City Hall and the Montrose Pavillion. Basically, COPS circumvent the TABOR (Taxpayer's Bill of Rights) constitutional amendment and allows them to avoid having to put projects to a public vote to get authorization to indebt the City and it's taxpayers. Because COPS are typically tied to a "LEASE," they're not subject to a debit limit of a governmental entity.

FYI, the average local sales tax in Colorado (not including state tax) is 4.235% [<https://tinyurl.com/mrxrzfkr>]. If State tax is included that rate would equal 7.135%. The current sales and use tax rates for retail sales in Montrose are: 3.88% - City of Montrose and Montrose Recreation District (MRD) + 1.75% - Montrose County + 2.9% - State which equals **8.53% - Total** [<https://tinyurl.com/2jbf8j75>].



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RED HAWKS BOYS RETURN TO DOMINANCE *From pg 1*

hands of Eagle Valley, Peak to Peak Charter, and Forge Christian School. The Red Hawks defeated all three teams in their own tournament to improve their overall record to 6 wins and 3 losses heading into the holiday break.

MONTROSE RED HAWKS 50, PAGOSA SPRINGS PIRATES 38

The Montrose Red Hawks opened up tournament play with a 12-point victory over the Pirates of Pagosa Springs on Thursday evening. The Red Hawks jumped out to an early lead and were never headed. Seven Red Hawks hit the scoring column with Sophomore Bodhi Schafer leading the way with 13 points. He was closely followed by Freshman Cache Oberg with 11 points and Junior Ridge Smith with 10 markers. In the rebounding department Junior Ryan Pankey and Freshman Cache Oberg each captured 7 caroms while Senior Lane Pressler and Junior Bodhi Schafer netted 5 boards. The Red Hawks passed out 11 assists, had 11 steals and blocked 6 Pirate shots. The Red Hawks shot 58 percent from the charity stripe while shooting 46

percent from the floor and only 21 percent from behind the three-point arc.

MONTROSE RED HAWKS 66, PUEBLO CENT. WILDCATS 59

The Montrose Red Hawks wasted little time in jumping out to a commanding lead versus the Wildcats from Pueblo Central. The Red Hawks led 24 to 11 after the initial period. After the great start the two teams played very even basketball as the Wildcats outscored the Red Hawks 48 to 42 throughout the evening. The Wildcats closed to within 2 points in the closing moments of the game, but the Red Hawks stout defense and key rebounding preserved the victory.

Freshman Cache Oberg led all Red Hawk scorers with 25 points while Senior C. J. Rocco added 13. This win was a team effort with seven Red Hawks scoring and also seven doing the dirty work on the backboards. The Red Hawks out rebounded the Wildcats 41 to 20, a dominating performance on the glass. The Red Hawks passed out 15 assists and had 5 steals to go along with 18 turnovers. The Red

Hawks hit 6 of 11 shots from beyond the three-point line and 58 percent from the free throw line,

RED HAWKS 66, GLENWOOD SPRINGS DEMONS 43

The Red Hawks third and final game of the tournament saw the Red Hawks outscore the Demons from Glenwood Springs in each of the game's four quarters and win the contest by 17 points, 66-43. Eight Red Hawks put their names in the scorebook while ten players had at least one rebound to their credit. Again, this was a total team effort.

C.J. Rocco led all scorers with 18 points, while Cache Oberg tossed in 17 points and Bodhi Schafer tallied 11 points. Cache Oberg led all Red Hawks glass cleaners with 10 rebounds. The Red Hawks passed out a dozen assists while stealing the basketball seven times. The Red Hawks only turned the basketball over four times.

Next up for the Red Hawks will be a road game after the holiday break as the Red Hawks travel to Basalt to take on the Longhorns.



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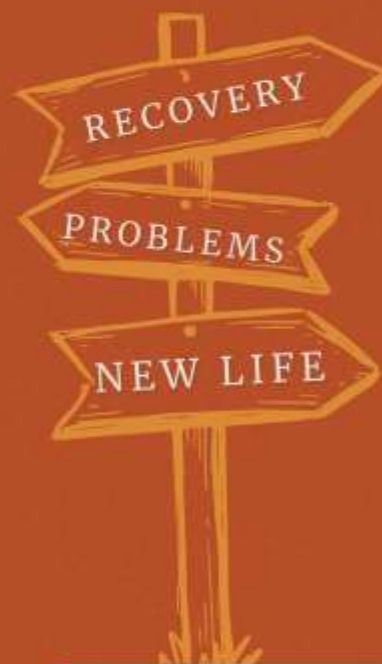
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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

MOUNTAIN VILLAGE AND TMVOA PARTNER TO OFFER EXPANDED HOLIDAY PROGRAMMING UNTIL JAN. 1

Special to the Mirror

MOUNTAIN VILLAGE-With unseasonably warm temperatures, lagging snowfall, Telluride Ski Patrol's recently announced strike beginning on Saturday, Dec. 27 and the ski area's subsequent announcement that the ski resort will close on Dec. 27, TMVOA and the Town of Mountain Village will present a variety of holiday programming from Dec. 26 to Jan. 1 to support our community over the holidays.

"The Town is working closely with our regional partners to monitor conditions and support our residents, businesses and visitors during this challenging and unprecedented period," said Mountain Village Town Manager Paul Wisor. "While circumstances on the mountain are evolving, our focus remains on keeping the community connected, active and supported over the holidays. Thank you to TMVOA and staff for their hard work over the past week to plan these events for the community."

"Just last Friday (Dec. 19), our Board approved holiday programming funding, and we got to work immediately — while nothing can replace skiing on a ski holiday, TMVOA and the Town of Mountain Village

quickly pulled together a fun, festive slate of family-friendly events across Mountain Village from Dec. 26 through Jan. 1 to enhance the experience, where we can, for everyone here this week," said TMVOA Chief Operating Officer Patrick Latcham. Enjoy daily programming across the Village's outdoor plazas and indoor spaces, perfect for all ages and energy levels.

Each day, Sunset Plaza comes alive from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. with an Alpacas Meet & Greet, offering a unique mountain experience and plenty of photo-worthy moments. Over at Reflection Plaza, lace up your skates for Rock the Rink DJ Parties from 3 to 5 p.m., followed by DJ Skate Parties from 6:15 to 8 p.m., bringing music and movement to the ice each evening.

Heritage Plaza features a stunning 23-foot ice sculpture on display all day, plus nightly light mapping shows projected onto the Madeline Hotel and Residences at 6 p.m. and 7 p.m., adding a magical glow to winter evenings.

The light mapping is sure to be a highlight. [Here's a taste of what light mapping looks like.](#)

Inside the Telluride Conference Center, families can warm up and play in the Kids

Activity Zone from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., strike a pose at the Free Western Photo Booth (10 a.m. – 1 p.m. and 2 – 5 p.m.) and settle in each evening for *Mountain Village Movie Nights*.

Presented by the Town of Mountain Village, Telluride Mountain Village Owners Association and the Telluride Conference Center, *Mountain Village Movie Nights* run Dec. 26 through Jan. 1, 2026. Movies are free and open to the public, with doors opening at 7 p.m. and showtime at 7:30 p.m. nightly.

Movie Schedule:

-Friday, Dec. 26: *Home Alone* (1990)
 -Saturday, Dec. 27: *Top Gun* (1986)
 -Sunday, Dec. 28: *Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle* (2017)
 -Monday, Dec. 29: *How to Train Your Dragon* (2025)
 -Tuesday, Dec. 30: *Mission: Impossible – Final Reckoning* (2025)
 -Wednesday, Dec. 31: *The Goonies* (1985)
 -Thursday, January 1: *Free Guy* (2021)
 The week culminates on Wednesday, Dec. 31, with New Year's Eve Festivities, including the beloved Torchlight Parade and Fireworks at 6:30 p.m., best viewed from the base of Chair 4.



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RED HAWK GIRLS PERFECT AFTER 9 GAMES



The Red Hawks and the Pueblo Central Wildcats battle under the boards. Photo by Cliff Dodge.

By Cliff Dodge

MONTROSE-The early season basketball games have gracefully moved into the holiday season and the Red Hawks girls have played nine opponents--basically without serious opposition. Head Coach Steve Skiff has his charges running from the opening tip to the final whistle, and they are outscoring the opposition as each eight-minute quarter fades into history. The Timberline Bank/Black Canyon Classic Tournament was an excellent proving ground for Offense and Defense to get ready for league play come January.

MONTROSE RED HAWKS 58, PAGOSA SPRINGS PIRATES 28

Four teams invaded the Montrose Fieldhouse last weekend to test their skills before retreating to the Christmas holidays and preparing for a difficult Southwestern League filled with tough opponents around every turn. First up for the Red

Hawks were the Pirates from Pagosa Springs.

The Red Hawks hit the gas pedal at the opening tip and gave the ball to the Red Hawks. The home team outscored the Pirates 14 to 7 in the initial period and basically never took the pressure off. This resulted in a 30-point victory, 58 – 28. Senior Mayce Oberg led all Red Hawk scorers with 19 points. Senior Maggie Legg cashed in 9 points while Seniors Lilly Nelson and Kendall Johnson each had 7 and 6 points respectively. Eight Red Hawks were credited with rebounding statistics as the team totaled 23 boards. The Red Hawks passed out 11 assists, had a dozen steals, and turned the basketball over only 11 times. The Red Hawks shot 56 percent from the charity stripe. The team hit only 2 of 10 attempts from behind the three point arc.

RED HAWKS 54, PUEBLO CENTRAL WILD-

CATS 9

The Wildcats were no match for the Montrose Red Hawks on Friday evening at the Timberline Bank/Black Canyon Classic Tournament played at the Montrose Fieldhouse. This game was so unbalanced that the Wildcats did not score a single point in the first quarter or in the second quarter, which saw the Red Hawks lead 25 -0 at the halfway break. Things got no better as the running clock shortened what was a game too long from the get-go.

Senior Mayce Oberg led all scorers with 20 points along with seven rebounds for an excellent night's work. In all, nine Red Hawks put their names in the scorebook as the Red Hawks defined a team effort in basketball. The Red Hawks passed out 11 assists and had 15 steals and only turned the basketball over 5 times. The Red Hawks hit on 3 of 12 shots from downtown while shooting 41 percent from the two-point range and 54 percent from the free throw stripe.

RED HAWKS 59, GLENWOOD SPRINGS DEMONS 13

The third and final date of the Timberline Bank/Black Hills Canyon Classic saw the Red Hawks run roughshod over the Glenwood Springs Demons by the score of 59 to 13. Needless to say, this game was out of hand from the opening tip to the final whistle. The Red Hawks were up 31 to 8 at the half-way mark. The Demons managed only 5 points in the second half--all of those points in the Fourth Quarter.

Senior Maggie Legg cashed in 16 points while Mayce Oberg added 14 to the total. Kendall Johnson chipped in with 9 points as the team saw eight Red Hawks dent the scoring column.

Next up for the Red Hawks will be a trip to Basalt for a re-match with the Longhorns on Jan. 6.



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The advertisement features a background image of a female doctor in a white coat with a blue stethoscope, smiling and examining a young girl's chest with a stethoscope. The girl is holding a small brown stuffed animal. In the top left corner, there is a logo for Delta Health Pediatrics, which consists of a stylized mountain peak icon above the text "DELTA HEALTH PEDIATRICS". Below the text are icons for Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, and TikTok. In the bottom left corner of the main image area, there is a circular portrait of a woman, Amanda Lovette, MD, with the text "Amanda Lovette, MD PEDIATRICS DELTA HEALTH" below it.

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TEL-SKI STRIKE, CLOSURE COULD IMPACT MONTROSE *From pg 1*

"The towns of Telluride and Mountain Village have been trying to work with the resort owner," she said. "But they're still kind of kept on the outskirts."

The Montrose City Council has no input on the matter but will continue their support for CFA as they watch events unfold, Files said. She noted that Telluride Ski Resort's closure will impact people here in Montrose, from those who fly into Montrose to those who rely on jobs in the service industries. "It's going to take a while to work through this," she said, "And Tel-Ski only owns some of the land that the resort is on--a lot of it is Forest Service

land."

While Montrose's economy is not dependent on the Telluride Ski Resort, the flow of tourism has certainly benefited the community. As reported in a recent *Mirror* story, flights generate around 1,400 local jobs, bringing around \$235M in tourism economic impact to Montrose every year. Still, the Montrose economy is diverse. According to the [December 2025 Economic Update](#) released by Colorado Mesa University, "The largest wage contributor to Montrose County is healthcare, at \$45,311,127 for Q1. Healthcare is followed by construction

(\$31,056,255), retail trade (\$24,247,026), and public administration (\$21,706,427)...Government continues to be the largest employer in Montrose County, and population trends show a drop in birth rates offset by migration...Migration is the factor that is expected to fuel Montrose County's growth." *The Mirror* reached out to Telluride Express for comment for this article, as Telluride Express holds specific Colorado PUC authority for unrestricted shared and private rides between Telluride and Western Slope airports, including Montrose.

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- Region 10 Board of Directors
- County Weed Commission



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

OUR DEMOCRACY DEPENDS ON IT

Dear Editor:

At a recent RE-1J School Board meeting, during public comment, I stated, "I am watching you." I want to be very clear about what that statement meant, and what it did not mean. There was no intent to threaten-only to participate. Watching, questioning, and staying engaged are essential duties of citizens, and I will continue to fulfill them.

Like many citizens, I believe that elected and appointed officials should be held to a high standard of governance, standards that reflect transparency, professionalism, accountability and the well being of the entire community over any public agenda. Public service carries both authority and responsibility, and with that comes public attention. In a healthy democracy, citizens observe, question, and remain engaged with those entrusted to make decisions that reflect every citizen they represent.

I will continue to participate, watch, question, and stay engaged with all of our elected and appointed officials. ***I highly encourage all citizens to do the same.*** Active civic engagement is not only appropriate, it is necessary. Our democracy depends on it.

Respectfully submitted,

Phoebe Benziger

CULTIVATED MEAT WILL HELP KEEP AMERICANS SAFE

To the editor,

Political leaders who are interested in preventing future pandemics should support state and federal funding for cultivated-meat research. For those who don't know, cultivated meat is grown from animal cells, without slaughter. Widespread adoption of the protein would dramatically reduce the risk of zoonotic viruses making the jump to humans, since livestock are eliminated from the process.

While the field of cellular agriculture has progressed a great deal over the past decade, some technological hurdles remain. These can be overcome, in my view, with significant public investment into cultivated-meat development. Let's build facilities like the Tufts University Center for Cellular Agriculture at every college with a farm program in the country. Among other things, it will help keep Americans safe.

Jon Hochschartner, Granby CT

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COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

COLORADO BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION LEADS SUSPICIOUS DEATH INVESTIGATION IN CENTER, COLORADO

CBI News Release

COLORADO- The Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has initiated a homicide investigation in Center, Colorado, following a request for assistance from Center, Colorado Police after its officers discovered a deceased male inside his residence on Dec. 23 just after 8 a.m. at a home off of E. Highway 112.

The victim is a 78-year-old resident of Center. The discovery was made after workers, who were building a new garage at the address, contacted law enforcement when they had not seen or spoken to the homeowner for a couple of days. Law enforcement officers located the victim in the kitchen area of the home with fatal injuries.

The death is being investigated as suspicious, although the specific cause of death is pending an autopsy by the El Paso County Coroner's Office, which is scheduled for later this week. Investigators believe the victim was last seen alive Friday December 19, 2025. That is when construction workers last reported seeing him and when family members spoke with him on the phone. The time of death is currently undetermined.

The CBI is leading the investigation and is receiving assistance from the Center Police Department, the Alamosa Police Department, and the 12th Judicial District Attorney's Office.

This is an active investigation, and no further information can be released at this time.

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RB ELIJAH WOMACK NAMED OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR

By Cliff Dodge

MONTROSE-The Montrose Red Hawks Football Team came very close to winning the 4A state championship but fell just short of winning it all. Nevertheless, the Red Hawks put together an outstanding season and garnered a state honor according to Rivals, Red Hawks Running Back Elijah Womack was named Offensive Player of the Year. The tailback was terrific all season long and lifted Montrose to the Class 4A state semi-finals.

Womack ended the season with outstanding statistics. He carried the pigskin 211 times for 2157 yards and scored 33 touchdowns. Womack also caught five passes for 154 yards and a touchdown. The 6'1" 205 lb running back also was outstanding on the defensive side of the ball, racking up 40 tackles, 12 for losses plus one sack. The senior's best game was against Palisade when Womack rushed for 249 yards on 36 carries and scored three times in a 37-20 victory.

Elijah has not decided where to cast his lot as far as his college choices are concerned but he is being heavily recruited by several Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference teams. Elijah will be a winner wherever he decides to play.



Red Hawks Running Back Elijah Womack was named Offensive Player of the Year. Courtesy photo.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

DELTA HEALTH SAYS FAREWELL TO DR. DORY FUNK AND WELCOMES DR. ELLIOT GHORAYEB TO ADULT PRIMARY CARE TEAM



Elliot Ghorayeb, MD. Courtesy photo.

Special to the Mirror

DELTA-Delta Health bids a heartfelt farewell to Dr. Dory Funk and extends our warmest congratulations as he enters a well-deserved retirement. During his eight and a half years with our organization, Dr. Funk made a meaningful and lasting impact through his unwavering dedication to his patients and his genuine commitment to the community he serves. His compassion, professionalism, and steady presence enriched the Delta Health team and the lives of those in his care. Dr. Funk's contributions were significant, and he will be deeply missed by colleagues, patients, and community partners alike. Delta Health wishes Dr. Funk every happiness and fulfillment in this next chapter of his life.

With Dr. Funk's retirement at the end of December, Delta Health is pleased to announce that Elliot Ghorayeb, MD, has joined the Delta Health Adult Primary

Care practice. Dr. Ghorayeb brings a strong foundation in family medicine and a passion for patient-centered care to the Delta County community.

Born and raised in Houston, Texas, Dr. Ghorayeb comes from a family deeply rooted in medicine—his mother is an anesthesiologist, and he jokes that his “in-doctor-ination” began at age three when he first put on scrubs and a surgical cap. He completed his undergraduate studies at Rice University and earned his medical degree from the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston McGovern Medical School. Dr. Ghorayeb went on to complete an intern year in General Surgery and a full Family Medicine Residency at UTHealth Houston, training at both Memorial Hermann Hospital in the Texas Medical Center and Lyndon B. Johnson Hospital.

“My training gave me a great mix of county and private medicine and exposure to a vast array of medical conditions,” said Dr. Ghorayeb. “It helped shape how I approach patient care today—with both rigor and empathy.”

Dr. Ghorayeb follows a patient-first care philosophy, emphasizing a collaborative, multidisciplinary approach.

“I believe in patient-centered care that involves input from every member of the healthcare team,” he said. “I practice evidence-based medicine while also meeting patients where they are, balancing guidelines with personal preferences. Ultimately, I want patients to know that I care about them and that my recommendations are always rooted in helping them live healthier, higher-quality lives.”

Excited to begin his medical career in rural healthcare, Dr. Ghorayeb was drawn to the challenges and opportunities it offers. “Rural medicine pushes your practice to the limits,” he shared. “With fewer specialists nearby, I’m able to treat a wide range of conditions and continue honing my skills. Plus, I was eager to be part of a community with a more outdoorsy lifestyle—it already feels like home.”

Since joining Delta Health, Dr. Ghorayeb says the experience has reaffirmed his decision.

“From the very first phone call, I knew this was the place for me,” he said. “The physicians here are amazing, the staff is stellar, and we all have a great sense of humor that makes work fun. We get things done—and we have a good time doing it.”

Outside of medicine, Dr. Ghorayeb enjoys staying active and exploring the outdoors. “I can’t wait to get as many ski days in as possible this season,” he said. “I’m also looking forward to hiking, off-roading, fly-fishing, and lifting heavier and heavier at the gym.” He’s also an aspiring home chef, loves movies and TV nights, and hopes to soon add a dog—or maybe an aquarium—to his home.

“I’m most excited to continue meeting more patients, building my panel, and becoming a true part of this community,” Dr. Ghorayeb added. “The patients are why I do this job.”

Dr. Ghorayeb is now accepting new patients at Delta Health Adult Primary Care, located at 1450 Burgess St., Delta, CO. To schedule an appointment, call 970-874-7668 or visit deltahealthco.org.

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UNITED STATES NEWS BRIEFS

DHS CHANGES PROCESS FOR AWARDING H-1B WORK VISAS TO BETTER PROTECT AMERICAN WORKERS

US Department of Homeland Security

WASHINGTON – The Department of Homeland Security is amending regulations governing the H-1B work visa selection process to prioritize the allocation of visas to higher-skilled and higher-paid aliens to better protect the wages, working conditions, and job opportunities for American workers. The new rule replaces the random lottery for selecting visa recipients with a process that gives greater weight to those with higher skills.

“The existing random selection process of H-1B registrations was exploited and abused by U.S. employers who were primarily seeking to import foreign workers at lower wages than they would pay American workers,” said U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services spokesman Matthew Tragesser. “The new weighted selection will better serve Congress’ intent for the H-1B program and strengthen America’s competitiveness by incentivizing American employers to petition for higher-paid, higher-skilled foreign workers. With these regulatory changes and others in the future, we will continue to update the H-1B program to help American businesses without allowing the abuse that was harming American workers.”

The number of H-1B visas issued annually is limited to 65,000, with an additional 20,000 for U.S. advanced degree holders. The current random selection process has often been criticized for allowing unscrupulous employers to exploit it by flooding the selection pool with lower-skilled foreign workers paid at low wages, to the detriment of the American workforce. To address these concerns, the final rule will implement a weighted selection process that will increase the probability that H-1B visas are allocated to higher-skilled and higher-paid aliens while maintaining the opportunity for employers to secure H-1B workers at all wage levels. This final rule is effective Feb. 27, 2026, and will be in place for the FY 2027 H-1B cap registration season.

The rule is another crucial step to strengthen the integrity of the H-1B nonimmigrant visa program. It is in line with other key changes the administration has made, such as the [Presidential Proclamation](#) that requires employers to pay an additional \$100,000 per visa as a condition of eligibility.

“As part of the Trump Administration’s commitment to H-1B reform, we will continue to demand more from both employers and aliens so as not to undercut American workers and to put America first,” said Tragesser.

For more information, see the [final rule](#).

For more information on USCIS and its programs, please visit uscis.gov or follow us on X (Formerly Twitter), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

ANNUAL CRESTED BUTTE AREA WINTER USE RESTRICTIONS BEGIN

Special to the Mirror

GUNNISON— The Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison (GMUG) National Forests' Gunnison Ranger District will implement annual winter travel restrictions beginning Dec. 31, 2025, through Dec. 31, 2030, in the Crested Butte Area.

The closure order restricts motorized over-snow vehicles and other winter uses, including dogsleds and snowcats, in several popular recreation areas near Crested Butte. The areas include Cement Creek, Brush Creek, East Kebler Pass, Upper East River, Washington Gulch and other surrounding areas. These restrictions are designed to reduce winter recreation conflicts, protect natural resources and increase public safety.

While there are no changes from previous winter use restrictions, visitors are encouraged to review the [full closure order and maps](#), as restrictions vary by location and may include specific exemptions.

Visitors are encouraged to plan ahead and check current conditions before heading into the backcountry.

A violation of the above prohibitions is punishable as a Class B misdemeanor by a fine of up to \$5,000 for individuals and \$10,000 for organizations, or by imprisonment for up to six months, or both. 16 U.S.C. § 551; 18 U.S.C. §§ 3559, 3571 and 3581.

For more information on this closure order, to include a detailed map, please [visit our website](#) or contact the Gunnison Ranger District at (970) 642-4700.

About the Forest Service: The USDA Forest Service has for more than 100 years brought people and communities together to answer the call of conservation. Grounded in world-class science and technology— and rooted in communities—the Forest Service connects people to nature and to each other. The Forest Service cares for shared natural resources in ways that promote lasting economic, ecological, and social vitality. The agency manages 193 million acres of public land, provides assistance to state and private land-owners, maintains the largest wildland fire and forestry research organizations in the world. The Forest Service also has either a direct or indirect role in stewardship of about 900 million forested acres within the U.S., of which over 130 million acres are urban forests where most Americans live.

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

HYPOCRISY LIES AND DEFLECTION?

Editor:

That was a good title for Monty George and the Montrose GOP and their article because that is exactly what their article was. It is election season so its time for the incompetent Montrose GOP to try and save face. Out of four local candidates that they endorsed in last years election cycle only two were elected and one of them was just removed and replaced in a recall. And the one that was elected and now holds office will be primaried, as will the one that was appointed in a vacancy vote. To make that point clear, they will be primaried by other republicans!! That is a very pathetic showing for the organization that is supposed to have their finger on the pulse of the county electorate. And this is what happens when an organization lets their misguided agenda get in the way of common sense. So for those of you trying to figure out who to believe in this back and forth just look at the results!

Ray Langston, Montrose

KEEPING POLITICS OUT OF OUR CLASSROOMS

Editor:

Lately, I have been reading an overwhelming number of negative and angry editorials. With so much frustration being voiced, it feels important to step back and try to bring some perspective back into the conversation.

In my view, school board members should not be political. They should not be Republicans, Democrats, or unaffiliated when they walk into a board meeting. Their focus should be on students, teachers, and school staff, and nothing else. The role of the board is to remove barriers so educators and staff can do their jobs well. While the board is responsible for policy, vision, and financial oversight, none of those responsibilities require a political lens, nor should they.

Teachers choose their profession knowing it comes with sacrifices. They understand the long hours, the limited pay, and the likelihood that they will spend some of

their own money on classroom supplies.

They make that choice because they believe in the value of educating children. They do not enter the classroom to promote a political agenda.

They are there to teach facts, history, math, science, and critical thinking, and to do so for the right reasons. They do not need politicians telling them how to run their classrooms or dictating what books they can or cannot use to teach their students.

When parents have concerns about what is happening in a classroom, the first step should be a conversation with the teacher. One parent's concern does not automatically represent the entire community. If concerns are shared by others, then those parents should come together and speak with the teacher, then the principal, and only then the school board. There is a process in place for a reason, and it should be respected and followed.

Some have expressed anger over the fact that Phoebe Benzinger and Linda Gann stated they would be watching the school board. That should not be upsetting.

We should all be watching the school board, just as we should be paying attention to the City Council, Montrose County, and any other governing body that serves our community.

Oversight is not an attack; it is a responsibility of an engaged public.

In the end, this should not be about politics, power, or proving a point. It should be about trust: trust in teachers to teach, trust in parents to parent, and trust in board members to govern thoughtfully and responsibly. Disagreement is healthy, and accountability is necessary, but hostility only divides us. If we keep our focus where it belongs—on our children—then we stand a much better chance of moving forward together.

Beth McCorkle, Montrose



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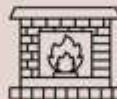
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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

NEW DMEA RATES START JAN. 1, 2026

Dear Member,

At a regular meeting on December 16, the Delta-Montrose Electric Association (DMEA) Board of Directors approved a rate increase.

The average impact across all member classes is a 7.49% increase.

The rate increase includes:

- A \$7.50 increase to residential single-phase (RES10) access fees. The new access fee is \$37.00 per month.

- Elimination of time-of-use (TOU) rate class. The current power supply contract does not offer time-based cost savings, resulting in the need to subsidize TOU rates. Eliminating TOU makes rates more equitable for all members.

- Increase in access fees for small commercial and three-phase residential rates.

- Increases in large commercial and industrial energy and demand charges.

The new rates and changes for all rate classes are available at dmea.com/rates. Earlier this year, the Board and staff began reviewing DMEA's operating costs,

maintenance needs, and long-term financial outlook as part of our annual planning process. Board and staff determine that a rate increase is necessary to offset inflation on operational costs. As part of the rate hearing on Dec. 16, members shared thoughtful feedback that helped inform discussions around rate design, timing, and the importance of member assistance programs.

"We are grateful to the members who reached out to provide input. All the feedback we received was read, discussed, and considered," said DMEA Board President Stacia Cannon. "We also recognize that time-of-use rates should have been reevaluated sooner. As our power supply costs have evolved, it has become clear that TOU pricing no longer reflects how costs are incurred today. This decision reflects our responsibility to correct that misalignment and ensure fairness for all members, while maintaining the long-term reliability and financial health of the cooperative."

The approved rate adjustment supports DMEA's responsibility to meet debt covenants, invest in essential infrastructure, and maintain safe and reliable electric service for all members, while balancing the impacts across rate classes.

The new rates will take effect January 1, 2026, and members will see them reflected on their February bills.

Assistance programs are available for members who may need help paying their electric bills. More information is available at dmea.com/assistance-programs.

To view the rate presentation, please visit the December Board packet in the documents tab in SmartHub at

dmea.smarthub.coop. Additional details about the updated rates can be found at dmea.com/rates. Board members may be reached [here](#).

Thank you for being a valued member-owner of your cooperative.

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*Delta-Montrose Electric Association
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COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

TOP 5 HOLIDAY CRASH CAUSAL FACTORS OF 2024 REVEALED



4. Lane Violation

5. Failure to Yield Right of Way

Whether the roads are dry or snow-packed, drivers engage in risky behavior when driving above posted speed limits. High speeds dramatically increase crash severity and fatality risk, and slower speeds allow drivers time and space to react to animals, people and changes in the road.

When celebrating, it may also be tempting to enjoy alcohol or other impairing substances. Driving under the influence doesn't just put your safety at risk; it carries serious legal, financial and personal consequences that can follow you long after the party is over.

Whether consuming an alcoholic beverage, cannabis products or other impairing substances, the Colorado State Patrol reminds you to prioritize responsibility and make a plan for a sober ride if socializing outside of your residence. Making a good decision "in the moment" while already intoxicated is unlikely. Don't underestimate the consequences of this choice, and plan ahead for a sober ride.

Even one drink could be "the one," and it can impact your ability to drive safely and result in a criminal charge.

Special to the Mirror

COLORADO – Whether attending a Christmas Eve party or making the rounds to every family and friend celebration, Colorado drivers are encouraged to drive the speed limit and, if enjoying holiday "spirits," make a plan. On Christmas Eve and Christmas Day 2024 (48 hours), Colorado State Troopers responded to 124 crashes around the State.

"Getting in a crash is likely the last thing people are thinking about after all the planning and excitement for the season,"

stated Col. Matthew C. Packard, chief of the Colorado State Patrol. "But if you are in the driver's seat, keep your focus on the road. The biggest gift you can give is ensuring everyone you see on the road and in your vehicle arrives safely to celebrate."

Looking at last year's most serious crashes (injury and fatal), the top five causes are things that drivers can control.

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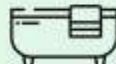
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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS RESERVED FOR CITIZENS: A HISTORICAL IMPERATIVE

Editor:

In the recent Sixth Circuit decision *United States v. Escobar-Temal* (Dec. 15, 2025), Judge Amul Thapar's partial dissent powerfully argues that "the people" in the Constitution refers exclusively to U.S. citizens. This premise aligns with the document's foundational purpose as a charter for self-governing citizens, not noncitizens. Extending rights to unlawful immigrants, as the majority suggests, contradicts text, history, and tradition. This article examines Thapar's view, supported by constitutional and historical sources, to affirm that rights are inherently for citizens.

Case Context

Milder Escobar-Temal, a Guatemalan citizen unlawfully in the U.S. since 2012, was convicted under 18 U.S.C. Section 922(g)(5)(A) for possessing firearms. The majority upheld the ban but held that some undocumented individuals with "substantial connections" like residency and family could claim Second Amendment rights. Thapar concurred in the judgment upholding the conviction but dissented on the scope of "the people," insisting it means consenting citizens. He roots this in popular sovereignty: "We, the People" denotes citizens who legitimize government through consent.

Textual Foundations

The Constitution's text distinguishes "the people," "citizens," and "persons." Thapar notes "the people" appears in rights-bearing contexts like the First, Second, and Fourth Amendments, implying citizens' political community. For instance, the Preamble's "We, the People" establishes sovereignty for citizens, not aliens. James Madison in Federalist No. 49 described "the people" as the "fountain of all

authority," excluding non-consenters.

Historical sources reinforce this. John Locke, influential on the founders, viewed "the people" as those forming a "body politic" through consent (*Second Treatise of Government*, 1689). Blackstone's *Commentaries* (1765) limited arms to "subjects," a concept the framers adapted to "citizens." Thapar cites the English Bill of Rights (1689), restricting arms to loyal Protestant subjects, excluding aliens.

Historical Traditions

Founding-era evidence shows rights were citizen-exclusive. Colonial charters and state constitutions used "the people" or "citizens" for arms-bearing, assembly, and petition rights. Pennsylvania's 1776 Constitution limited arms to "freemen," meaning citizens. Thapar highlights that aliens lacked these privileges, as Blackstone confined them to basic protections under the law of nations.

The Alien Act of 1798 allowed deporting "dangerous" aliens without due process, implying no constitutional rights attachment. Madison and Jefferson debated this, but the Act's passage underscores aliens' outsider status. Thapar argues history disarms non-allegiant groups like Loyalists, analogous to unlawful immigrants today.

Supreme Court precedent supports this. In *United States v. Verdugo-Urquidez* (1990), the Court suggested "the people" means those with "sufficient connection" via citizenship or allegiance, excluding casual entrants. Thapar critiques extensions to noncitizens as ahistorical, noting even First Amendment speech rights are limited for aliens (*Reno v. AADC*, 1999).

Applying to Broader Rights

This citizen-centric premise extends be-

yond the Second Amendment. Voting and office-holding explicitly require citizenship (U.S. Const. art. I, Sections 2-3; art. II, Section 1). Due process under the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments uses "person," but political rights like assembly and petition are for "the people," historically citizen-limited. Thapar notes the First Amendment's petition right as an "attribute of national citizenship" (*United States v. Cruikshank*, 1875).

Fourth Amendment searches apply tentatively to noncitizens (*INS v. Lopez-Mendoza*, 1984), but Thapar argues its roots in English subjects' rights exclude unlawful aliens. Extending rights universally undermines sovereignty, as noncitizens lack consent incentives to obey laws.

Implications and Absurdity of Alternatives

Thapar warns that including unlawful immigrants in "the people" creates absurdities, like arming potential threats without allegiance. History shows the Constitution as a citizen-governance compact; applying it to noncitizens dilutes this. As Chief Justice Jay stated in *Chisholm v. Georgia* (1793), sovereignty "devolved on the people" as citizens.

This ruling highlights ongoing debates, but Thapar's history-driven dissent affirms: Constitutional rights are for citizens, preserving the founders' vision of self-rule.

Michael J Badagliacco, "MJB"

Michael is a father of five, grandfather of three, United States Air Force veteran, international recording artist, and Editor-in-Chief of the [Colorado DOGE Report](#). He is passionate about the United States of America and the founders' genius in crafting the Constitution.



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

MY LETTER TO THE DELTA COUNTY INDEPENDENT

Editor:

The following is a letter I sent to the Delta County Independent regarding my perception that more and more liberal bias is creeping into their opinion pieces. They have had three opportunities to publish, but have thus far chosen not to.

"I canceled my subscriptions to the Montrose Press and GJ Sentinel because they long ago gave up any pretense of fair and balanced reporting. I actually provided the publishers and editors of both papers with detailed, months-long analyses of their opinion pages showing they very seldom published any article or political cartoon remotely favorable to conservatives while continually parroting Democrat talking points. Neither paper challenged the accuracy of my analyses. Their attempts to show they are balanced were rather humorous. Pointing out that they occasionally publish George Will, a pseudo conservative and rabid Trump-hater, as evidence of balance was like appointing Liz Cheney to a panel investigating January 6th and calling the committee "bipartisan." I haven't written letters to the DCI for several months because I am seeing the same bias creeping into their opinion pages. I was appalled to see a recent article by Robert Reich, whose politics are only slightly to the right of Karl Marx. I was also disappointed to see an article by Gary Franks trying very hard to connect Trump to Epstein. Franks is actually a Republican with some good ideas, but he, like George Will, is a Trump-hater. His article was chock-full of falsehoods, like Trump "has strategies to hurt black people." He cited pedophile Epstein's hatred toward Trump as if that was a point scored against Trump. Sorry liberals, but the Epstein files just confirmed that Epstein is one of your own. It is now apparent that numerous Democrat elites continued embracing Epstein long after his crimes were evident. No wonder there was no outcry from Democrats when the files languished under Biden. It turns out all of Epstein's friends were Democrats. I hate to see Dennis Anderson and Francis Wick turn the DCI into just another liberal echo-chamber like they did

to the MDP." (end letter)

The Independent is a great local weekly paper with interesting and well-written news articles about local happenings and issues. The editor and local writers are great people who put out professional articles with no bias that I have noticed. So, why do I care whether their publisher and the owner at Wick Communications are now injecting the same liberal bias in the DCI that I have often objected to in the Montrose Press? The DCI will still have great locally written articles about Delta County. They will still have the crosswords my wife and I enjoy, and the cartoons. So who cares? The answer to that is: We should all care. The Democrat party, starting with the Obama presidency, has systematically done everything they can to destroy this once great nation, and have had some success in doing so. That success would not have been possible without the active participation and collusion of the media. The historic role of the "fourth estate" in our democracy was that of a watchdog over the government --- providing checks and balance to hold those in power accountable. That role no longer exists in most of America's media. Not only have they failed in their task of rooting out lies and corruption in our government, they are now active participants in the fraud and subversion. There is no longer a "fourth estate."

Liberals lied about Biden's health and his corruption. They lied about Obamacare, Russian Collusion, and Covid. They lied about Hunter's laptop, voter fraud, and January 6th. They lied about Ukraine, Epstein, and everything in between. Without the media's complicity, the Democrat party would have no support whatsoever --- their 18% approval rating would drop to zero and no Democrat would win another election. Liberals can't identify a woman, a criminal, dementia, or which bathroom to use, but they can identify a fishing boat that looks suspiciously like a narco-terrorist drug boat when they see one --- and no one in the media calls them out on it. The left is fine with Somalis stealing \$9 billion of taxpayer money and many bil-

lions more of foreign aid siphoned off by NGOs and the Democrat party, but get hysterical when our troops get a military bonus. There is no investigative journalism exposing the truth. In the span of a few days, Democrats go from demanding to release the Epstein file so they can finally "get Trump" to the media trying to convince us that "those 400+ pictures of Bill Clinton with Epstein in various locations and in hot tubs with underage girls means nothing." This is the same Bill and Hillary that invited Epstein to the White House 17 times, but our illustrious media still gives Hillary a platform to spread her nonsense. If we had a "fourth estate," Bill Clinton would be in jail for his crimes and Hillary would be a pariah rather than a favored media guest.

Incredibly, the Democrats' newest narrative is the economy. Biden's "Inflation Reduction Act" created the highest inflation in 50 years while wages remained static. Democrats' "Affordable Care Act" requires massive tax subsidies to hide astronomical premium costs. Biden's Green New Deal and attempts to destroy the domestic oil industry soared gas and utility costs to the highest on record. A real "journalist" would point out that Democrats talking about "affordability" is like asking an arsonist his opinion on putting out the fire he set. The Trump agenda of higher energy production, curtailed government spending, and less regulation has dramatically reduced inflation to 2.7%. Real wages have increased. Consumer spending is strong. Net exports are way up. Imports and trade deficits are way down. Investment is setting records and GDP is posting strong growth. No one is going to believe anything coming from the people who destroyed affordability, but our media is still giving air time to the likes of Liz Cheney claiming Trump inherited a great economy or others trying to give Biden credit for Trump's great economy. So, yes, I care very much if the DCI turns into just another liberal mouthpiece actively participating in this country's demise. Delta County citizens deserve better. *Ed Henrie, Montrose*



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

WHO IS KIRSTIN COPELAND?

Editor:

The narrow recall of Montrose County Commissioner Scott Mijares on November 4 succeeded by just 659 votes (based on early unofficial counts showing a close margin of around 666). This razor-thin outcome installed **Kirstin Copeland** in his place, representing a disturbing shift that threatens the county's conservative foundation.

Kirstin Copeland's Troubling Pattern of Political Opportunism

While **Copeland boasts a long career in public service** with over 20 years as a Park Manager and Peace Officer with Colorado Parks and Wildlife, **her voter registration and voting history** expose a calculated pattern of non-committal and strategic maneuvering that reveals a profound lack of conviction on the stark policy divides separating Democrats and Conservatives over the past decade.

Copeland voted in the Republican June Primary in 2022, then in the Democratic Presidential Primary on March 5, 2024. She promptly returned to the **Republican ballot in time for the June Primary in 2024.** This is not mere indecision. It is a **classic, well-worn tactic used to sabotage conservative candidates** by diluting their primary support and engineering more left-leaning outcomes. In an era **when the ideological chasm between the two parties has never been wider** on issues ranging from fiscal restraint, Second Amendment rights, border security, energy policy, and cultural priorities, such strategic cross-party voting demonstrates a complete absence of principled loyalty to conservative values.

Compounding this pattern, Copeland is a registered **"unaffiliated"** in Colorado's voter system. In a state where unaffiliated voters now form the majority of the electorate, this status is often touted as independence or freedom from party control. However, it serves as a glaring red flag for someone seeking office in a deeply conservative county like Montrose. **Being**

unaffiliated provides a convenient "out," an escape hatch that allows avoidance of firm commitment to any party's platform. It permits flexibility to align with whichever side offers political advantage at the moment, rather than standing on a solid foundation of convictions. **This lack of fixed allegiance raises serious doubts about whether Copeland will consistently defend core conservative principles** when tough decisions arise, or if she will drift toward moderation under pressure from influences like "Saint Sue Hansen".

Copeland's willingness to game the system by jumping back and forth raises serious questions about whose agenda she truly intends to serve. **Voters deserve representatives with consistent convictions,** not opportunists who treat party affiliation, or the lack thereof, as a convenient tool for personal or political advantage.

Alignment with "Saint Sue Hansen" and the Erosion of Conservative Values

Copeland now appears firmly under the influence of **"Saint Sue Hansen,"** who exerts significant control over Montrose County government as "Chair" of the Board of County Commissioners. Hansen has drawn intense conservative criticism for her **left-of-center** leanings and her formal departure from the Republican Party in early 2025 after years of benefiting from GOP support. Her vision for Montrose to become a **"lighter shade of red"** signals a deliberate push to weaken the county's longstanding conservative identity.

Implications for Montrose County Governance

Montrose County remains a deeply conservative stronghold, as proven by the overwhelming rejection of left-leaning initiatives like LL and MM, the defeat of Library initiatives and City Charter Amendments, and the decisive victories of all four conservative school board members on November 4.

Yet the county's substantial **2026 budget of approximately \$126 million** requires relentless vigilance. With a population under 45,000 and many residents living on fixed or limited incomes, every tax dollar must be fiercely protected. Residents have every right to demand absolute accountability.

The elevation of Copeland, with her demonstrated history of shady partisan tactics, shifting priorities, unaffiliated status, and lack of ideological consistency, combined with **Hansen's questionable fiscal track record and leadership in transferring tens of millions of dollars in taxpayer-owned real estate to Montrose Regional Health,** raises grave concerns about the future direction of county governance.

Strict fiscal conservatism, limited government, and unwavering loyalty to core conservative principles are now at risk of being sidelined in favor of increased spending, new revenue grabs through taxes or fees, and priorities that stray from what Montrose voters have repeatedly endorsed.

The irony is stark: a recall effort that condemned Mijares has instead placed in power someone whose voting behavior and registration choices show **a clear willingness to undermine conservative principles when it suits her.**

Montrose County deserves commissioners who exhibit rock-solid convictions, consistent loyalty to conservative values, and genuine fiscal discipline, not political chameleons who shift allegiances, or claim independence, to advance a more moderate, less principled agenda.

Michael J Badagliacco, "MJB"

Michael is a father of five, grandfather of three, United States Air Force veteran, international recording artist, and Editor-in-Chief of the Colorado DOGE Report. He is passionate about the United States of America and the founders' genius in crafting the Constitution.

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SOUR GRAPES

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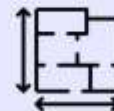
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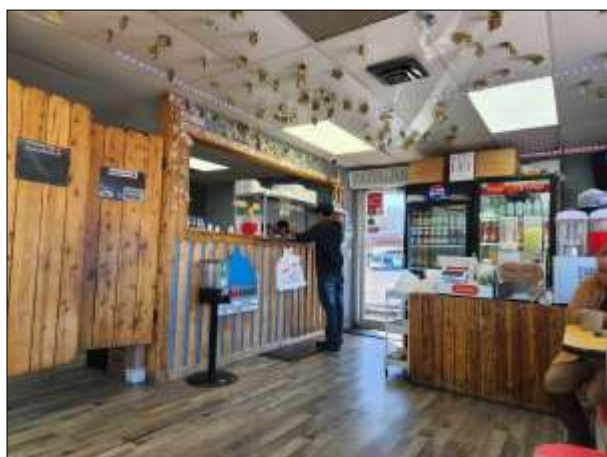
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COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

WILLIAM GEORGE NANCE *February 2, 1945- October 19, 2025*

WILLIAM GEORGE NANCE, 80, passed away in hospice's care with his wife, Martha Ann (Marty) Nance by his side on October 19, 2025 in Tucson, Arizona. Bill had been battling Parkinson's disease and Lewy Body Dementia since 2019. He is thankfully no longer suffering and is now at peace. He was born in Queens, New York on February 2nd, 1945. Bill spent most of his life in Colorado and Florida and just recently moved to Tucson from Montrose for treatment of his declining health. Bill was known for his generosity, caring and devotion to his family, friends and people he got to know during his lifetime. His youth was spent on the waters between New York and southern Florida. He loved sailing, swimming and fishing. He graduated from Florida State University with a degree in History; it is there that he met his first wife, Penny Kay Cook. They had two sons, Todd William Nance and Jamie Robin Nance. He joined the United States Air Force after graduation from college and served for over 21 year as an officer; he retired as a Major, having earned a Masters in History along the way. After retirement from the Air

Force, he pursued a second career as a Physical Therapist Assistant earning an associate's degree from Fort Morgan Community College. He worked as a PTA at Montrose Memorial Hospital and Valley Manor Care Center among other places. It was while working at MMH that he met his second wife, Marty with whom he would spend the remainder of his life. They shared a beautiful home together in Montrose and enjoyed cycling, camping and traveling. They took many happy trips around the US in their RV and traveled abroad as well.

Bill was an accomplished cyclist, skier and swimmer. He competed in many triathlons, swim meets and cycling events across the United States and was a long-time member of Montrose Marlins Masters Swim Team, where he was known for his beautiful butterfly stroke. He had many happy winter seasons skiing with his two sons in Telluride, Colorado. He is survived by his loving wife of 27 years, Marty, his two sons Todd William Nance and Jamie Robin Nance, and his first wife, Penny Kay Cook.

Bill will be remembered for his love of



life and adventure. His unwavering generosity, love and warmth toward others touched many along the way and will not be forgotten. Rest in peace, Bill, we are sad that your memory and many experiences were lost toward the end of your life but glad you are not in pain any longer. We love you dearly.

ERIC E. "RICK" COBB *May 26, 1947- December 8, 2025*



ERIC E. "RICK" COBB, age 78, passed away peacefully on December 8, 2025 at his mountain home in Crawford, Colorado where he lived contentedly with his beloved dog, Bella.

Eric was born on May 26, 1947 to Eric and Rosalyn Cobb of Montrose, Colorado. He had one sister, Rhonda, and is survived by his daughter, Denna Nelson; her husband, Trevor; and two grandchildren, Ethan & Abigail.

Eric graduated from Montrose High School and proudly served three years in the United States Army. He spent much of his adult life in Santa Monica and Santa Ynez, California, before returning to Colorado.

A gifted and meticulous aircraft mechanic, Eric built his own experimental aircraft and logged more than 3,000 safe flight hours. He was always generous with his skills, readily helping anyone in need. A self-taught musician, Eric found joy in playing guitar and singing at clubs throughout California and Colorado. Art was another lifelong passion—he exhibited his work in California and generously gave many of his paintings to friends.

Cremation took place at Taylor Mortuary in Delta, Colorado. A memorial service is planned for the spring of 2026.

COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

RICHARD LEROY SHULL

August 9, 1964- December 18, 2025

RICHARD LEROY SHULL (RICK), age 61, a resident of Montrose for the past 18 years, passed away peacefully at home in Montrose, Colorado, on December 18, 2025, surrounded by love. He was born on August 9, 1964. Rick was a devoted husband, a loving father, a cherished brother, and a proud grandfather and great-grandfather. He is survived by his wife, Denise; his son, Rowdy; his daughter-in-law, Bernadette; seven grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; his mother, Lana Heightley; his brother, Rex; his sister-in-law, Wella; and two sisters, Kate and Jennifer. He is also survived by his brother-in-law, Peter; his sister-in-law, Sheila; and his brother-in-law, Duane, along with numer-

ous friends. He will be deeply missed by all who knew him. Rick proudly served in the United States Army.

After his military service, he became a Master carpenter and glassman. He worked at Smoking in the Rockies, where he was respected for his dedication, work ethic, and colorful outfits. Rick loved fishing and spending time outdoors. He made it a priority to rescue as many hounds as he could. He was well known for his vibrant personality. Above all, he will be remembered for his caring, generous, and kind heart, always willing to help others. His legacy of love, service, and compassion will live on through his family and the many lives he touched.



CRAIG ALAN BOND

June 3, 1958- December 14, 2025

CRAIG ALAN BOND went to his eternal home on December 14, 2025. He was born June 3, 1958 in [Montrose, Colorado](#) and raised on a farm in the Coal Creek Valley. He retired from his 26 year career in the USAF as a Lt Col.

He is survived by his loving wife, Donna Lynn Bond of Springfield MO; Mother Loretta Bond of Montrose CO; Son Jeremy Bond of Columbus GA; Brother Steve Bond of [Whitesboro, TX](#); and Sister Gayle Flowers of Anchorage AK.

He was preceded in death by his Father Robert Bond on February 24, 1987; and Brother Scott Bond on September 11, 2010. Now and always dearly loved by his family and friends.

TERESA MARTINEZ CARRERA

October 10, 1940 — December 22, 2025

TERESA MARTINEZ CARRERA passed into eternal life on December 22, 2025, surrounded by the love of her family.

Teresa was a devoted wife, a loving and selfless mother, and a deeply cherished grandmother and great-grandmother. Her life was a true reflection of her Catholic faith, lived with humility, love, and service to her family. She leaves behind a legacy of prayer, strength, and devotion that will continue to guide and inspire all who were blessed to know her.

She is lovingly survived by her children: Leticia, Silvestre, Yolanda, Hector, Martha, Aracelia, Arnoldo, Arnulfo, and Griselda, as well as her beloved grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Teresa was preceded in death by her devoted husband, Meliton Quintero, with whom she is now reunited in the eternal peace of the Lord.

Teresa found her greatest joy in spending time with her family, friends, and loved ones, always offering kindness, wisdom, and comfort. We trust that she now rests in the loving arms of our Lord Jesus Christ and has been welcomed into His heavenly kingdom, where there is no more pain or sorrow, but everlasting life.

Services will be held on Monday, December 29, from 3 PM to 7 PM, at Crippin Funeral Home.

ISSUE 554 Dec. 29, 2025

ART & SOL

the Barefoot Laureate: with Wendy Videlock

**The Dark Feathers of Intelligence**

I woke this morning to a snow-dusted mesa, a couple of finches at the feeder and a raven rising up like a vision from the ravine. I

was reminded of a recent trip to Yellowstone.

Yes, there were waterfalls, breathtaking views, antelope, elk and hundreds of bison but it was raven who returned my gaze, raven who engaged me in conversation, raven who captured, like a thief, my imagination.

To glimpse this great corvid in flight is to glimpse the open mind of the sky, a flicker of charisma and contradiction seems to animate each turn. Few creatures command air as ravens do— they soar, glide, tumble, dive with an acrobatic thrill and perform somersaults mid-air.

All this grace seems impossible for a bird with a chunky neck, a heavy beak and shaggy, unkempt throat feathers. This is a bird carrying an iridescent darkness, a lightness of being and an intelligence that feels both prehistoric and new, a bird of both myth and neuroscience.

As a child of the desert, the raven, much like the coyote, always seems to follow me around, reminding me of myself, sometimes appearing as a form of solidarity, other times appearing as some kind of

croaking omen.

Scientists study the raven with measurement tools; the poets and myth-makers look to the same creature with jaw dropping awe. Perhaps the raven resides in both realms and challenges both science and art in large part because it refuses to be only one thing.

Science tells us the raven can solve problems, Edgar Allen Poe tells us the raven knows things we don't and many First Nations peoples believe Raven is the trickster deity who created the world.

In Judeo Christian tradition the raven was sent by God to feed a starving Elijah, lost in the wilderness. In Norse myth, Odin's two ravens are named Huginn (Thought) and Muninn (Memory). Inuit hunters speak of ravens as guides; where the raven flies, the caribou may follow. Clearly, the raven has captured, not just my imagination, but the collective imagination.

Even the raven's voice is a kind of chthonic landscape of prophesy: croaks, clicks, beak-clacks, gurgles, shrill cries, rebuttals, mimics of wind, wolves, human voices and machinery issue forth and onto the air wherever the raven is near. Whether in the white wilds of the Arctic



Raven in the moonlight. iStock image.

or the dry mesas here in the Southwest, the raven arrives to say: I am here and I am watching you as you watch me.

The raven is forever wed to the split-second moment, the blessing and the curse and to the deep mysterious folds of the multiverse.

Yes, science has confirmed what the artist's intuition has long suggested—ravens are thinkers, problem solvers, planners of the future, and even seem to understand the crafty nature of deception. In experiments, ravens stash away food while others watch — only to return later to move the stash once the observers have left the scene. This behavior requires imagining the perspective of another being, which is a skill once thought uniquely human.

Continued next pg

the Barefoot Laureate: with Wendy Videlock From previous pg

A study from the University of Vienna shows that ravens can remember individual human faces for years. A raven wronged will never forget your face. A raven treated kindly might reciprocate by bringing shiny gifts. The mind behind the raven's eye is not a blank bead of instinct but a complex system of memory, learning, emotion and curiosity.

Study after study shows a raven's cognition is not mere mimicry, but rather a consciousness of relation, projection and possibility.

As a visual artist, I think I've probably sketched and painted the raven more than any other creature.

The raven has likely never heard

of shiny object syndrome

or Edgar Allen Poe

and so

I paint her on the canvas

a mystic and an alchemist.

Yet, for all their intelligence and grace, perhaps the most marvelous thing about ravens is that they play. Unabashedly. Wildly. In remarkable displays they roll around in snow, they drop sticks midair and then drop down to swoop and catch them. They surf wind currents with what can only be called expressions of joy. Ravens slide down rooftops (on plastic lids, no less) again and again, like children on sleds.

And of course they stash away shiny objects they cannot eat or use for nest making: coins, buttons, pretty stones, even bits of glass. Scientists are stumped as to why—can a bird be inspired by shiny things? I say why not?

When a raven rises up from the ravine on a cold December morning, it can change your day.

And when a raven turns her head and returns your gaze it can change your life. In this gaze we find perhaps a recognition of kinship. I've come to see the raven as a mirror of survival, living across time, deserts, forests, and tundra, revealing all

manner of experience, feeding on what remains and what might be newly discovered.

In her beautiful book, *The Painted Drum*, Louise Erdrich tells us that ravens are the birds she'll miss most when she dies. She goes on to say, *If only the darkness into which we must look were composed of the black light of their limber intelligence. If only we did not have to die at all. Instead, become ravens.*

Indeed!

*If I were a raven,
I'd silence myself
and make a fuss,
alighting here,
on this delicate arch
exquisitely weightless
and robust.*

..

Wendy Videlock of Palisade is serves as poet laureate of the Western Slope. Her poems and essays appear in O Magazine, Poetry, The New York Times, Best American Poetry and other venues. Her books are available where books are sold. Reach her at westernslope-



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The Satisfied Self

26 for 26, Weeks 6&7: stability, Expression & Renewal



By Gia Pirelli.
Courtesy photo.

As we move into the final stretch of the 26 for 26 challenge, something important shifts. The habits are no longer new. The systems no longer feel forced. What once required intention now carries momentum.

Weeks Six and Seven

are about sustainability—the structure that keeps your life running cleanly, and the relationships, expression, and joy that make it worth running at all. This is where personal development matures: when discipline and delight coexist.

WEEK SIX: MONEY, WORK & MENTAL CLARITY

Money and work are often the greatest sources of stress—not because they are inherently difficult, but because they're frequently avoided. This week replaces avoidance with simplicity, clarity, and control.

Shift 19: The Money Map

(Pillar: Money & Work)

Financial calm doesn't come from restriction, it comes from awareness. This week, establish a weekly 15-minute money date. Same day, same time. Consistency builds confidence.

During this check in:

Review balances

Notice upcoming expenses

Automate bills and savings wherever possible

The goal: money as information, not emotion. When finances are visible, they stop feeling heavy.

Shift 20: The 24 Hour No-Spend Rule

(Pillar: Money & Work)

Impulse spending is often emotional, not practical. Introduce a 24-hour pause on all non-essential purchases over \$200.

This single rule creates space between

desire and decision.

What happens: Most purchases lose urgency. Clarity replaces impulse

Self-trust grows

This isn't deprivation. It's discernment.

Shift 21: Inbox Zero –Weekly

(Pillar: Work & Systems)

Inbox Zero doesn't mean living in your email. It means controlling it,

Once per week schedule a single inbox sweep:

Respond or archive decisively

Unsubscribe aggressively

Create folders only if necessary

The mindset: email is a task container, not a to-do list. Mental clarity increases when digital loose ends are closed.

Week Six Theme: Financial and mental stability. These shifts reduce background stress, the kind that constantly drains energy.

WEEK SEVEN: CONNECTION, VOICE & JOY

With systems stabilized, attention turns toward what nourishes the soul: relationships, expression, and play. This week reminds you that a well-designed life must still feel alive.

Shift 22: Relationship Maintenance

(Pillar: Relationships & Communication)

Connection doesn't thrive on intention alone. It requires structure.

Each week, choose two people to reach out to and schedule a one-on-one intentional connection: a walk, a coffee, a call.

The Key: consistency over complacency.

Relationships deepen when they're tended regularly not reactively.

Shift 20: Upgrade your Speaking

(Pillar: Communication & Presence)

Confidence is built through repetition not performance.

Each day this week, record a 30 to 60 second video answering a simple prompt—a reflection, insight or idea. No publishing. No polishing. Just practice.

Why this matters: you learn to trust your

voice. You become comfortable being seen. Your communication sharpens naturally. Expression is a muscle and it strengthens the more we flex it.

Shift 23: Play, Awe, & Whimsy

(Pillar: Meaning & Recovery)

Not everything needs to be productive. Schedule one block this week that is entirely devoted to play, awe, or delight.

Walk somewhere beautiful. Visit a museum or gallery. Laugh with friends. Do something purposeless on purpose.

Why this matters: joy is not a reward for productivity. It's a requirement for resilience.

Weeks 6 & 7 Reflection; A Life That Holds You

These two weeks bring balance: structure and softness; discipline and delight; responsibility and freedom. You're not just closing the year with better habits, you're closing it with a better life. One that feels healed rather than hurried.

Next week we enter the final sprint—the last three shifts that turn reflection into momentum: earning leverage, values-based decision making, and quarterly personal review that sets the tone for the year ahead.

For now, let stability support you—and let joy remind you why you built it in the first place.

Gia Pirelli—Former salon owner, group fitness instructor, competitive cyclist and triathlete. These days she's trading blow-outs for balance, and endurance for infinity as a certified Yoga and Mat Pilates instructor, Sound Healing Practitioner, Breathwork & Meditation Guide, and inner & outer beauty consultant. When she's not guiding clients toward balance and beauty, she's exploring the world, chasing waves, riding motorcycles, and saying "yes" to life—and Tank, her Pit-bull PIC, is almost always along for the ride.

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MIRROR CHURCH DIRECTORY

ALL SAINTS ANGLICAN CHURCH

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

Office Hours: By appointment.

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

Worship Service Times: Sundays 9AM,

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

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

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

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

BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH

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

Olathe, Co 81425

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

Sunday School 9:15 a.m.

Sunday 10:30 a.m.

Sunday 6 p.m.

Wednesday Bible Study/Prayer 7 p.m.

CEDAR CREEK CHURCH

affiliation: Evangelical Free

Address: 222 South Townsend Montrose, CO 81401

Office Hours: 10am-2pm Tuesday- Friday

Contact: 970-252-1163

ccc@cccmontrose.org

Pastor: Curt Mudgett

Sunday worship:

worship Service: September-May at 10:15am **Discipleship Hour** at 9am

Worship Service: June-August at 9:30am
 Nursery available for 0-4 during worship service

Wednesday Prayer: 5:30-6:15pm

Cedar Creek Church is a welcoming and friendly group of people that takes God seriously, but not ourselves.

We enjoy gathering for encouragement, meals, prayer and having fun!

Our mission is to exalt Jesus Christ by being a Word-centered community of believers who are equipped for a life of worship, prayer and service, and to reach our neighbors for Christ.

Please make plans to come check us out soon!

CELEBRATION CHURCH

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

Address: 2900 Sunnyside Road, Montrose, CO 81401

Office Hours: By appointment

Phone: (970) 497-4925

Email: celebrationmontrose@gmail.com

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

celebrationmontrose.org/

Worship Service Times: 9am and 10:45am

Senior Pastor:

Pastor Brandon Mathis

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

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

Demographics: Multi-generational

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

Student (middle & high school) at 9am.

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

CHRIST'S CHURCH OF THE VALLEY

Name of Church: Christ's Church of the Valley

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

Address: 10 Hillcrest Plaza Way. Montrose, CO 81401

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

Contact information:

Phone: 970-249-0530

Email: CCVMontroseCO10@gmail.com

Website: ccvmontrose.org

Name of current Senior Pastor: Ken Lawrence

Worship service times: 10:30 a.m.

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

in our Lord Jesus Christ to the glory of God.

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

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

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Denomination: Christ Lutheran Montrose

Affiliation: Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

Address: 1980 N. Townsend Ave., Montrose, CO 81401

Contact: 970-633-0226

Website: www.montroselutheran.org

Email: montroselutheran@gmail.com

Pastor: Tim Onnen

Worship: Sundays at 9 AM

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

find friendly people gathered in a welcoming environment being comforted and encouraged by the forgiveness and love of Jesus, and sharing that with one another.

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

MIRROR CHURCH DIRECTORY From previous pg

COMMUNITY SPIRIT CHURCH

United Church of Christ (UCC)

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

Office hours: Call or text for appointment

Phone: 970-765-7070

Email: spirit@communityspiritucc.org

Website: communityspiritucc.org

Current Pastor: Rev. Wendy Kidd

Worship service: Sundays at 11am

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

where everyone can live freely and authentically.

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

COVENANT HEBRAIC FELLOWSHIP

Denomination affiliation. No affiliation

Address Office hours N/A

Contact: 720-951-9941,

office@ccfmontrose.net,

www.ccfmontrose.net

Name of current Senior Pastor. Led by elders

Worship service times. Noon on Saturdays. Children's Church will be offered as needed.

Covenant is a Hebraic roots community

that studies the Torah as well as the rest of Scripture. We learn about the Hebrew roots of the language and believe that the Lord's feasts are for today. We are predominantly made up of older folks, but have some young blood, too.

FIRST CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

Denomination: Church of the Nazarene

Address: 705 South 12th Street

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

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

Pastor: Interim Pastor Ian Hyde

Services Sunday: Worship 10:30

AM, Discipleship Hour: 9:30

AM. Discipleship Hour has classes across all age groups. Nursery for children UNDER 3 is available during Worship.

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 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:

9:15 AM to 10:15 AM: Children's, Youth, and Adult Sunday School; Christian Education & Fellowship.

10:30 AM: Sanctuary & Virtual Worship
Montrose UMC is a leader in being fully

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

ROSEMONT BAPTIST CHURCH

Affiliation: Southern Baptist

Address: 1598 E. Niagara Road, Montrose, CO 81401

Office Hours: Tues-Thurs, 9am-4pm

Contact information:

Phone: 970.249.4887

website: www.RosemontBaptist.org

email: office@rosemontbaptist.org

Senior Pastor: Rolland Kenneson

Worship Service Times: Our engaging and relevant Sunday Worship Service is at

10:45 AM. We also have Bible Study for All Ages Sunday mornings at 9:15 AM. We provide a professionally-staffed nursery throughout both.

Rosemont Baptist's desire is to passionately bring people face-to-face with the life-changing power of Jesus Christ.

We are a multigenerational church from different walks of life who love Jesus, love each other, and love our community. Everyone comes dressed in whatever is comfortable. We love meeting new people no

matter what stage of life they are in.

Children's services: *We have a fun Sunday School for children from four years old through youth. We provide Children's Church during the Sunday Worship Services where children four years old through 9 years can learn to be worshippers of Jesus.*

We provide a nursery for children under four years old with paid staff providing excellent care during Sunday Morning Bible Study and Worship Service.

MIRROR CHURCH DIRECTORY From previous pg

SPIRITUAL AWARENESS CENTER

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

Macdonald, Senior minister; Rev. Ruby Salaz, Assistant Minister. Spiritual Counseling available.
Worship service times: From November 9-December 14, the regular Sunday gatherings will meet from 9:30-11 am for a six-week SAC/Meditation program with Sang-drol Blanchard of Meditation Spaces. Meditation time and guest speakers are planned. Virtual services are temporarily cancelled. Chai Chats will continue to

meet on Wednesday mornings at 10:30 am at Pun Hill Himalayan Restaurant, 710 N. Townsend, Montrose.
 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, meditation, and family and community projects.
 People of all ages are welcome.

ST. STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

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

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

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

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?

Now more than ever...

Thank you for reading

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Cell: 970-209-3934 www.the-res.com

One of the original homes in Montrose, has been lovingly cared for, carefully updated and maintained. The main floor business was a styling salon for many years that evolved into a cottage retail store with room for classes and workshops. The original use of the home is noticeable in the front parlor, living, dining, bedroom, bath and kitchen.

COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

SANTA CRUZ POET DANE CERVINE READS AT BARDIC TRAILS JAN. 6

Special to the Mirror

TELLURIDE- Poet Dane Cervine of Santa Cruz (CA) will be the featured poet for the Telluride Institute's first Tuesday Talking Gourds' Bardic Trails virtual Stories & Poems series Jan. 6th at 7 pm MST.

Dane Cervine's books include *Nine Volt Nirvana* (Word Poetry Press), *DEEP TRAVEL – At Home in the [Burning]* World (Saddle Road Press), *The World Is God's Language* (Sixteen Rivers Press), *Earth Is a Fickle Dancer* (Main

Street Rag), and *The Gateless Gate – Polishing the Moon Sword* (Saddle Road Press). His poems have won awards from Adrienne Rich, Tony Hoagland, and the *Atlanta Review*. His work appears in the *SUN*, the *Hudson Review*, *TriQuarterly*, *Poetry Flash*, *Catamaran*, *Miramar*, *Rattle*, *Sycamore Review*, *Pedestal Magazine*, among others.

Dane lives in Santa Cruz, California. Visit his website at:

<https://danecervine.com/>

For those that like prompts, we are suggesting "Wishing for Snow," although poems on any subject are welcome. Virtual attendees are encouraged to bring a story or poem to share each month after the featured reader, their own work or someone else's.

The Stories & Poems Norwood series at the Lone Cone Library has shut down indefinitely due to declining attendance and loss of funding, so no more Third Thursday live events in Norwood.

However, the Wilkinson Library and Talking Gourds has started a new live Stories & Poems series at Magazine Room on the third Tuesday of every month. We began in December with Montrose metaphysical poet Tracy Lightsey, and for January we will have Montrose storyteller Tanya Ishikawa.

Talking Gourds' Scot Rasor (KOTO DJ Razor Blaze) is working with Telluride Arts to continue to bring poetry to Artwalk first Thursdays in selected galleries and is also working with a lot of local arts entities to start a monthly music and poetry event somewhere in town with the beginning of the new year.

The Telluride Institute's Talking Gourds Poetry Program hosts the free Bardic Trails virtual zoom series on the first Tuesday of each month. The Wilkinson Public Library continues as our collaboration partner, with town support from Commission for Community Assistance, Arts & Special Events.

No longer needing to register with the library, participants are encouraged to visit <https://www.tellurideinstitute.org/western-slope-calendar> to get the zoom link each month, if they aren't already on our mailing list. Thanks to the Cantor Family, the Guttman Family Foundation, CCAASE and our Fischer and Cantor contest participants for supporting our program and projects.



Poet Dane Cervine. Courtesy photo.

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COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

COLUMBINE QUILTERS TO MEET JAN. 3

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE--On Jan. 3, 9 am Columbine Quilters will meet at Welcome Home Alliance Warrior Resource 4 Hillcrest Plaza Way, Montrose. Social time is at 9:00, Business Meeting at 9:30, followed by Show-and-tell, refreshments and a program. Rebecca Chatham will be demonstrating "the block in a block" quilt block method. Also we will be learning how to tie a quilt. Visitors are always welcome. For more information: Paula millsappscooi@gmail.com or Cheryl 970-462-3849



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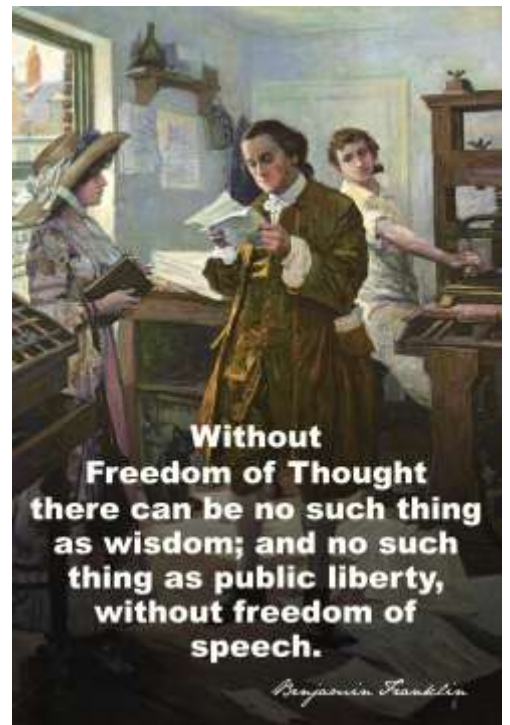
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BLACK CANYON AUDUBON SOCIETY TO HOST PRESENTATION ON BIRDING IN HIGHLANDS OF KENYA

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE--Thursday, Jan. 8, 7 p.m. Black Canyon Audubon Society will host Don March, birder extraordinaire re-accounting his 12-day birding tour in the highlands of Kenya. This is your chance to glimpse the amazing birds and wildlife of a small part of this continent. The presentation is at the Montrose Field House Summit Room, 25 Colorado Avenue, Montrose. For more information about the speaker and topic go to programs at blackcanyonaudubonsociety.org.



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"Paint a Vacation!"

Acrylic on Canvas

Thr., Jan 15th, 5:30 pm Mosaic Montrose

Fri. Jan 16th, 1:00 pm Senior Center



Paint a chapel gate on canvas

Thur., Jan 22nd. 5:30 pm Endless Pastabilities



Abstract Alcohol Ink on Yupo

Sat., Jan 24th, 1 pm. LaNoue Winery



**Paint a Winter Scene
with Watercolor Pencils**

Thr., Jan 29th, 5:30 pm Mosaic Montrose

Fri. Jan 30th, 1:00 pm Senior Center



Class Details and Registrations

kathrynrburke.com/https://education

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SAVE THE DATE! LOCAL EVENTS CALENDAR

ONGOING-

ALTRUSA INT'L believes in "Leading to a Better Community" and is always looking for new members. We meet in Montrose on the first three Tuesdays a month at the Field House: 25 Colorado Ave, 12-Noon. Pick a day that works for you & please join us! Through our local Altrusa Club, members unite their varied talents in service to others, achieving as a group what individuals cannot do alone." <https://www.altrusamontrose.org/> P: 970-765-7666 E: Altrusa.Montrose@gmail.com

BLACK CANYON AUDUBON SOCIETY provides a monthly program on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 7 pm at the Montrose Field House, 25 Colorado Avenue, Montrose. blackcanyonaudubon.org

Tuesday - 1st and 3rd Tuesdays-Black Canyon Audubon Society hosts monthly birdwatching field trips in the Montrose area on 1st Tuesdays of the month and in the Delta area on the 3rd Tuesdays of the month. Check out the website for field trip details at blackcanyonaudubon.org.

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 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

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MIRROR IMAGES: OUT & ABOUT



Sunday afternoon saw a return to clear skies, as locals like Glen and Sprocket, above, took to the trails for a breath of fresh air. Mirror staff photo.

A black bear is sitting on a wooden bench, holding a tablet computer. The bear is looking at the screen. The background is a scenic view of a mountain range with snow-capped peaks and green slopes. The sky is blue with some clouds.

*Save a tree –
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