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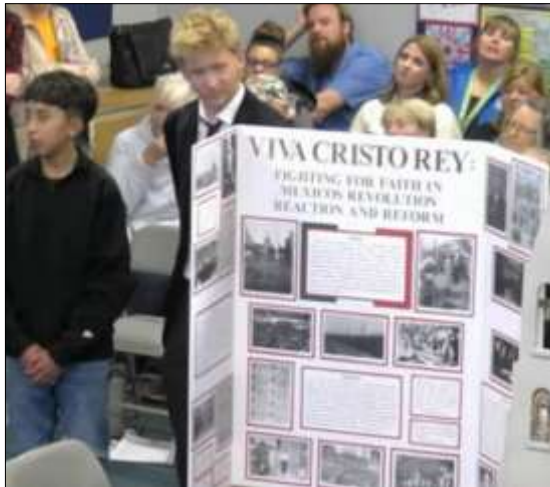
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## RE-1J HEARS PRESENTATION ON POSSIBLE SCHOOL 'MERGERS'



Two sophomores from the Olathe Middle High School History Club presented at the April 14 meeting. The Club is led by "retired" Olathe Middle/High School Teacher Kari Keller. Screenshot.

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE-At the regular meeting of Tuesday, April 14, the Montrose County School District RE-1J Board of Education heard from community members and a demographer.

The Board considered the future of local schools, which faced with declining enrollment in the lower grades, and decreasing state funding.

The meeting stretched to nearly four and a half hours. Directors include Board President Neisha Balleck; Vice President Ted Valerio; District C Director Scott Scarborough; District D Director Tom West; District E Director Tiffany Vincent; District F Director Jody Hovde; and District G Director Shane Daly.

All directors were present.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence, District F Director Jody Hovde asked to move the Superintendent's Report to follow the President's Report, and to move the Executive

*Continued pg 40*

## RED HAWKS BASEBALL DROPS PAIR: GJ TIGERS 14, RED HAWKS 2

By Cliff Dodge

MONTROSE-The Montrose Red Hawks Baseball Team hosted the Grand Junction Tigers last Tuesday and the outlook was difficult to handle. The Tigers pushed across four runs in the top half of the first inning and never let up. The visitors added a single run in the second inning, four more in the fourth inning and five runs in the final two frames. The Red Hawks managed a single run in the fourth inning and another in the sixth frame for a final score of 14 to 2.

The Red Hawks managed only five base hits, all singles. The Red Hawks players with base hits included Trevor Hatch, Chazz Miller, Isaiah Coley, Jayce England and Chase Gleason. The Red Hawks were walked only once, struck out four times and left seven base runners stranded.

Ryan Pankey pitched two scoreless innings. Cade Helber allowed two earned runs, while Wes Rhoades gave up three. Cohan Sauter pitched 4.2 innings and allowed 8 earned runs. Red Hawk pitchers also issued nine bases on balls.



Red Hawks get set to take on the Tigers. Photo by Cliff Dodge.

*Continued pg 29*



# Book Talk: *Disentangled*

Thursday, April 23  
at 6:45 p.m.  
Library Meeting  
Room



Erin Easton,  
Founder of New Leaf Coaching, will  
give a reading and signing of her new  
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# REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

## FAMILY BIRD WATCHING EVENT

*Special to the Mirror*

MONTROSE-Join the Black Canyon Audubon Society on April 25 for a family birdwatching event from 8 to 10 am. We will have a spotting scope and binoculars to share. Family groups must include at least one adult. Spring migration brings in new birds, and we'll see some year-round favorites too. The Marine Road Wildlife Area has wetlands and meadows, and even a bird blind. Join us at the parking area on Marine Road, 0.4 miles NW of the intersection of County Road 90 and Marine Road. Please email [black.canyon.audubon.fieldtrips@gmail.com](mailto:black.canyon.audubon.fieldtrips@gmail.com) to let us know how many will be in your group. No dogs please. There are no bathrooms at the location.

## CORRECTION

CORRECTION-Our Election Night Watch Story referred to the business at which the party was held as San Juan Brews, which is the former name. The present name of the business is The Coffee Shop. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused.

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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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Published every Monday in Montrose, Colorado, the Montrose Mirror reaches a readership of more than 35,000 across the region and around the world

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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. In addition to the Online News Association, we hold memberships in the Colorado Press Association and Society for Professional Journalists.



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# OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

## WATCH THE BOARD MEETING, ATTEND A FUTURE MEETING, AND STAY INFORMED

Dear Editor,

Once again, the overflow room was filled to capacity at the Montrose County School Board meeting. Jody Hovde began the meeting by requesting two changes to the agenda. First, she suggested moving the superintendent's report to immediately follow the president's report. President Balleck had placed it near the end of the agenda, which did not reflect the level of transparency many in the community expect. Parents, educators, and taxpayers want to understand why decisions are being made and what issues remain unresolved.

Second, Ms. Hovde requested that executive session be moved to after board planning so community members would not have to wait unnecessarily. It was a thoughtful suggestion.

President Balleck, Valerio, and Scarborough voted "nay" on moving the superintendent's report earlier in the agenda. West and Hovde voted "yea," as expected. Vincent and Daley also voted "yea," appearing to recognize the community's desire for greater clarity and transparency.

Fortunately, President Balleck did not bury the report compiled by the superintendent and staff, allowing the public to gain a clearer picture of the district's current situation. Dr. Stephenson shared that 840 families participated in the recent community survey. Shannon Bingham of Western Demographics, Inc. also provided important information for the community to consider. (I encourage readers to watch the presentation on YouTube.)

The next hour was devoted to educating the public on the district's current circumstances and possible future changes. In the recent past, President Balleck supported sending Vista Charter School to the Charter School Institute and also backed

Montrose Classical Academy, both of which affect district enrollment numbers. The legal fees associated with these actions had a significant impact on district budgets and community morale. It is important for parents, businesses, and community members to understand how these decisions affect students and employees across the district.

President Balleck also drafted a resolution regarding the public release of community surveys and had **legal counsel** review it to ensure it was legally sound. In my two decades as an educator in this district, I do not recall a board ever making such a request. Dr. Stephenson then suggested the matter should be addressed as a policy rather than a resolution. President Balleck responded, "That was my thinking as well, actually." Later, however, she said she wanted to revisit the resolution, which created confusion about the board's direction. Resolution or policy?

After 9:45 p.m., Ms. Balleck suggested starting future board meetings two hours earlier. While perhaps intended to improve efficiency, such a change would make it harder for many families and working community members to attend. If the goal is public engagement, a 5:00 p.m. start time would exclude too many people. At the same time, meetings lasting four to five hours are unreasonable and suggest the need for better time management. President Balleck stated the earlier start would apply only to this meeting, but possibly to future meetings as well.

Ms. Hovde also suggested the board should be able to work through issues without a facilitator. Some may see this as an effort to reduce facilitator and attorney costs. President Balleck replied that Mr. Graham was doing the work for free. Either she doesn't understand there is no

such thing as a free lunch or he isn't a savvy businessman. Mr. Valero then joked that the district paid for his lunch, though that hardly seems equivalent to the expense of traveling over from the Front Range.

Finally, the board entered executive session to meet online with legal counsel Bryce Carlson through Teams, without Dr. Stephenson or board secretary Laurie Laird present. Ms. Hovde questioned the unusual process, telling President Balleck, "You know more than I know." Direct board involvement in personnel matters is not typically part of the school board's role. Ms. Balleck stated for the third time that evening that she had been communicating with **legal counsel** and that this was his recommendation. Mr. West confirmed this was the suggestion of legal council. Balleck confirmed. New board member Vincent suggested the decision may have been due to the nature of the complaints, though personnel matters are generally handled internally rather than by the school board. Experienced board members Hovde and West voted no.

The board later returned from executive session with **legal counsel** and announced the need to hire an independent third-party investigator to review concerns at Olathe Elementary School and the district's response. The board president was authorized to work with counsel to select a qualified investigator.

In total, the meeting lasted almost four and a half hours. That is highly unusual and suggests poor management for a board that already relies on multiple consultants, independent investigators, and legal experts. My call to action is simple: watch the board meeting, attend a future meeting, and stay informed. Our students are the ones shaping our future.

*Ellen Angeles, Montrose*

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# REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

## CULVERT REPAIRS ACROSS MESA AND MONTROSE COUNTIES BEGIN: SEVEN CULVERTS RECEIVE UPGRADES EXTENDING THEIR LIFESPANS

*Special to the Mirror*

MESA AND MONTROSE COUNTIES — An advanced technology for culvert repairs is being utilized in Mesa and Montrose Counties with seven culverts receiving improvements by the Colorado Department of Transportation and prime contractor American West Construction.

Recently crews started work on US Highway 50 east of Montrose implementing an advanced culvert liner that has a 50-year design life. Six culverts along US 50 will see improvements from just east of Cerro Summit, Mile Point 108, to Cimarron, MP 112.3. Crews will finalize the project in August with a culvert under I-70 just short of the Utah-Colorado border, MP 4.4.

This culvert liner technology allows for the trenchless rehabilitation of pipes while the pipe is still operational and in place. The liner is pulled into the culvert pipe using a special tool to inflate it. This takes out all the creases and creates a smooth internal surface.

“Though often invisible to drivers, culverts provide essential drainage that keeps roadways safe and operable,” said CDOT Executive Director Shoshana Lew. “Several years ago, CDOT and the Transportation Commission worked to fund an initiative dedicated specifically to culvert repair, to ensure these vital assets are functioning properly for years to come. This innovative project is a direct result of that focused effort.”

Repairing culverts with an inflatable liner requires less time and creates fewer impacts to the traveling public by avoiding trenching and major excavation. The process starts with clearing the area of debris and then cleaning the culvert. Installing the liner is estimated to take a matter of hours. For most culverts, the entire operation takes only one day.

These improvements are a direct result from a CDOT culvert funding initiative aimed to ensure these vital assets are functioning properly for years to come in order to support essential drainage and keep roadways safer.

### Traffic Impacts

-The project is slated to begin mid-April and go through August.

-Working hours will be from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

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# REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

## 3RD ANNUAL CORNHOLE FOR A CAUSE TOURNAMENT

*Special to the Mirror*

MONTROSE-Join Mrs. Claus and her crew for the 3rd Annual Cornhole for a Cause Tournament where all proceeds support Mrs. Claus for a Cause. This event will be on Sunday May 3rd from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Montrose Elks Lodge (801 South Hillcrest). Spaces are limited to 30 teams with an entry fee of \$100 for each team of 2, which includes lunch. A fan favorite, the wiener dog races, will be at 1

p.m., with a \$10 entry fee. There will be tunes, food, vendors, and prizes – join us for a great event to support a fantastic cause.

For team entry, sponsorships, and vendor information contact info@mrsclausforacause.org or scan the QR code to register.

About Mrs. Claus for a Cause: Mrs. Claus for a Cause is a non-profit that annually provides a free Christmas event for chil-

dren of Montrose and its surrounding communities. The 2026 event will be at Friendship Hall in Montrose on December 18th & 19th for all children with December 20th as an event day reserved for children with special needs. For more information on the event or to donate or volunteer, please visit mrsclausforacause.org.



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# REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

## FOREST SERVICE EXPANDS PUBLIC ACCESS WITH 80-ACRE ACQUISITION

*Special to the Mirror*

MONTROSE—On April 8, the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests acquired two parcels totaling 80 acres in Montrose County. The acquisition secures the integrity of Buck Trail (National Forest System Trail #149), a popular route used for motorcycling, hiking, biking and horseback riding.

“This acquisition enhances public recreational opportunities, protects forest habitat and helps us manage the landscape as one connected system,” said Ouray District Ranger Dana Gardunio. “The purchase protects an important recreation corridor, improves the Forest Service’s ability to maintain trails and infrastructure, and supports long-term resource stewardship across the surrounding landscape.”

The parcels are located approximately 18 miles southwest of Montrose, off Old Highway 90 at the intersection with Buck Trail. See map here.

The parcels were purchased from two private landowners, with funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Created by Congress in 1964, the LWCF provides money to federal, state and local governments to purchase land, water and wetlands for the benefit of all Americans.

Now that the parcels are in public ownership, the Forest Service will manage them as part of the National Forest System consistent with the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests’ land management plan.



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BOOT STOMP

## REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

### GMUG PLANNED CLEANUP FOR NEW DOMINION MINE SITE

***Work will address contaminated waste and reduce risks to people and wildlife***

*Special to the Mirror*

NORWOOD—The Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison (GMUG) National Forests, in coordination with the Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety, plan to initiate a removal action at the abandoned, inactive New Dominion Mine site from May to October 2026.

Located just east of the Town of Ophir, Colorado, near National Forest System (NFS) Road #630 (Ophir Pass Road), the site includes two separate water-discharging mine openings and associated waste rock piles. The project area encompasses approximately three acres of land primarily within GMUG boundaries on the Norwood Ranger District, with a small portion located on land managed by the Town of Ophir.

This action involves the consolidation and capping of contaminated waste rock that may be hazardous to human health and the environment, in accordance with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA). The work also includes constructing permanent mine drainage channels to divert mine flows around contaminated waste piles and installing fencing and other techniques to prevent beaver manipulation of the collapsed mine openings. The objectives of the removal action are to reduce potential exposure to hazardous materials and to limit the possibility of contaminants migrating or being released into nearby waterways.

Temporary road closures will be in place during hauling activities to ensure public safety. Visit the GMUG [official website](#) and [social media](#) channels for closure updates.

An engineering evaluation and cost analysis report (EE/CA) was completed for the site in April 2021. The EE/CA included sampling and chemical analyses of mine wastes, soils, draining mine water and adjacent streams, along with human health and ecological risk screening. The report evaluated several removal action alternatives and selected the preferred alternative based on effectiveness, cost and ability to implement. A public notice and 30-day public comment period for the EE/CA was conducted in March 2021.

The EE/CA is available at: <https://nfs.fs2c.usda.gov/sites/nfs/files/r02/gmug/publication/New%20Dominion%20EECA-Final-04-28-2021.pdf>

The administrative record contains all documents upon which the USDA Forest Service based its decision to conduct a removal action at the site. Community members are encouraged to review the administrative record. Copies will be available for public review at the GMUG National Forests Supervisor's Office during regular business hours and may also be requested electronically by emailing [Bryan.Barrett2@usda.gov](mailto:Bryan.Barrett2@usda.gov).



# REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

## **HAND THERAPY SERVICES NOW AVAILABLE AT MOUNTAIN VIEW THERAPY STAR COURT** *Specialized rehabilitation helps patients recover from hand, wrist, and arm injuries*

*Special to the Mirror*

MONTROSE – The Montrose Regional Health (MRH) hand therapy team in Montrose has relocated its services to the Mountain View Therapy (MVT) Star Court location at 611 E. Star Court in Montrose, consolidating services to improve access and convenience for patients.

MVT offers multiple locations across the region, and the transition brings Montrose hand therapy services into its newest and most specialized space. The move expands access to specialized rehabilitation for injuries and conditions affecting the upper extremity, from the fingertips to the shoulder. While services have been consolidated in Montrose, hand therapy services continue to be available at Mountain View Therapy’s Telluride location.

Hand therapy is a highly specialized form of rehabilitation that addresses a wide range of conditions, including fractures, sprains, tendon and nerve injuries, and post-surgical recovery. Treatment plans are tailored to each patient’s unique needs, helping restore strength, mobility, and function.

The hand therapy team includes Kaitlyn Burke, OT; Amy Hanley, OT, CHT; and Sarah Lorenzen, MOT, OTR/L, CHT. Together, they provide comprehensive, one-on-one care designed to support patients throughout every stage of recovery.

“By bringing hand therapy services together at our Star Court location, we’re making it easier for patients to access specialized care in one place,” said Sarah Lorenzen, MOT, OTR/L, CHT. “Our goal is to provide highly individualized care that helps patients regain function and return to the activities they love as quickly and safely as possible.

The new location offers a dedicated space for therapy, allowing clinicians to deliver focused, patient-centered care in a comfortable environment.

For more information about hand therapy services at MVT call (970) 249-1646 or visit [montrosehealth.com/mvt](http://montrosehealth.com/mvt).

**BOCC WORK SESSION - KINIKIN ROAD**  
**April 30, 2026 at 6:00pm**  
 Historic County Courthouse  
 320 South 1<sup>st</sup> Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Board Room  
 Montrose, CO 81401  
 Watch online at: [www.montrosecounty.net](http://www.montrosecounty.net)

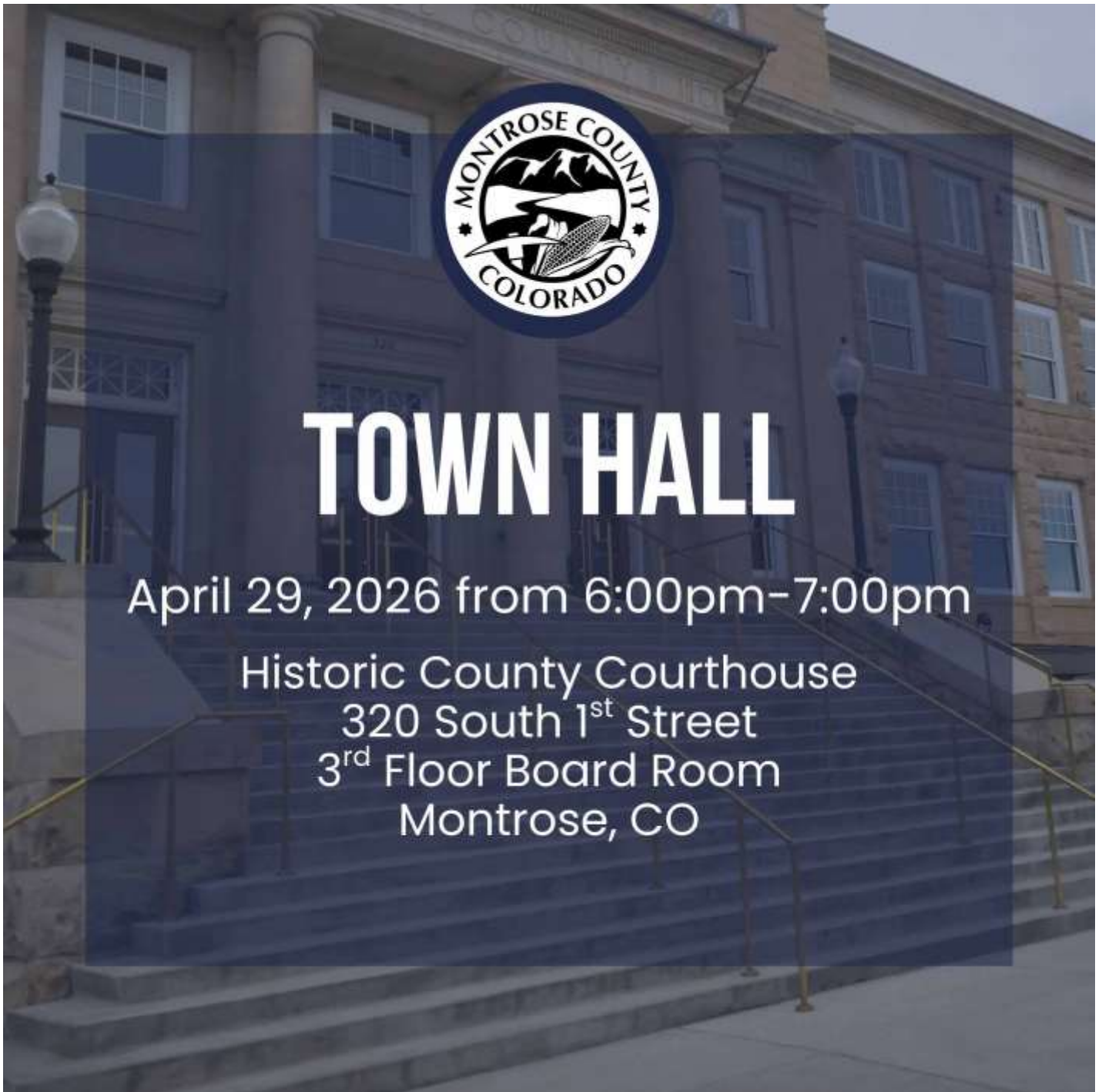
# OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

## THE POSSIBILITY OF A NEW CITY MANAGER IS AT HAND

*Editor:*

The results of the recent city election were a mixture of bad, good, and really good news. The bad news was that approximately two thirds of registered Montrose voters failed to exercise their right and responsible to vote!! The good news was that three good independent conservatives were elected, who will be immune to the manipulation and intimidation that has existed for twelve years by City Administration. The REALLY GOOD NEWS is that for the first time in all those years the possibility of a new City Manager is at hand.

*Dee Laird, Montrose*



40 acre parcel

FOR SALE

18858 Rocky Road Trail

\$188,000

MLS # 832528



Take a look at this prime 40 (-+) acre parcel with cinematic views of the San Juans, Cimarrons, Grand Mesa and Montrose. The NW corner of this unique parcel is at the corner of Paradox and Rocky Road Trail. DMEA is at the lot line and you'll notice a couple great building sights. This parcel extends to Spring Creek Canyon, (what a view) and Old Paradox Trail crosses the NW corner.

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# REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

## JOIN US FOR OUR TOWN HALL!

### Montrose Board of County Commissioners

MONTROSE-We're excited to invite you to an upcoming Town Hall on April 29 from 6pm-7pm. This is your chance to connect, ask questions, and share your ideas directly with your Board of County Commissioners.

The event will be structured to give you the best opportunity to participate:

-30 minutes of open Q&A

-30 minutes of direct, informal interaction with Commissioners

Whether you have concerns, suggestions, or simply want to meet the people serving your community, we encourage you to attend. Your input helps shape the future of our community, and we want to hear from you.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Location: Historic Montrose County Courthouse, 320 S. 1st Street, BOCC Board Room on 3rd floor, Montrose, CO 81401

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# REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

## HOPEWEST NURSE NAMED FINALIST FOR PRESTIGIOUS COLORADO NIGHTINGALE AWARD



**Lindsay Kelly, LPN at HopeWest in Montrose, has been named a finalist for the prestigious Nightingale Award, Colorado's highest honor recognizing excellence in nursing. Courtesy photo.**

which will be held on May 16, 2026, in Denver.

Community Nursing LPN: Exceptional Achievements in Nursing is the category in which she was nominated. Kelly has been a nurse for 6 years, touching the lives of countless individuals and families in the community through her compassionate care.

"Both HopeWest finalists, Crystal and Lindsay, are so deserving to have their names listed

among the many outstanding nurses in our communities," said Meghan Martin, Vice President of Clinical Practice at HopeWest. "Licensed Practical Nurses are an essential part of providing exceptional care to patients and families. At HopeWest, we truly value the unique role LPNs play in strengthening our care teams. This award reflects that impact, and we are proud to recognize the dedica-

tion and excellence demonstrated by both nominees." Kelly has a kindness that doesn't go unnoticed. She is known throughout HopeWest for being a team player, someone who is always willing to jump in to help her community. Because of her, HopeWest nurses are inspired to lead with compassion and selflessness. Her commitment to providing exceptional care directly supports HopeWest's mission to profoundly change the experience of aging, illness, and grief—one family at a time.

"I am completely honored and humbled to receive this award," said Kelly. "It is truly a highlight of my professional career. To be recognized in this way by my peers and such incredible nurse leaders means a lot. I love what I do and the people I serve." *Founded in 1885, the Nightingale Award honors Colorado nurses who best exemplify the philosophy and practice of Florence Nightingale, a 19th century nursing pioneer. The award is promoted through the Colorado Nurses Foundation. For more information about the Western Colorado Nightingale Awards, please contact Meghan Martin at (970) 683-4924.*

GRAND JUNCTION-At the Western Colorado Nightingale event held this past Saturday in Grand Junction. Kelly was selected from a distinguished group of 59 nominees and honorees to receive the 2026 Luminary Award for the Colorado Western Region. She is one of two nurses from HopeWest out of only 12 individuals regionally chosen to advance to the 2026 Nightingale Luminary Awards Banquet,

among the many outstanding nurses in our communities," said Meghan Martin, Vice President of Clinical Practice at HopeWest. "Licensed Practical Nurses are an essential part of providing exceptional care to patients and families. At HopeWest, we truly value the unique role LPNs play in strengthening our care teams. This award reflects that impact, and we are proud to recognize the dedica-

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# OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

## WILL MONTROSE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT CLOSE POMONA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL?

### Editor:

Several of us attended the April 14 School Board meeting and, thankfully, the agenda item for the Superintendent's Report was moved up before Community Input, otherwise I (and many others) would have missed the desired plan to potentially close Pomona Elementary and have its students absorbed into the surrounding elementary schools.

The demographer, Shannon Bingham, who created the survey that has caused much upheaval, along with Mr. Pavlich and Ms. Imus spoke about how closing Pomona (or Northside) would solve some of the financial problems our District is facing due to declining enrollment and decreased government funding. The red flags were numerous. Let me elaborate.

1. It was stated that over the last ten years, enrollment has decreased by 384 students. Current enrollment is 5,876. Declining enrollment was blamed on lower birthrate. That may be partially true, but the fact is parents have been withdrawing their children from MCSD and either home schooling or sending them to a private school.

2. Mr. Pavlich, representing the District, predicted an enrollment estimate showing a loss of 150 students of the 200 projected for Montrose Classical Academy (MCA). Ms. Imus spoke about losing students "from the district." Now wait a minute! MCA isn't open until 2026 Fall semester so they haven't taken anyone from the "regular" schools, and so far most of those enrolled are from home schooling families. MCA might begin their year with 50+ students, and to use them as a viable reason for declining enrollment is over the top. Incidentally, the way MCA was spoken about made it seem they were not a District school (which they are), and what was left out was the fact that out of \$12,001/student received by the State, the District will receive 5% of those mon-

ies that are withheld from MCA earmarked for administrative costs.

3. When asked by the Board what would happen to the Pomona property, Mr. Pavlich replied that it would be "repurposed," and that Peak Academy would use the building. If the Pomona property is not to be sold, then the building expenses would stay the same for the District, so why make the students be incorporated into other schools if this is the case? Will the Peak Academy building be sold? Is it possible to have Peak and Pomona Elementary use the same building?

4. Traditionally, every Fall semester the large majority of new students are kindergartners. All previous grades move up. If MCA's kindergarten has 15 students this year, it won't affect the rest of the schools very much. As I mentioned before, as of this writing, most of the students enrolled are from home school families, so actually MCA is bringing new students into the District.

4. Dr. Stephenson said that MCSD was "not in a financial crisis." Why, then, are we even looking to close any school? Maybe we wouldn't be in a financial crisis if over a million dollars hadn't been spent on an architectural firm to design a new high school. Why did the District purchase the Field House for \$4,000,000 just approved in February if enrollment and birth rates are declining; not to mention the Superintendent's overblown salary which is 31% higher than the average Colorado superintendent's salary (approximately \$235,000)?

5. The money per student was said to either remain flat or have around a \$400/student increase. It was implied that it would most likely remain flat. However, there is an education bill introduced in January that is under consideration. All signs indicate that this bill would increase school funding

[[coloradonewsline.com/2026/04/16/](http://coloradonewsline.com/2026/04/16/)

[colorado-legislature-approves-state-budget/](http://colorado-legislature-approves-state-budget/)].

6. Mr. Pavlich commented that the last ten years, the District has been in good financial shape. In light of declining enrollment, why didn't MCSD put monies aside seeing this demographic downward trend?

Dr. Stephenson is an employee of the Board and should submit to them, not undermine them. Remember that the survey was not submitted for Board approval; many in the community wrongly assume that it was. The Board President told Dr. Stephenson not to send out the survey, but she did anyway. The Board should have been fully informed and in agreement with the distribution of this information prior to alarming the community with a proposed solution that would impact teachers, students and families so significantly.

Dr. Stephenson has planned meetings with each school that will be impacted by this potential closure. The community needs to be prepared with the facts so they can get meaningful answers based on real data, and be fully aware of potential options for addressing the actual shortfall, if any. Remember, the Board has NOT approved moving forward with any closure, and you can be sure that they will scrutinize the facts before they make any decision. Feel free to email the Board members of your concerns [<https://montrose.esvbeta.com/BoardMembers.aspx>]. Come to the April 28 meeting at 6:30 PM at the School District Offices. Also, you can watch last Tuesday's Board meeting on YouTube; there are two parts [ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZYq0QAAGTk4> & <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFXGtQwUiv0> ].

*Leah Vandersluis, Montrose  
Montrose, CO*



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# RED HAWKS BASEBALL DROPS PAIR: GJ TIGERS 14, RED HAWKS From pg 1

## GR. JCT TIGERS 10, RED HAWKS 4

The Montrose Red Hawks hit the road on Friday and lost, once again, to the Grand Junction Tiger--this time by a score of 10 to 4. The Red Hawks and the Tigers played very even baseball through the first inning as the Red Hawks led 4-2 when the roof collapsed in the sixth inning. The Red Hawks pushed across four

runs in their half of the fifth inning and then watched in dismay as the Tigers scored eight runs in their half of the seventh, putting the game out of reach.

The Red Hawks saw their bats come alive as they put 12 base hits on the board as the plated four runs. Chazz Miller led the hit parade with three base knocks including a triple. Other multiple hitters includ-

ed Trevor Hatch, Chase Gleason, and Conner Jennings. The Red Hawks were issued one base on balls and struck out eight times. The most telling statistic was the twelve Red Hawks who were stranded on the base paths.

The Red Hawks' Ryan Pankey allowed four runs on three hits in his one inning of pitching. Asher Buehrle pitched the final five innings, allowing six runs on nine base hits.

The Red Hawks season record dropped to seven wins against nine losses overall and 1-3 in league action. Next up for the Red Hawks will be a Tuesday affair vs the Palisade Bull Dogs here at the Red Hawks ball yard. First pitch is scheduled for 4PM.

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## MHS CLASS of 1976 REUNION

*Special to the Mirror*

MONTROSE-The Montrose High School Class of 1976 will be holding a 50th class reunion the first weekend of June 2026. Festivities will start Friday, June 5th at the Cerise Park Pavilion at 5 pm to include the free concert in the park that evening. Saturday, June 6th will start at 5:00 pm at the Carver Farm - \$22 includes BBQ dinner, water, lemonade & tea.

Both events allow for bringing your own beverage but NO hard liquor or glass containers!

We invite members of other MHS classes, former faculty and staff members to join us on Friday evening.

Contact us at email: [montrose-high1976@gmail.com](mailto:montrose-high1976@gmail.com) or Facebook: 76 Reunion Page for more information.

Pass the news on to your friends!





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# REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

## IMAGING AT RIVER LANDING OFFERS LOWER-COST, CONVENIENT X-RAY SERVICES *Outpatient imaging center features advanced technology and reduced out-of-pocket costs*

*Special to the Mirror*

MONTROSE – Imaging at River Landing, located in the Ambulatory Care Center, provides a more affordable and convenient option for patients needing X-rays. This option is ideal for routine or outpatient X-rays ordered by a provider.

The imaging center, located at 3330 S. Rio Grande Ave., offers lower out-of-pocket costs than imaging performed at the main hospital campus.

In addition to cost savings, the River Landing location offers convenient access, easy parking, and shorter visit times. Dedicated admissions staff for medical imaging help streamline the process, and patients are not competing with inpatient or emergency department cases.

“Our goal is to make high-quality X-ray services more accessible for our community,” said Chelsie Kulkan, supervisor of medical imaging at Montrose Regional Health. “In a dedicated outpatient setting, we can reduce wait times, lower costs, and provide a more efficient experience.”

The center also features advanced imaging technology designed to deliver fast, accurate results. The Ambulatory Care Center is equipped with the Canon Medical Systems OMNERA 500A auto-positioning digital radiographic system, which enhances image quality while using lower doses of radiation.

To schedule an X-ray at Imaging at River Landing, call 970-497-5976. Patients may also walk in with a provider’s order Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. To learn more about Montrose Regional Health’s imaging services, visit [montrosehealth.com/imaging](http://montrosehealth.com/imaging).



*Montrose Regional Health Courtesy Photo.*

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# COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

## WOMEN'S GIVING CLUB TO MEET MAY 7 AT THE BRIDGES

*Special to the Mirror*

MONTROSE-The next meeting for the Women's Giving Club will be on Thursday, May 7 at 5:30 PM at the Bridges Golf and Country Club. All women are welcome to attend, whether you're a returning member or joining us for the first time. New attendees always encouraged. We hope to see you there. For more information, please contact: [Givingclubofmontrose@gmail.com](mailto:Givingclubofmontrose@gmail.com).

### *Proper Disposal Prevents Unnecessary Health Risks*

**National Drug Take Back Day**  
Drug Enforcement Agency along with the Montrose County Sheriff's Office

**WHEN:** Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup>  
**WHERE:** Montrose County Sheriff's Office  
1200 N. Grand Ave - Montrose  
**TIME:** 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

**NATIONAL DRUG TAKE BACK DAY**

The Montrose County Sheriff's Office urges everyone to properly dispose of expired prescription and unused medications. With the assistance of volunteers from the Montrose County Neighborhood Watch, a free, safe, and convenient drive-through station will be set up at the Sheriff's Office at 1200 N Grand Avenue in Montrose on Saturday, April 25- 2026, for your convenience.

According to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, medications stored at home are a leading source of nonmedical use, particularly among young people. As a community, we can do our part to prevent potential misuse of medications, protect our children and pets from accidental ingestion and protect our water systems by offering a safer way to dispose of drugs. Flushing medications into the sewer system or throwing them out with the garbage can release pharmaceutical compounds that can contaminate our rivers and groundwater. Wastewater treatment plants do not fully remove them, and these compounds can disrupt aquatic ecosystems and may eventually have an impact on the quality of our drinking water.

Let's work together to keep Montrose County safe. **ACCEPTABLE** medications include opioids, and other controlled substances, empty inhalers, unused prescription creams and patches can be kept in original containers or loose in a bag. **REMOVE** personal information from prescription labels. Liquids (like cough syrup) must remain sealed in original containers. **Items NOT ACCEPTED:** aerosols, filled or partially filled inhalers, illicit drugs, syringes or injectables, e-cigarettes, vape pens devices with non-removable batteries, intravenous (IV) solutions. Call MCSO 970-252-4023 if you have questions.

Sieglinde Carpenter, MCSO NW Communication Coordinator

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# REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

## **GEOHERMAL PROJECT GETS FUNDING TO DRILL TEST WELLS** *The Project Could Potentially Produce 20-80 MW of Clean Renewable Energy*

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-CCLMontrose.org wants to report that the Colorado Energy Office just awarded \$306,000 to an energy company to investigate the viability of their geothermal wells in Western Colorado. The project will drill wells 9-11,000 feet deep accessing high temperature sites that could produce enough heat that would be converted to electricity through steam turbines. The project proponents want to supply 20-80 MW of electricity carried by Tri-State's 245 Volt lines to the grid and to homes within Ouray, San Miguel and Montrose Counties.

This is an exciting energy project that may produce abundant clean, renewable energy without impacting a large area like solar projects do. Hot water is accessed via vertical wells with pumps deep in the ground. The surface area impacted could be in terms of 10's of acres instead of 100's of acres. This is an example of the State's 'Beneath Your Feet' geothermal program aimed at advancing geothermal technology in the Mountain West.

Our State has long term goals to have 100% renewable energy powering our electric lines. Geothermal is a step in that direction. Geothermal has worked well for Colorado Mesa Universities campus saving the college millions of dollars. We are in a geothermal hotspot here in western Colorado so as long as there are no long term negative effects of geothermal CCLMontrose.Org will support it along with solar, and wind.

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# OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

## FACTS, NOT FICTION: STANDING FOR TRANSPARENCY

*Editor:*

The First Amendment guarantees every American the right to voice their opinion. With that right comes responsibility. Even so, it is a right that must be protected at all costs, even when we disagree.

I believe the First Amendment is a critical cornerstone of our Republic. I welcome criticism and dialogue, as that is how we grow and find common ground.

Last week, I became aware of an op-ed by Mr. William Babbel submitted to the “other paper”. Before addressing it, I want to thank Mr. Babbel for his service to our country and our community.

### **The Op-Ed That Sparked the Conversation**

*“A sad time in Montrose*

*It is a sad time in the City of Montrose; it's called Badagliacco, city councilman. Did you people forget all the trash and lies he published frequently trying to defend his friend, the RECALLED county supervisor (commissioner)? Everything Badagliacco wrote was offensive to good citizens of this city and you elected him to run your city?*

*William Babbel”*

The column is short, pointed, inflammatory, and condescending. It levels sweeping accusations that I publish “trash and lies”, accusations made without a single example, quote, or verifiable fact.

### **Why the Misunderstanding?**

Mr. Babbel appears to have based his critique solely on articles written by a certain “publisher” in the “other paper”. I suspect he may not see this response, as his op-ed suggests he primarily reads that publication. Those pieces contained inaccuracies and were slanted to fit a specific narrative that did not reflect the full content of my original articles.

Had Mr. Babbel read the originals published in the *Montrose Mirror*, *Rocky Mountain Voice*, or the *Colorado DOGE Report* (codogereport.com), he may have seen a more complete and balanced picture. As my articles openly addressed both my agreements and disagreements with former County Commissioner Mijares.

### **Policy Support, Not Personal Loyalty**

I supported Commissioner Mijares on several important **policy issues**. These included **greater fiscal transparency in county budgets, responsible spending to avoid waste, and common-sense governance** that puts Montrose residents first, rather than special interests. Those principles remain central to my service on City Council.

At the same time, I did not endorse Commissioner Mijares’ tactics. In multiple articles, I directly criticized him for allowing ego and interpersonal conflicts to influence public decisions.

I stated clearly that **public service is no place for ego**. I even conveyed this message to him privately and encouraged him to resign rather than subject Montrose residents to a recall process.

Support for sound policy does not require blind allegiance to any individual’s style. Regular readers of my writing understand this distinction. However, Mr. Babbel’s op-ed ignored it.

For example, in my November 5, 2025, article in the *Rocky Mountain Voice* titled **“A Conservative Tide in Montrose County Education, Tempered by a Disturbing Underbelly,”** I noted that the recall served as a caution regarding leadership style and that Commissioner Mijares could have benefited from stronger interpersonal skills. Several other articles in the Mont-

rose County archives on codogereport.com express similar sentiments.

### **Facts Backed by References**

Unlike typical opinion pieces built on assertions alone, virtually every article I write includes verifiable references. Readers can review the budgets, meeting minutes, public records, and official statements themselves. This commitment to evidence-based commentary sets responsible writing apart from empty attacks. Mr. Babbel’s letter, and similar pieces from “the publisher”, offered no such proof, relying instead on ad hominem attacks.

### **Accountability**

On April 7, 2026, Montrose voters elected myself and two others to the City Council because they want leaders focused on transparency, fiscal discipline, and genuine service. I

take that responsibility seriously. On the City Council, **I will continue championing the openness and accountability I have always defended, while rejecting any approach rooted in ego, chaos, or division.**

Public office demands humility and respect for the people we serve. Our real work begins now. Residents can expect clear communication grounded in facts, not rhetoric. Montrose has spoken at the ballot box. Together, we will build a local government that earns trust through action and accountability.

**Michael J. Badagliacco, “MJB”**

**Michael is a father of five, grandfather of three, and recently elected to the Montrose Colorado City Council. He is also the editor-in-chief of USALibertyReport.com and remains enamored by the genius of the Constitution.**



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# RE-1J HEARS PRESENTATION ON POSSIBLE SCHOOL 'MERGERS'

## From pg 1

Session to the end of the meeting.

Hovde said, "We are going to be hearing a lot of information tonight...I just feel we need all of that information before we get to other information...I just want to support transparency, and I want the community to be involved."

The Board engaged in discussion, with several voicing their thoughts on the proposed change.

Board President Neisha Balleck said that she would like the agenda to remain as written due to the length of the Superintendent's Reports, with the Executive Session prior to the Superintendent's Report. "...We have the overflow room for people to go to, so they don't have to go outside if they don't want to go to their cars..."

"Madame President, I guess if things are timed, we shouldn't have a two-and-a-half hour Superintendent's report or President's Report. I really want to hear what they have to say earlier rather than later," Hovde said.

The Board voted four to three in support of Hovde's motion, with Balleck, Scarborough, and Valerio voting to deny.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The board voted to approve the amended agenda.

### STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Teacher Amber Bray introduced students from the Peak Virtual Academy Pursuit of Purpose/ Homegrown Pathways Class, to talk about their experiences with the Spark Lab program, a business class that helps students take plans from ideas to action. The class was called "The Pursuit of Purpose." Said Bray, "...Students dove into their passions, turning them into ideas for clubs, projects, and businesses." Students also received seed funding for their projects.

PEAK Senior Amber Chenoweth spoke about her idea for a crochet club, which was successful in generating interest and drawing participation. A student named Jasper founded a business to rent chicken coops. Student Dina Celak created a workshop to explore themes and arts challenges, and Student Gus Bray created a mobile skate shop. A student named Rebecca created an animated series with her own



*Shannon Bingham of Western Demographics, Inc presented information on Budget, Demographics, and Efficiency, with a series of informational slides. Meeting Screenshot.*

characters, stories, and designs. She plans to use her funding to hire voice actors for the series.

Next, "Retired" Olathe Middle/High School Teacher Kari Keller introduced two sophomores from the Olathe Middle High School History Club. One student, Alejandro, said that he has learned how to differentiate primary sources from secondary sources, how to create annotated bibliographies, and has learned research skills and analysis. The other student, Sawyer McCall, said that the theme this year was Revolution, Reaction and Reform. McCall created a project about Fashion Designer Christian Dior, who revolutionized the fashion industry. Sawyer asked for a chair, in which he sat to perform the introduction to his project in the persona of Dior on the eve of his Fashion Show of Feb. 12, 1947. It was a riveting performance that drew a round of applause from those present at the meeting.

### COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND STAFF RECOGNITION

Altrusa Apple Award Winners were Lynette Palmer of Montrose High School, Kyle Piatt of Olathe Middle School, and Dani Brew of Olathe High School.

Recent donations include:

-Pomona Brewing Inc donated \$200 designated for Special Olympics

- Chow Down Pet Supplies donated \$100 designated for Special Olympics
  - Anytime Fitness donated \$250 designated for Special Olympics
  - Guild Mortgage donated \$250 designated for Special Olympics
  - Denise Dever donated \$100 designated for Special Olympics
  - James Benny donated \$50 designated for Special Olympics
- Recent grants include:
- The Gunnison Basin Roundtable Public Education, Participation, and Outreach Program awarded an Adobe Green Wall Project Grant in the amount of \$1,350 to Lisa Franks, MHS Ag Program.
  - The Montrose County School District has been awarded a Justice Necessary Menstrual Product Grant valued at \$16,772.

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Re-1J Board President Neisha Balleck discussed the recent Board Retreat at the Grove on March 26. "We had about four hours, and we focused on revving up. Thanks to Dr. Stephenson for facilitating...our board norms and our values. We had Mr. John Graham facilitate our goals...we haven't gotten through all of our goals yet, but he has said that he would come back and help us finish our goals..."

Balleck discussed the Board's core values,

## RE-1J HEARS PRESENTATION ON POSSIBLE SCHOOL 'MERGERS' From previous pg

which are included in the agenda packet.

### SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Carrie Stephenson introduced Demographer Shannon Bingham of Western Demographics, Inc, who discussed the [Budget, Demographics, and Efficiency](#) and presented a series of [informational slides](#) for the Board, all of which are included in the agenda packet.

Also included in the packet are the [results from a survey](#) that was distributed by Stephenson to all families with students currently enrolled in local schools. There were 840 responses to the survey – 830 to the English version, ten to the Spanish version.

Among the factors that will impact the school district's finances are declining enrollment, uncertain state funding, the release of Vista Charter School, and the creation of the Montrose Classical Academy, according to the presentation.

Bingham also noted that over the last 10 years, enrollment has decreased by 384 students, mostly at the elementary level. During the next ten years, enrollment could decline by as much as 600 students. [Active scenarios](#) being considered are the "mergers" of Northside Elementary and Pomona Elementary schools into adjacent schools.

Board President Neisha Balleck said that the Board has not yet made a decision.

### FINANCIAL REPORT

Re-1J Finance Director Emily Imus discussed the mechanics of school funding, the state budget picture (\$1.5B deficit at the State level), RE-1J's 2027 Budget, enrollment projections, and anticipated funding from the state. "The intent of our planning efforts is to be fiscally responsible based on what we know now," Imus said.

RE-1J Executive Director of Operations James Pavlich spoke about the operational challenges facing the district. Superintendent Carrie Stephenson said that there is time for the board to ask questions and continue to explore alternatives. "...We need some guidance to be able to determine budget priorities and the direction that we will move in the next couple of months in order to meet the budget timeline..."

"It's a lot to absorb," District F Director Jody Hovde said.

"We have no time to plan really, for the next school year," said District E Director Tiffany Vincent.

The Board took a five-minute recess.

Upon returning, the Board voted to move Item J, Board authorization of independent third-party investigation related to employee grievances at Olathe Elementary School, to follow the Executive Session.

### COMMUNITY INPUT

First to speak was Kristal Benson, who said that she has proudly taught at Olathe Elementary School for 25 years. "...While I have seen many changes under four different administrators, I have never been more certain that OES is the best place to work." Test scores are higher than ever before under Principal Jennifer Hesse, she said. "Beyond the data, it's about our common purpose, our kids.

"I grew up there, I live there, it is my home...and I am very passionate about our school. As teachers we help our kids to communicate well and productively, and Mrs. Hesse models this daily with her open-door policy. Even when we don't agree we still have respectful conversations and negotiate solutions which keep us focused on what matters, the kids." Benson said, "My hope is that this board will take note of all the positive changes that have occurred at our school in the past three years. I urge you to support our leadership and allow us to continue on our mission to meet our kids' needs."

Melissa Cary spoke, noting that she is a Fourth Grade Teacher at Olathe Elementary School.

"I'm here to mention something that can't be measured on a spread sheet but is felt every single day at our building, our school climate. Over the past two years I have seen a school culture that is supportive, collaborative, and focused on what matters most—our kids," Cary said. "Staff feel valued, heard, and motivated to do their best work. That kind of environment doesn't happen by accident. It comes from leadership that is present, consistent, and genuinely invested in both students and teachers. Our principal has created a space where teachers want to stay. They want to grow. And they want to give all to their students.

Cary said, "Morale in school directly im-

pacts student success. And when teachers feel support, students thrive, and I see that in my classroom every day. Times of uncertainty like the one we're in now, can quickly affect that climate. Where leadership is questioned or destabilized, it creates anxiety among staff, which reaches our kids.

"Stability matters, trust matters, and right now those things are at risk," Cary said.

"Our school deserves decisions rooted in transparency, integrity, and what is best for our students—not influenced by agendas that take away from the mission. I'm not here to speak on politics or decisions made behind closed doors, I'm here to share the reality inside our school halls. From my experience, our Principal has been a positive force in building a healthy, effective, wonderful, learning environment."

Leah Vandersluis spoke. "...I want to address the issue of this survey that was sent out. When I heard about it, I first of all, wondered why I didn't get one, because I am a taxpayer, I pay my property tax every year and I know a big chunk of that goes to the district.

"But secondly, I reached out to the board president and asked her about it, and she told me that it was not approved by the board, that it wasn't okayed by the Board to go out. And I saw a lot of reaction--of fear, consternation--from people on the staff...and it really caused a lot of concern, and depression in a lot of cases. And people were kind of freaking out, and so I just want to emphasize the fact that it was not sent out by the Board's direction.

Vandersluis said, "...After listening to the presentation by Mr. Bingham, I was just concerned again about teachers losing their jobs...I don't want to see teachers lose their jobs. I just want to encourage the board to do what's right and what's best for this district. Keep up the good work."

Linda Gann spoke next. "Thank you for voting to move that presentation up, all of us in this room heard that as incredible information that we all needed, so thank you...at least twice since this board was sworn in, an executive session has been scheduled in the middle of board meetings. In practical terms, that discourages parents and community members

## RE-1J HEARS PRESENTATION ON POSSIBLE SCHOOL 'MERGERS' From previous pg

from attending, staying engaged, and participating in decisions that affect our schools...there is a straightforward solution. Schedule all executive sessions at the end of the meeting with the understanding that the Board will return only to adjourn. This is standard practice...this should not be controversial, it's a basic questions of process and respect...I appreciate the board's intent to strengthen transparency, protect student and family privacy, and ensure that all surveys align with the district's educational mission and values...my concern is with how broadly the resolution later in your meeting is written...surveys are regularly used to gather input on classroom experiences, school climate, safety, activities, transportation, parent engagement. Many of these are low risk and time sensitive, and staff need...to respond quickly to student and family needs...there is meaningful difference between high impact surveys that warrant Board oversight, and ones that support normal operations...i would encourage a more tiered approach...to your resolution that you are bringing up later this evening."

Joelle Ricalde spoke, saying that she is a parent of children who attend Northside, a PAC President, a district substitute and volunteer, and a Montrose High School graduate.

"I am here tonight because I am deeply concerned and frankly extremely frustrated by the way a potential school closure is being approach by all of you...using a survey to float a decision of this magnitude feels less like engagement and more like you're avoiding responsibility...our classrooms are already full...our teachers are stretched thin," Ricalde said. "Closing a school does not solve that problem, it only makes it worse....what's even more concerning is that while you're asking families to absorb the impact of these costs, there have been significant spending decisions that lack transparency and accountability...funds were allocated to create an architectural plan for a high school that was never approved. This is a major financial decision and there's been no return because it wasn't approved...how much

did those plans actually cost us? I would like to know...the continued discussion about improvements without any sort of acknowledgment of the failures made in the past is what really is not working here. Ricalde said, "...Closing a functional, needed elementary school? Why are we really not taking a hard, independent look at how funds are being managed internally? As a community we deserve transparency and we deserve accountability on your part. And most importantly, our children deserve better than to be impacted by decisions that may not have been made responsibly by all of you...sending out a survey before informing the parents is not working together...you work for this community...I strongly urge the board to pause this direction and consider bringing in an independent, forensic, financial review to evaluate spending, identify inefficiencies, and explore alternative solutions...as an accounting professional myself, I can say that when a business is struggling there's two options, work more or spend less—it's never closing the business."

### BOARD ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATES/BOARD COMMENTS

There were no Board Advisory Committee updates, but District E Director Tiffany Vincent said that she attended the trout release, "that was fun." She sat in on a class at Montrose High School (AP English), "that was fun," and toured Centennial Middle School.

"I am actually very, super impressed," Vincent said. "They have a great culture...it seems cohesive and like a great, great, happy environment...Mr. Thompson, shout out to him... got a big...robotics grant...that's the only team from the Western Slope that went to state, so it's a big deal."

District F Director Jody Hovde spoke. "I was at the trout thing too, I went to the third grade FFA thing--cool. Mrs. Franks, our FFA Teacher, does a great job of organizing that. She started it as a third grade teacher and has moved it forward. Today I went to the Construction Expo, it was fun watching kids...plus they were using power tools! It was like Whoa! It

was a really, really, positive experience...and I also was at Columbine and Montrose High."

District G Director Shane Daly was also at the Construction Expo, running a booth. "... We built planter boxes," he said. "It was a lot of fun...you could tell the kids that had run a drill and which ones hadn't. It was a lot of fun, getting to hang out with 'em..."

### OLD BUSINESS

The Board voted unanimously to approve Revisions to Board Policy IKF (Graduation Requirements) to clarify and update graduation credit expectations while maintaining the district's current total of 24.5 credits required to graduate. The primary change is the addition of a 0.5 credit Personal Financial Literacy requirement, which is embedded within the existing 3.0 required credits of Social Studies (no increase to total credits). This update also includes revised credit categories for Black Canyon High School aligned to program design under Principal Scot Brown's leadership to clarify credit categories required for BCHS graduation.

### CONSENT AGENDA

Consent Agenda items, including [Personnel Report](#), were unanimously approved.

### NEW BUSINESS

The Board discussed joining the Colorado Association of Charter School Authorizers (CACSA) to support ongoing Board and District understanding of best practices in charter school authorizing. The annual dues are \$200. The Board reached general consensus that it would be a good idea.

Because the Board of Education is looking at every possible way to reduce expenditures, Board President Neisha Balleck discussed the possibility of a potential Salary Reduction for the Superintendent, pursuant to Item 3 of the [Superintendent's Employment Contract](#), which states: "The DISTRICT shall advise the SUPERINTENDENT on or BEFORE April 1 of each year of this agreement if a reduction in salary is being considered for this following contract term. DISTRICT further agrees to not reduce the salary below the salary noted above without proof of financial hardship."

# RE-1J HEARS PRESENTATION ON POSSIBLE SCHOOL 'MERGERS' From previous pg

After some discussion, the board voted to table proposed [Resolution no. 06-2026](#), requiring Board of Education review and formal approval of all surveys and questionnaires distributed to students, parents, guardians, or the general public. Instead of a resolution, the matter will be reviewed as a possible Board Policy.

## ENROLLMENT REPORT

Finance Director Emily Imus presented the Enrollment Report. The [April Enrollment Report](#) is included in the meeting agenda packet. Current Enrollment is 5,824, a decrease of 27 students from the previous month.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board voted five to two to enter Executive Session with just the board and not the Superintendent and Secretary to the Board (as advised by Counsel), with Directors West and Hovde voting Nay.

## NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED

The Board discussed Item J, "Board authorization of independent third-party investigation related to employee grievances at Olathe Elementary School."

Board Vice President Ted Valerio moved to authorize an independent, third-party investigation into employee grievances at Olathe Elementary School and the District's response to those matters, and to further direct the Board President to work with Counsel to select a qualified independent investigator. The motion was unanimously approved.

## ADJOURNMENT

The Board of Education voted to adjourn.

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# REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

## SOLAR LEASES

### *Citizens Climate Lobby Montrose*

With the expiration of the federal tax credit for solar panel installation many people who want to put solar panels don't know where to turn. The cost of solar has come down dramatically over the last 10 years, but still the cost is out of the reach of many families. There is an easy way for homeowners to have solar panels and not have to pay the full upfront costs-solar leases.

Solar leases give the homeowner the chance to have solar panels on their roof, but without having to lay out a ton of cash. The solar company owns the equipment and is responsible to maintain it. The homeowner pays the solar company a fee each month that is typically less than the electrical costs they have been paying to their electric utility. No upfront costs.

The homeowner pays for the energy they use from the panels. Often times there is a power purchase agreement (PPA) where the costs for electricity are locked in often at a below market rate. One thing to watch for is if a company throws in an escalator- a term referring to raising the agreed costs for electricity. The escalator can raise the rates above your utilities rates.

Companies like Atlasta Solar also offer a pre-paid lease which is like buying the solar panels, but at a 20% discount. The lease can be paid in cash or through a loan which Atlasta can set up for you. The monthly payment is often times less than the owner was paying in electrical costs. The loans are usually structured with a buy out at 5- 7 years and then the homeowner owns the solar panels outright. A homeowner can also opt to lease the solar equipment for 25 years with PPA payments below the electric costs each month. With the panels in place the homeowner only pays for interconnection fees to DMEA (\$37.50/month) while they enjoy the production of free energy from their panels.

So if you were thinking of going solar, but missed out on the 30% Federal tax deduction these solar leases may just be what you are looking for- no upfront costs, below market electricity costs and somebody else maintains the system.



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# REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

## MONTROSE COUNTY ELECTIONS ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF 2026 "I VOTED" STICKER CONTEST

### *Special to the Mirror*

MONTROSE-Montrose County Elections is proud to announce the winners of its 2026 "I Voted" Sticker Contest, celebrating student creativity and civic pride throughout the community.

The contest invited students in grades 3 through 12, including public, private, and homeschooled students living in Montrose County, to design original "I Voted" stickers for the upcoming election season. One winner was selected from each of two divisions: grades 3–6 and grades 7–12. The winning designs will be printed and distributed at Voter Service and Polling Centers across Montrose County during the June 30, 2026 Primary Election and the November 3, 2026 General Election.

The contest generated strong participation from local students, showcasing artistic talent and enthusiasm for the democratic process. Forty-four entries were reviewed by staff from the Montrose County Clerk & Recorder's Office and other Montrose County Elected Offices, with final winners selected following the judging process.

Montrose County thanks all students who participated and helped highlight the importance of civic engagement in our community. All contest entries will be on display at the Montrose County Historic Courthouse in the BOCC Room through Friday, April 24 during business hours. Students who entered the contest are encouraged to stop by to see their artwork on display and pick up a prize.

"We were thrilled to see so many creative and thoughtful entries from students across Montrose County," said Tressa Guynes. "The 'I Voted' sticker is a visible symbol of participation in our elections, and these winning designs help celebrate the importance of every vote."

The winners of the 2026 contest are:

Grades 3–6 Division

1st Place: Jessalin Vigil

2nd Place: Ellie Safken

Honorable Mention: Ariadne Turtura

Grades 7–12 Division

1st Place: Aven Bauman

Honorable Mention: Hannah Greenfield



**The winners of the 2026 contest are:**  
**Grades 3–6 Division 1st Place: Jessalin Vigil; 2nd Place: Ellie Safken; Honorable Mention: Ariadne Turtura; Grades 7–12 Division; 1st Place: Aven Bauman; Honorable Mention: Hannah Greenfield. Also pictured is Montrose County Clerk and Recorder Tressa Guynes. Photo by B. Switzer.**



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# SHOOTIN' THE BREEZE WITH THE MHS TRAP SHOOTING TEAM!

By Jack Switzer

MONTROSE-It was a perfect Sunday afternoon, a gentle breeze was carrying the sounds of small shotgun booms across the rolling mesas.

I watched with respect and curiosity as the co-ed MHS Trapshooting Team participated in their first competition day of the season, Seniors and Freshmen alike standing beside each other waiting for their turn in the rotation.

If you are like me you might not know about trapshooting or its rules but it's pretty simple. A four and a quarter-inch clay disk is launched from a device in the trap house, a small box in the center of the range, and up to five shooters in five different positions take turns firing at the disk.

While I was talking to one of the two coaches, Trenton Wise, he stressed the club's focus on safety and the proper procedures that the team follows meticulously, while also making sure there's room for everyone to learn and have fun. Their other coach is Travis Fletcher.

According to the USA Clay Target League there hasn't been a single reported injury since the time of its founding in 2001; for a national organization that's pretty impressive!

I watched the five shooters at the front of the range closely, and couldn't find anything wrong with their safety conduct, it seemed like second nature to them.

As most of the team was competing, I had the chance to talk to some of the students involved and learn how they feel about the club. One member said, "It's everything, It's what I do on my weekends, it's what I do to have fun." Another responded, "It's just nice to have something competitive to do." In a sport with no benchwarmers, everyone gets to compete and you don't have to be athletically gifted to be good.

The team has doubled in size since last year, where they also took second place at State, and it seems like that trend could continue next year as this group moves through competition. Their next competitive match will be Sunday, April 26, and each consecutive Sunday after until their state tournament on June 6 in Colorado Springs. The atmosphere with this group



*Above, members of the Montrose High School Trap Shooting Team practice on Sunday, April 19. Photo by Harry Switzer.*



*Team members include (not pictured in order) Uriah Bogart, Jacob Clowers, Cameron Culver, Emilio Eudave, Annalee Fletcher, Morgen Fletcher, Danika Gallegos, Caleb Horton, Reagan Jenkins, Holli Johnson, JD Johnson, Dillon Kay, Garrett Kay, Zachary Knight, Logan Kor, Maxwell Mullin, Talon Randall, Kyle Sanchez, Oliver Sanchez, Ezra Self, Morgan Smith, Jasper Vigil, and Easton Wise. Photo by Harry Switzer.*

felt laid back and easygoing; the kids were bantering while their teammates shot, and some of them were examining an antihill.

When a few separate members were

asked who on the team they thought was the best shot, they all started pointing at one other.

The Team now has a [Facebook Page](#) where you can learn more!

## OPINION/EDITORIAL: COMMENTARY

### THE MONTROSE COUNTY SHERIFF'S POSSE – NOT THE OLD WEST'S "POSSE" *Volunteers Looking for Adventure and Community Service are Wanted and Needed NOW!*

By David White

During a phone conversation with a senior member of the Montrose County Sheriff's Posse this past week, I found out that this local First Responder organization is in somewhat dire straits when it comes to manpower levels. We, as a community, need to help them and quickly! I'll explain.

As background, the concept of a posse dates back to the 1700s in the United States. Initially, sheriffs and marshals would deputize local citizens, such as ranchers and farmers, to help enforce the law and pursue criminals. Over time, the role of posses has adapted, but their fundamental purpose remains the same.

In general, Sheriff's Posse's perform various duties, including assisting in searches for missing persons; providing security at public events; conducting patrols in rural areas to assist law enforcement and supporting certified deputies in daily tasks as needed. The dedication of posse members is vital for community safety and the effective operation of sheriff's offices.

Locally, the Montrose County Sheriff's Posse (MCSP) provides voluntary, independent support to the Montrose County Sheriff's Office for Search & Rescue, Wildfire Suppression, Security, Community Service and other services in which the volunteers are trained, qualified and certified to perform. They have a state-of-the-art facility located on North Grand Avenue near the Montrose County Justice Center where they house equipment; have classrooms and training facilities for members of the Posse and much more.

Our Sheriff's Posse is comprised of dedicated individuals (both men and women) who have all been trained by professionals working with the Sheriff's Office and the Sheriff's Posse in various areas such as swift water rescue; first aid; CPR; fire suppression and fighting; search and rescue of missing or lost individuals and much more. It's an exciting and challenging volunteer opportunity for anyone with an adventurous spirit or just looking for a way to give back to our community. No experience is necessary! They'll teach you what you need to learn.

The Posse does not charge for their services, but they do rely on the generous contributions from our neighbors and fellow citizens through an annual fund drive to keep thriving.

To the point...***the MCSP is down to just 12 citizen volunteers!*** This isn't sustainable. In the last 7 months, they have had just **ONE (1) applicant** for a position with the Posse. They are, at a minimum, down by 5 positions and need your help...desperately.

On behalf of the MCSP, please consider joining the Posse or at least sharing this opportunity to give back to the community with family and friends.

Anyone interested in finding out more about the Posse can call them at 970-765-7033 or email the team at [info@mcsp.org](mailto:info@mcsp.org). They have a great website that you can also visit and find out more about the organization: <https://www.mcspi.org/>

Your help will ensure the ongoing success of the now 62-year-old Montrose County Sheriff's Posse. Let's keep this great organization on sound footing. With your help, we can do it.

***Mr. White is an active citizen & community leader as well as a business owner, entrepreneur, former Colorado Springs City Councilor and Montrose City Councilor as well as Montrose Mayor. He was a two-term Montrose County Commissioner and has served on many boards and commissions during his career. He was most recently the Interim Montrose County Manager. He & his wife are the parents of six children and have 10 grandchildren & a great grandchild.***



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# OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

## ONE BOARD, ONE COUNCIL, ONE LEGISLATOR AT A TIME

*Editor:*

While attending the Colorado Republican Assembly in April 2026, I reflected on how Colorado fell to the radical far left. A conversation with a friend came to mind. It described the precise mechanism the left uses to convert our Constitutional Republic into a social democracy, contrary to the vision of the founders.

The U.S. was founded as a Constitutional Republic with power rooted in local government, built from the bottom up rather than imposed from the top down. Although we look to the president for national leadership, the true foundation lies in town councils, school boards, and state legislatures.

Article IV, Section 4 of the United States Constitution guarantees to every state in the Union a Republican Form of Government. The 10th Amendment reinforces this by reserving powers to the states or the people. In Federalist Paper No. 10, James Madison explained the genius of this structure. He warned that a “*democracy becomes a spectacle of turbulence and contention, incompatible with personal security or the rights of property.*” A republic, by contrast, uses representation to control factions and protect liberty. The founders designed our system to prevent the hidden influence and incremental erosion we witness today.

### **The Progressive Era Shift to Nonpartisan Elections**

During the late 1890s through the 1920s, city elections began shifting to “nonpartisan”. Groups such as the National Municipal League, founded in 1894 promoted model charters that removed party labels from ballots. The stated goal was to combat big-city machines, corruption, and boss control.

On the surface the idea sounded reasonable. Remove politics from local government. Make it businesslike and efficient. In practice the change proved far more dangerous. It stripped away labels and concealed true intentions. Voters could no longer see at a glance whether a candidate aligned with one party or another. The public lost the ability to understand the agenda fully.

### **How and When the Change Spread**

The shift occurred gradually, city by city

and state by state.

Early experiments began around 1909 to 1912. By 1929 a majority of U.S. cities with populations over 30,000 used nonpartisan elections. By the 1950s more than 60 percent of municipalities nationwide had adopted the system. Today over 75 percent of U.S. municipalities hold nonpartisan elections for city and town councils.

School boards and many special-district boards followed the same pattern. Nonpartisan elections became the norm, now exceeding 90 percent, during the same drive to keep education and local services out of politics.

### **Colorado-Specific Context**

In Colorado, city and town council elections and most local boards have operated under nonpartisan rules for decades.

Denver adopted nonpartisan elections in its 1913 city charter as a Progressive reform against machine politics. Longmont’s charter made elections nonpartisan in 1961. State law has required school board elections to be nonpartisan since 1973. Even without party labels on the ballot, candidates often maintain party affiliations

### **The One-Sided Nature of Nonpartisanship**

What makes this pattern troubling is its one-sided effect. Today it is primarily the left that hides its affiliations behind the label of nonpartisanship. Conservatives remain happy and proud to display their partisan identity.

They run openly as Republicans supporting limited government, individual liberty, and the rule of law.

The radical left, by contrast, recognizes that its full agenda of higher taxes, expansive regulations, ideological indoctrination in schools, and the replacement of republican principles with pure majoritarian rule would face rejection if voters saw it clearly. So candidates run without labels. They advance under the radar. They win one board, one council, one school district at a time. Then they use those positions to advance the very changes the founders warned against.

### **Is This Nefarious or Much Ado About Nothing?**

Once in office these officials employ incre-

mentalism to undermine the fabric of our Republic. They replace the word “Republic” with “democracy” in everyday speech. The shift appears benign. It is not. Madison and the founders held strong views on this exact issue, expressed throughout the Federalist Papers and embedded in the Constitution. ***Democracy invites faction and tyranny of the majority.*** Our Republic was built to guard against it.

Stripping away labels hides true intentions. The practice is not accidental. It is strategic. The result is a slow, quiet erosion of the Constitutional Republic the founders envisioned. Local government was always meant to be the most transparent and accountable layer of our system. Nonpartisan elections have made it the opposite.

### **Restoring the Republic: One Board at a Time**

We must reverse this trend. Not through a grand federal decree or top-down mandates, but one board, one council, one legislator at a time. We must demand transparency in every local race. We must remind voters that the guarantee of a Republican Form of Government in Article IV, Section 4 is not a suggestion. It forms the foundation of our liberty. The 10th Amendment reserves real power to the people and their local representatives for a reason.

The Progressive Era reformers may have believed they were cleaning up government. In practice they opened the door to undetected infiltration. The left has exploited that opening for decades. The time has come to close it. Let every candidate declare their principles. Let every voter see the labels clearly. Let us restore the bottom-up Constitutional Republic our founders gave us.

***One board. One council. One legislator at a time.*** This is how we reclaim our country.

***Michael J. Badagliacco, MJB***

***Michael is a father of five, grandfather of three, and recently elected to the Montrose Colorado City Council. He is also the editor in chief of USALibertyReport.com and remains enamored by the genius of the Constitution.***



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# OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

## TO THE REPUBLICAN PARTY AND CITIZENS OF MONTROSE COUNTY

To the Republican party and citizens of Montrose County,  
I'm writing this because I don't want anyone wondering where I stand. I'm still with you.

The Montrose County Republican Central Committee appointed me to this seat. I don't forget that. I don't take it lightly. That's where I came from. I'm the same man you put here. Same values. Same beliefs. Same fight. What happened with my decision had nothing to do with Montrose County. After the state assembly, I went to dinner with my family. I went back to the motel room that night and I was fine with the outcome. I accepted it. Truth is, I was relieved it was over. I was ready to come home, get back to work, and move on. The next morning, I came down to the lobby.

There was a large group of delegates there waiting for me. Not a couple people. A large group. People who were on that floor. People who saw it for themselves. A lot of them from Montrose County.

I was told they had been there since 6 a.m. waiting to catch me. I came down around 9:30.

I walked in and they saw me. They called out, waved me over. Some had Pond hats, Pond shirts. I remember thinking, what are you all doing here, we just lost. I didn't know why they were there. They gathered around me, and that's when it started.

They told me what they saw on that floor. They talked about how things played out. They talked about how endorsements and pressure in the room influenced delegate votes. They had their own thoughts about

it, and they were not quiet about it. This wasn't coming from me. This was coming from them.

Then they asked me not to leave. I told them no.

I told them I was done. I told them I was going home. I said it over and over. They didn't go anywhere.

They stayed right there and they kept asking. They kept pushing. They kept telling me not to walk away. They begged me.

They asked me not to leave the fight. They asked me not to walk away from my values. They asked me not to leave them after what they had just watched.

Some of them were emotional. This wasn't small. They meant it. That went on for hours.

They were the ones who brought this path to me. They were the ones who told me about the Constitution Party. I had never even heard of it.

Before I made any decision, I started making phone calls.

My first call was to the chair of the Montrose County Republican Party.

Then I called PCPs. I called people I trust. People who know me. People who understand what I stand for and what this county stands for.

I didn't make one call. I made a lot of them.

Every single person I talked to understood it.

Every single one of them supported it. That's the truth.

So when I made the decision, it wasn't about chasing something. It wasn't about staying relevant. It wasn't about me.

This came from the people who were there. It came from what they saw. It

came from what they asked of me. And it was backed by the people here at home. I joined the Constitution Party. I didn't leave the values. I didn't leave the people. I didn't leave this fight.

If you take the time to look at what it is, you'll see it stands on the same foundation we've always believed in. The Declaration of Independence. The Constitution. The Bill of Rights. Limited government. Individual liberty. Local control. Read it for yourself.

You'll recognize it. I haven't changed.

I'm still a Republican in everything that counts.

And I want to say something about home. What happens at the state level is not what we have in Montrose County.

This county is strong.

The Montrose County Republican Party is strong.

The Montrose County Republican Central Committee is strong.

You've shown that. You flipped the school board. You've pushed the city in a better direction. That came from people here stepping up and doing the work.

I'm proud to stand with that.

I still support the Montrose County Republican Party.

I still support the Montrose County Republican Central Committee.

I still support the direction you're taking this county.

And I still support your local candidates. There's no divide here.

I'm still here.

I'm still with you.

Same guy. Same fight.  
With respect. Sean M. Pond



*And somehow, these little moments slip by.*



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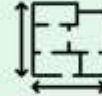
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# OPINION/EDITORIAL:LETTERS

## AI WILL MAKE DINOSAURS OUT OF THE TALKING HEADS



**Editor:**

The great divide between liberals and conservatives often boils down to what each side values most: form versus substance. Liberals typically excel at the mechanics of communication — proper grammar, spelling, and pronunciation. College and elite institutions heavily reward these skills, treating them as essential filters for intelligence and credibility. In the process, mental bandwidth gets consumed by polishing presentation, leaving less room for raw, original ideas or practical know-how. Graduates emerge highly skilled at conveying thoughts elegantly, critiquing others, and shaping nar-

ratives. This naturally funnels them into “conveyor” roles: media, news, education, academia, and bureaucracy, where they dominate public discourse. Conservatives and the “common doer,” by contrast, prioritize ideas and practical knowledge. They focus on what works in the real world — innovation, execution, and results. They may have limited patience (or need) for perfect linguistic polish, viewing it as secondary or even unimportant. Their strength lies in generating and applying ideas that move the world forward, often in trades, business, engineering, and everyday problem-solving. However, because they communicate less elegantly, their contributions are frequently dismissed as “dumb” or unsophisticated by those who judge primarily on style. This creates a self-reinforcing loop. The conveyors (mostly liberal) control the microphones and classrooms, rewarding form and marginalizing unpolished substance. The doers keep society functioning and progressing, yet rarely shape the story told about that progress. College can even convert practical minds into form-focused

liberals by enforcing linguistic standards that crowd out idea space. Now, enter the age of Grok and other AI. Suddenly the common man no longer needs to hire a retired English teacher (or spend years in college) to polish his raw ideas. AI handles grammar, spelling, pronunciation, structure, and elegant delivery instantly — freeing up mental energy for pure idea generation.

The filter is removed. The doer can now convey thoughts with the same professional polish as the elite conveyor, without sacrificing substance. No wonder there is growing fear of AI. It’s not just because it will displace many jobs — it will also make dinosaurs out of the talking heads, the polished conveyors, and the entire credentialed class whose main advantage was superior presentation. When anyone can express strong, practical ideas clearly and powerfully, the gatekeepers lose their monopoly on the public square. The idea explosion begins, and the old divide starts to crumble.

*Don Hemme (idea maker)*  
*(image and text created by xAI)*



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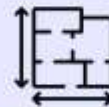
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# OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

## NO LOVE FOR AMERICA

*Editor:*

If we've learned nothing else the last fifteen years, we should at least clearly recognize the Democrat play book: Promise everything. Deliver nothing. Blame everyone else. While the election of NYC's mayor Mamdani will be a disaster for the city's residents, his implementation of socialism in NYC will have the benefit of showcasing absurd Democrat failures. Let's use Mamdani's plan for city-run grocery stores to illustrate that. Mamdani initially earmarked \$70 million to build three government grocery stores. It is now known that the first store will be massively more expensive (\$30 million) and years away (open date 2029).

For \$30 million, Whole Foods or Aldi could build ten private stores. Mamdani also must have missed the "for sale" listings of already operational groceries in Brooklyn for under \$2 million. Why spend \$30 million to build one small grocery store when you could just buy ten for less than \$20 million? Aside from being a big government debacle in the making, the laws of economics clearly show there is no way, except through subsidies that shift costs to taxpayers, for Mamdani's plan to reduce food costs. The grocery business is one of the most competitive, tightly run industries in this country, with an extremely low profit margin. Companies like Kroger, Walmart, and Target survive because they are relentlessly efficient in managing cost and competing to keep prices low. Industry average profit margins are only 1.5% - 2%, which means that even eliminating all profit would produce only marginal price reductions for consumers. The math doesn't change just because the sign on the door says "government."

So, how does a government store lower prices? It relies on government subsidies, which just means you are paying for it somewhere else, through taxes. A more serious consequence when the government starts selling food below cost is when privately owned businesses, including the bodegas and neighborhood markets, close – one by one. Like all good Marxists, Mamdani will ignore reality and tell you that all the other attempts "just didn't do it right. We will do it differently." That's kind

of the definition of insanity. This is the same Mamdani that wants to tax in a big way people with properties in New York that don't live in them full time. The mayor doesn't own any property in NYC, but his family owns a massive compound in Uganda which is fully staffed even though the family doesn't live their full time. Like their buddy Bernie Sanders, socialist Democrats aren't concerned about their own wealth – just the wealth of others.

Trump's presidency has clearly revealed how Democrats get away with their play-book of promising everything and delivering nothing. We now know the federal government was essentially a giant money laundering operation to fund the Democrat party and expand its power – using our taxpayer money. It is worth detailing that process. First, Democrats take control of a segment of our society – like day care centers, public employee unions, or "homelessness." They then pass laws to direct billions of your tax dollars to those entities.

They make sure there is no oversight of how the money is managed. They then siphon the money out of those entities and direct funds to groups that support Democrats. Those groups then send a portion of those funds to Democrats who write the laws that protect the entire scam. In the last two weeks, California Democrats have gone from "There is no fraud in California" to "There might be some fraud" to "We are on top of the fraud" to "We are now working on legislation to make it a crime to investigate fraud in California." In that same state, where 450 "hospices" had their payments blocked as a result of Nick Shirley's investigative journalism, not one hospice operator called to get their money back – nearly \$1 billion -- because they know they got caught ripping off taxpayers. Taxpayers lost \$9 billion in Minnesota to Medicaid fraud under Tim Walz. Every single Democrat on that state's House Rules Committee just voted to block any investigation into that massive theft.

Every week we see multiple examples of top Democrats doing crazy things, and you have to ask: How can anyone possibly want the Democrats who run states like California, Minnesota, and now Virginia, and cities

like NYC, Chicago, or Philadelphia to run this country? This week we saw Philadelphia's mayor Parker yell at her constituents over a new tax she wants on every ride-sharing journey. She wonders "how dare" the citizens and voters question how much she wants to take out of their pockets. This is the same mayor, who makes \$270,000 before perks, whose "leadership" led to the public school system facing a \$300-million deficit. The reality of socialism is also hitting Virginia, where they just increased property taxes by 21%, and funneled \$18 million of taxpayer money to the new governor's husband's company. Chicago's mayor Johnson called to defund the police, but spent \$30 million in tax dollars in 2025 on 150 cops for his personal security detail. In just a few months, 405 people have been shot in a war where innocent children and civilians are being murdered. This is Chicago – not Iran. California governor Newsom spent \$1.5 million from campaign funds to buy copies of his own book, which made up two-thirds of his sales. Ah yes, California. The state that is hemorrhaging residents to Republican run states. It is now giving free sex change operations to illegals. The state that tries to blame their wildly expensive gas – among the highest in the nation -- on those evil oil companies, but makes more per gallon of gas in taxes than the oil companies do in profit. This is the state whose leading Democrat candidate for governor was Eric Swalwell, until Democrats turned on him overnight when he became a risk to losing that important election. Prior to that, his sleeping with a Chinese spy while on intelligence committees didn't matter, nor did his being a sexual predator, which they were fully aware of for many years. The only thing that mattered was his impeccable credentials as a Russian collusion hoax perpetrator and his relentless lies and persecution of Trump. Democrats in 2026 have no solutions, no policies, no integrity, no sane leadership, no talent, no joy, and, most importantly, no love for America. That is becoming more and more clear as they slowly lose control of the narrative. You have to give them credit, though. They have successfully put lipstick on a pig for at least the last two decades.

*Ed Henrie, Montrose*



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# COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

## ROBERT E. BAILEY

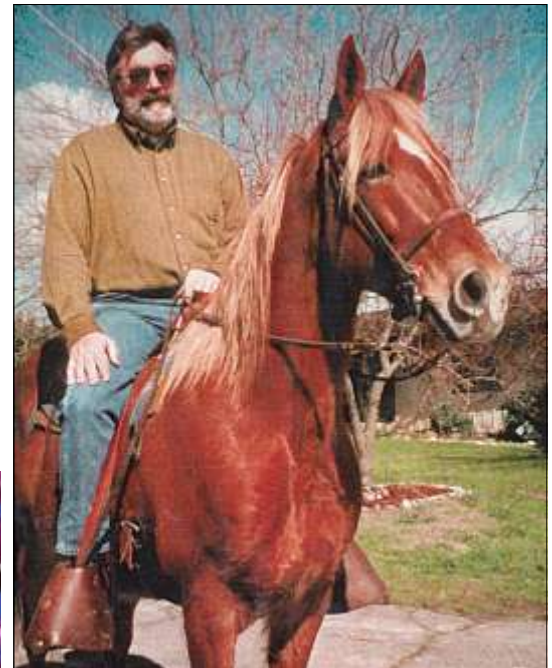
ROBERT E BAILEY, 82, of Montrose, passed away on March 25th, after a long battle with PSP, a rare neurological disease. Bob is survived by his spouse of 47 years, Frances Bailey.

Robert served his country with an honorable discharge from the United States Army, 14th Armed Cavalry for outstanding service on the U.S. - U.S.S.R Border in Western Germany.

He was an avid horse man, member of the Lariat Club, fisherman, DOW Volunteer, member of Montrose Gun Club, San Francisco 49-ner and Giants fan for life.

So many friends over the years knew and loved Bob. He was a wonderful and compassionate man with a great zest for life.

A graveside Celebration of Life will be held on April 22, 2026, at 11 am, at Grand View Cemetery in the Serenity Gardens.



## DAVID MAX HANNAH *January 18, 1944- April 13, 2026*

DAVID MAX HANNAH, 82 died peacefully on April 13, 2026. He was born on January 18, 1944 and lived most of his life in Texas before moving to Montrose in February, 2016.

He is survived by his wife of 9 years, Nancy Hannah; his sons Dr. John David Hannah and Steve Hannah; and his stepdaughters Stacey Clark and Amy Lunsford; and seven grandchildren.

Dave loved God, his family, horses, hiking, and camping in the mountains. He and Nancy traveled the world and enjoyed wonderful adventures together.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, April 25 at Grace Church at 10am. In lieu of flowers, Dave requested that donations be made to HopeWest for their loving care and Shepherd's Hand



ISSUE 569 April 20, 2026

# ART & SOL

## YOUR BRAIN ON NATURE - RESILIENCE



By Dr. Lauren Hall Ruddell, PhD.



*Greetings Mirrorites!*

OLATHE-I will be the first to admit that the current headlines are disturbing my otherwise calm, springtime mind. Any seasonal affective disorder symptoms are long gone, and the peppers in my greenhouse actually have tiny little peppers on them, thanks to the warmest March in our nation's history. Despite this welcome sight, international events are rattling my nerves these days.

While investigating the current work in my field in countries where universities are affected by war, I stumbled across a recent contribution to the scientific literature that really made me think. Although not a huge sample size, the location of the study participants caught my attention. It made me wonder about the state of my own resilience in the face of uncontroll-

able events.

University students in two Iranian universities, 302 in all, participated in the study about resiliency. The findings indicated that self-regulation had a marked positive direct effect on cognitive flexibility, and resilience. Similarly, cognitive flexibility by itself displayed a strong positive influence on resilience. If there was ever a student body in need of understanding the path to personal resilience, it's probably them.

I've talked about the role of time in restorative natural environments for improving coping skills and resilience before in this publication, but it's been a while, so a little review is probably warranted.

According to the American Psychological Association (APA), "resilience is the pro-

cess and outcome of successfully adapting to difficult or challenging life experiences, especially through mental, emotional, and behavioral flexibility and adjustment to external and internal demands." It is worth noting that resilience and coping have some overlap, but offer different behavioral outcomes. While coping manages stressful events by using cognitive and behavioral strategies, resilience refers to the adaptive capacity to recover from traumatic or stressful situations. One is immediate, the other is longer term.

Resiliency is a critical component of a life well-lived. Resilient people are described as enhanced internal locus of control, self-efficacy, happiness, life satisfaction, the ability to derive a sense of life meaning,

**Continued next pg**

# YOUR BRAIN ON NATURE - RESILIENCE From previous pg

the ability to foster social and communal interactions, and superior problem-solving skills. All of these items I feel abundantly in need of these days, so cognitive flexibility, self-regulation, and most importantly, resiliency, are super relevant to me and my friends and family right now.

Cambridge University Press notes that resilience in emergencies is the capacity to adapt, cope, and recover, driven by a perceived sense of control, social support, and active problem-solving. Building this capacity involves focusing on manageable actions, maintaining emotional awareness, and leveraging prior experience, which helps turn chaos into solvable challenges. All of these skills require practice and effort, and sometimes are not tremendously fun, interesting, or immediately rewarding. But in time, doing this important personal work changes the course of a person's life when the \*^% \$\$ Hits The Fan. So how will your inner resiliency professor rate your efforts when you are under duress? You can get an A on your resiliency assignment through several steps successfully managed.

**-Perceived Control (Internal Locus):** Resilient individuals believe they can influence outcomes despite the situation. They focus on what they can control, while acknowledging but not dwelling on what they can't.

**-Active Coping Mechanisms:** Resilient people often view emergencies as challenges to overcome, often adopting a "6 Ps" approach: Pause, Practice gratitude,

Plan, Protect, Practice self-compassion, and Prioritize connection. This is good practice throughout life, in good times and in bad.

**-Building the "7 Cs" of Resilience:** Developing competence, confidence, connection, character, contribution, coping, and control over time creates an effective personal emergency kit for high-stress situations.

This is admittedly a huge task, but much research shows that it's worth the effort. For instance, Bensimon (2012) found that military personnel with high resilience scores were more likely to recover swiftly and effectively from a traumatic experience, with less tendency to fall victim to PTSD. Similarly, Fletcher (2019) demonstrated that elite athletes with psychological resilience who experience a setback often exhibit superior subsequent performance later down the line. Qualitative research conducted by Lyu et al. (2020) suggested that developing resilience in nurses helps to reduce burnout and high turnover rates. You get the picture at this point, I'm sure. Cognitive flexibility is an important tool for achieving resilience in adversity.

Cognitive flexibility refers to the brain's ability to adapt and respond effectively to new information and to switch back and forth between varying concepts and procedures. Current research indicates that spending time in nature significantly boosts cognitive flexibility. EEG studies confirm that nature exposure enhances brain function by increasing alpha oscillations (associated with relaxation/

attention) and boosting functional connectivity. These brain changes, often appearing as reduced distress and increased Default Mode Network activity, show that restorative nature reduces cognitive fatigue and lowers rumination, particularly through viewing or walking in pleasing natural environments.

I've mentioned in previous articles that dosage matters when it comes to the beneficial effects of restorative environments. One fun memory device I've recently come across is referred to by nature-based therapy specialists as the **20-5-3 Rule**... a prescription of spending 20 minutes outside 3 times a week, 5 hours a month in semi-wild nature, and 3 days a year in wild nature for optimal mental restoration.

I think this is too little, personally, but it's better than nothing for increasing resiliency. My personal recommendation is 150 minutes per week at least in restorative environments of some sort, 8 hours per month in semi-wild nature, and 8 days in the wild yearly for urban dwellers who really are freaking out about our current news headlines.

Aren't we Western Slope dwellers lucky that we can crank up our resiliency with ease by immersing ourselves in so many immediately accessible, highly restorative natural settings? I think so, and so I am going outside this lovely morning to reduce my stress and inject my cortex with improved resiliency to help cope with whatever comes next this year.

*Stay frosty,  
The Mindful Naturalist*



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Continued next pg

# COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

## MONTROSE REGIONAL HEALTH FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES SAN JUAN FUND SCHOLARSHIP FOR 2026 *Scholarships available for students pursuing careers in health care*

*Special to the Mirror*

MONTROSE– The Montrose Regional Health Foundation is now accepting applications for the San Juan Fund Scholarship, created to support and encourage students pursuing careers in health care.

Since 2016, the San Juan Fund Scholarship has awarded more than \$65,000 to over 55 students pursuing nursing, medical, and other health-related degrees, reflecting a continued investment in building a strong local health care workforce.

The scholarship is open to individuals who have been accepted into or are currently enrolled in a health care-related program. Preference will be given to applicants from the Montrose area who intend to return and serve the health care needs of the community and surrounding regions.

Recognizing the wide range of opportunities within the health care field, the scholarship supports students at all stages of their educational journey and across diverse career paths.

Applications are reviewed holistically, with an average award of \$1,000.

“Investing in health care students today means stronger, healthier communities tomorrow,” said Kelly Anderson, executive director of the Montrose Regional Health Foundation. “The San Juan Fund Scholarship helps ensure that talent grows here, learns here, and returns to serve here.”

**Application requirements include:**

- Completed online application
- Three letters of recommendation (e.g., personal, employer, instructor, or professional reference)
- High school transcript
- College or post-secondary transcripts, if applicable
- Current acceptance letter from a college or health care program

Applications must be received by May 22, 2026. Scholarship recipients will be announced in early June.

To apply or view full scholarship details, visit [mrhfoundation.org/sfscholarship](http://mrhfoundation.org/sfscholarship). For questions, contact Kelly Anderson at [kander-son@montrosehealth.com](mailto:kander-son@montrosehealth.com) or call 970-240-7396.



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# The Satisfied Self

## THE SATISFIED SELF: BREATH FIRST — HOW TO CHANGE YOUR STATE IN MINUTES



By Gia Pirelli

If there were one place to begin — one tool that could shift your energy, your focus, your emotional state, and your nervous system in real time — it wouldn't be a mindset strategy.

It would be your breath.

Not because it's trendy or simple.

But because it is the most direct way to influence how your body feels — and how you move through your life.

We tend to think of breath as automatic, something that happens in the background. But in reality, it's one of the few systems in the body that is both automatic *and* under conscious control.

Which means you can use it.

And when you do, things change quickly. And this matters more than you might think.

Your breath is directly tied to your nervous system. Every inhale and exhale sends signals to the brain about whether you are safe or under threat. Fast, shallow breathing reinforces stress. Slow, steady breathing signals safety.

This is why your breath changes when you're overwhelmed:

- it becomes shorter
- faster
- more shallow

-often held without realizing

The body tightens. The mind speeds up. Reactivity increases.

But the reverse is also true.

When you intentionally change your breath, you change the signal.

And the body responds. Which leads to regulation in real time.

One of the most practical aspects of breathwork — what yoga calls **pranayama** — is how quickly it works.

You don't need an hour.

You don't need perfect conditions.

You don't need to leave your life.

In just a few minutes, you can:

- slow your heart rate
- reduce muscle tension
- quiet mental noise
- shift out of fight-or-flight

This is not conceptual. It is physiological. The breath communicates directly with the vagus nerve — a key regulator of the parasympathetic nervous system. When stimulated through slow, controlled breathing, it tells the body to downshift. To settle.

To soften.

To regulate.

It's a shift you can feel immediately. One of the most effective and accessible techniques is simple:

### Lengthen your exhale.

Inhale for a count of four.

Exhale for a count of six or eight.

That extended exhale is what signals the nervous system to relax. This is one of my favorite Breathwork practices that I start class with. Or that I personally meditate with.

Within a few rounds, most people feel a shift:

- shoulders drop
- jaw softens
- thoughts slow
- breath deepens naturally

This is regulation — not through effort, but through input. This changes everything. When your nervous system is dysregulated, everything feels harder:

- decisions feel urgent
- emotions feel amplified
- focus becomes fragmented
- reactions happen quickly

But when you are regulated:

- you respond instead of react
- you think more clearly
- you move more deliberately
- you feel more in control of your energy

The external world doesn't necessarily change.

But your experience of it does.

And that changes your results.

In terms of a daily practice, the power of breath isn't just in moments of stress.

It's in repetition.

Short, consistent practices teach the body a new baseline — one where calm is accessible, not something you have to chase.

This can look like:

- a few minutes of breathing before starting your day
- pausing between tasks instead of rushing into the next
- resetting your breath after a difficult conversation
- slowing your exhale before bed

These moments are small.

But they accumulate.

And over time, your default state begins to shift. This is the missing piece in most routines.

Many women are already doing "the right things."

They move their bodies.

They try to eat well.

They manage their responsibilities.

But without regulating the nervous system, those efforts can feel inconsistent or unsustainable.

Breath is what ties it together.

It supports:

- better movement (less tension, more control)
- better sleep (easier downshift)
- better focus (less mental scatter)
- better emotional regulation (less reactivity)

It doesn't replace other practices.

It enhances them.

In yoga, breath is not separate from movement.

It leads it.

Each posture, each transition, each moment of stillness is guided by breath. This is what transforms movement into practice — and practice into something that carries into your life.

Because eventually, you don't just breathe differently on a mat.

You breathe differently in conversations. In stress.

In uncertainty.

You create space before reacting.

Continued next pg

## THE SATISFIED SELF: BREATH FIRST – HOW TO CHANGE YOUR STATE IN MINUTES

*From previous pg*

And that space changes everything. In Yoga, they say the space between the breaths equals the space between the thoughts. You don't need to master complex techniques to begin.

Start with awareness.

Notice your breath when you feel rushed.

Notice it when you feel tense.

Notice how it changes throughout the day.

Then gently adjust it.

Slow it down.

Lengthen the exhale.

Let it deepen without forcing it.

That's enough.

In the next article, we'll explore how the physical practice of yoga builds strength without tension — and why that matters not just for your body, but for how you move through challenges in your life.

Because the goal isn't just to feel calm for a few minutes.

It's to build a system that supports you — consistently.



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# COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

## COME HEAR THE SUITS! A PERFECT FIT FOR CONCERT SEASON FINALE

*Special to Art & Sol*

REGIONAL-The Delta Montrose Community Concert Association is excited to bring you The Suits as the last concert of the 2025-2026 season on Friday, April 24, 2026 at the Delta Performing Arts Center, 822 Grand Avenue in Delta, CO at 7 PM. Doors open at 6 PM. The Suits are comprised of four dynamic gentlemen performing four genres of hit music from the '50s through the '80s: Motown, Doo



*The Suits. Courtesy photo.*

Wop, Pop and Rock.

Fusing smooth choreography and tight harmonies with exciting showmanship and fun audience interaction, this production will give you a night to remember!

With hits such as *Oh, What a Night* by The Four Seasons, *My Girl* by The Temptations, *Can't Buy Me Love* by The Beatles, *Signed, Sealed, Delivered* by Stevie Wonder, *Uptown Girl* by Billy Joel, and *Don't Stop Believin'* by Journey, you're in for a thrilling and engaging show!

Single admission tickets will be available at the door on the night of the performance: \$25 for adults and \$5 for students.

For more information please contact Anna Marie at 801-870-8621 or Connie at 970-249-4308 or visit [www.deltamontroseconcerts.com](http://www.deltamontroseconcerts.com).

Please note: This is the last concert of our 2025-2026 season...if you attend this concert and purchase a season ticket for our next 2026-2027 season, you will get this concert free! That's 6 concerts for the price of 5!

## WOMENS GIVING CLUB TO MEET MAY 7 AT BRIDGES

*Special to the Mirror*

MONTROSE-The next meeting for the Women's Giving Club will be on Thursday, May 7 at 5:30 PM at the Bridges Golf and Country Club. All women are welcome to attend, whether you're a returning member or joining us for the first time. New attendees always encouraged. We hope to see you there. For more information, please contact: [Givingclubofmontrose@gmail.com](mailto:Givingclubofmontrose@gmail.com).



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# COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

## THE LIBRARIANS DOCUMENTARY TO SHOW AT CMU APRIL 24

### *Special to the Mirror*

MONTROSE-In recognition of Library Appreciation Week, the Montrose Regional Library will partner with CMU Montrose to share a film called, The Librarians. The documentary follows several librarians across the country as they wrestle with serving their communities and upholding Constitutional rights for everyone. Having viewed it, I found that the following overview does it the most justice. It is taken from *filmplatform.net* from an article written in September, 2025.

Once upon a now, in today's America, political polarization finds librarians under siege as an unprecedented wave of book banning is sparked in Texas, Florida, and beyond. As the crisis escalates, they join forces as unlikely defenders on the frontlines of democracy.

In October 2021, Texas House Representative Matt Krause issued a list of 850 books for schools to review for obscene and race-related content, urging officials to develop standards to ensure "pornography" and anything that may make students feel "discomfort, guilt or anguish" be removed. The majority of

content flagged had racial or LGBTQia+ themes. Parental Rights groups like Moms for Liberty dug in nationwide and book challenges escalated exponentially and became more coordinated. Vulnerable librarians were, and continue to be, targeted.

With unique access to a new movement in the making, librarians take us on an odyssey across America to tell their story to resist censorship efforts. We meet a US Army veteran who was fired for refusing to remove books with racial content — and whose County Commissioners, in the wake of a lawsuit filed by local community members alleging First and Fourteenth Amendment Rights infringements, attempted to close the public library itself. A librarian in New Jersey investigates coordinated efforts between Parental Rights organizations and a national effort to undermine public education that landed in her own school district with direct attacks, calling her a "pornographer, pedophile, and groomer of children". A nationally lauded librarian is besieged with death threats in her native Louisiana parish where she lost 12 students to suicide be-

cause of feeling "othered." Tensions escalate as legislation spreads proposing to criminalize librarians for distributing alleged pornographic materials to minors. In a dystopian saga akin to a real-life Fahrenheit 451 sequel, director Kim A. Snyder's gripping documentary The Librarians traverses small-town U.S.A. with riveting interviews and troves of archival material to reveal the story of the country's heroic librarians, everyday Americans who have become unlikely defenders of democracy, risking everything to uphold our most fundamental of rights. Runtime: 88 min.

Please join us on Friday, April 24 for a viewing of the film, followed by refreshments and civil, open-minded conversation.

There will be three showings in Cascade Hall on the CMU Montrose campus: 9am, 1pm and 6pm. No registration is necessary, but if you are bringing a group larger than ten, contact one of the organizers so we can find the best time to accommodate your needs. You can reach James at 970-275-9693 or email him at [jstetson@montroselibrary.org](mailto:jstetson@montroselibrary.org). Thank you for reading and I hope you can attend!

**THE LIBRARIANS DOCUMENTARY**

Join us for any of our 3 free screenings!

**Friday, April 24th**  
**CMU Montrose**  
**Cascade Hall**  
**S. 3rd & Cascade St.**

**9:00 a.m.**  
**1:00 p.m.**  
**6:00 p.m.**

NO REGISTRATION NEEDED  
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**Contact Information:** (970) 249-2451  
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 tor: The Rev Preston Gordon, [pgor-  
 don@allsaintsmontrose.org](mailto:pgor-<br/>
  don@allsaintsmontrose.org)

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 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

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**Address:** 222 South Townsend Montrose,  
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**Office Hours:** 10am-2pm Tuesday- Friday

**Contact:** 970-252-1163

[ccc@cccmontrose.org](mailto: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  
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**Phone:** (970) 497-4925

**Email:** [celebrationmontrose@gmail.com](mailto:celebrationmontrose@gmail.com)

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

**Worship Service Times:** 9am and 10:45am

**Senior Pastor:**

Pastor Brandon Mathis

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

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

**Demographics:** Multi-generational

**Celebration Kids:** (age birth to 5<sup>th</sup> grade)  
 programs offered both services.

**Student** (middle & high school) at 9am.

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

## CHRIST'S CHURCH OF THE VALLEY

**Name of Church:** Christ's Church of the  
 Valley

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

**Address:** 10 Hillcrest Plaza Way. Mont-  
 rose, CO 81401

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

**Contact information:**

Phone: 970-249-0530

Email: [CCVMontroseCO10@gmail.com](mailto:CCVMontroseCO10@gmail.com)

Website: [ccvmontrose.org](http://ccvmontrose.org)

**Name of current Senior Pastor:** Ken Law-  
 rence

**Worship service times:** 10:30 a.m.

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

in our Lord Jesus Christ to the glory of  
 God.

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

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

## CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

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

**Contact:** 970-633-0226

**Website:** [www.montroselutheran.org](http://www.montroselutheran.org)

**Email:** [montroselutheran@gmail.com](mailto:montroselutheran@gmail.com)

**Pastor:** Tim Onnen

**Worship:** Sundays at 9 AM

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

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

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

# 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](mailto:spirit@communityspiritucc.org)

**Website:** [communityspiritucc.org](http://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](mailto:office@ccfmontrose.net),

[www.ccfmontrose.net](http://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](mailto:mncfirst@gmail.com),

[www.montrosenazarenechurch.org](http://www.montrosenazarenechurch.org)

**Pastor: 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 UN-

DER 3 is available during Worship and Dis-

cipleship Hour. Youth Night (6-12th

grade): Tuesdays, 6:30 PM. Weeknight

Bible Study: Wednesdays, 6:30

PM. Mission Statement: Montrose First

Church of the Nazarene exists to make Christlike disciples in Montrose Colorado and around the world. Demographics: Our church consists of older and younger people. We have younger families with children and young teens and older adults as well. We also support the work of Calvary Ranch Colorado and its addiction recovery ministry.

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

### MONTROSE

**Affiliation:** Presbyterian

**Address:** 1840 E Niagara Rd. Montrose

CO. 81401 **Office Hours:** M-Thu 9AM -

12PM

**Contact:** 970-249-4732, [in-](mailto:in-form@fpcmontrose.com)

[form@fpcmontrose.com](mailto:in-form@fpcmontrose.com),

[www.fpcmontrose.com](http://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](mailto:office@montroseucc.org)

Website: [montroseucc.org](http://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](mailto:office@montroseumc.org), [\[roseumc.org\]\(http://roseumc.org\)](http://mont-</a></p>
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**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](http://www.RosemontBaptist.org)

[youtube.com/@rosemontbaptistchurch](https://youtube.com/@rosemontbaptistchurch)

[facebook.com/RosemontBaptist](https://facebook.com/RosemontBaptist)

email: [office@rosemontbaptist.org](mailto:office@rosemontbaptist.org)

**Senior Pastor:** Rolland Kenneson

**Worship Service Time:** Our engaging and relevant Sunday Worship Service is at 10:45 AM.

We also have small groups we call L.I.F.E. Groups for all ages on Sunday mornings at 9:15 AM.

We strive to have each of our small groups live L.I.F.E. together.

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 where they are at in life .

# MIRROR CHURCH DIRECTORY *From previous pg*

## ST. STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

**Denomination:** Anglican-Reformed Episcopal Church (REC)  
**Address:** 2405 Sunnyside Road, Montrose 970-249-4868  
**Contact:** [ststephensmont-](mailto:ststephensmont-rose@yahoo.com)

[rose@yahoo.com](mailto:rose@yahoo.com)  
[www.ststephensmontrose.com](http://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](mailto:info@vbcmontrose.org); website: [vbcmontrose.org](http://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?

### Premier Sponsor:

Montrose Farmers Market  
970-249-0705

Horsefly Brewing  
970-249-6889

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

Fiesta Guadalajara  
Re-Opening 2026  
970-249-2460

El Jimador  
970-249-8990

Busy Corner White Kitchen  
970-323-6215

Delta: CB's Tavern  
970-399-3570



Lighthouse Eatery  
970-964-7570

Ray's Corner Cafe  
970-417-4340

Rib City  
970-249-7427

Stone House  
970-240-8899

Sidelines Sports Bar  
970-765-0129

Delta: Pour Ernie's  
970-546-0074



Alpen Confections  
970-648-0609

Crash Burger  
970-249-0825

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

Tacos & Beer  
970-964-4448

Tacos & Beer on Main  
970-964-4999

Pahgre's  
970-249-6442





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# Lunch & Learn at Endless Pastabilities



## Witih Kate. Saturdays, 11 am - 1 pm



### Learn to paint FLOWERS



### May 2

### Learn to draw & paint DOGS

### June 6



\$35/pp. Includes light lunch and fountain drink. All materials provided plus 1:1 instruction. Class limited to 8 adults. Click QRcode to register.

## **CUSTOM, GROUP, CORPORATE KATE'S CREATIVE CLASSES**

Any of my classes can be requested for private, group, or corporate sessions. Provide your preferred time, date, and location, and we'll work something out.

<https://kathrynrburke.com/contact-me/>



# 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](mailto: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](http://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](http://blackcanyonaudubon.org).**

**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.

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

**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.

**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.

**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](mailto:aheadaviation@outlook.com)

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

[www.valleyfoodpartnership.org](http://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 HISTORICAL SOCIETY** meets 1st Wednesday of the month @ Montrose Events Center, 1036 No 7th Street 7 pm (970) 249-2085 [www.montrosehistory.org](http://www.montrosehistory.org)

**NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH**-3rd Wednesday of every month at 6pm, the Montrose County Neighborhood Watch meets at the Sheriff's Office at 1200 N Grand Ave

**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.

## MONTHLY

**April 23**-Book reading and talk by Erin Easton at the Montrose Library on April 23 at 6:45pm for her new book, Disentangled: Mindfully Freeing Ourselves from Emotional Abuse.

**April 23**-Friendship Quilters of Western Colorado will meet Thursday, April 23, at Friendship Hall, Montrose County Fairgrounds, 1001 N Second Street in Montrose. The meeting starts at 9am with social time, followed by a business meeting, program, and show and share. It will be a birthday party for the guild, celebrating our "Silver Threads" members. Our historian will provide a history of the Guild. Questions 360.448.0153.

**April 24**--The Delta Montrose Community Concert Association is excited to bring you The Suits as the last concert of the 2025-2026 season on Friday, April 24, 2026 at the Delta Performing Arts Center, 822 Grand Avenue in Delta, CO at 7 PM. Doors open at 6 PM. Single admission tickets will be available at the door on the night of the performance: \$25 for adults and \$5 for students. For more information please contact Anna Marie at 801-870-8621 or Connie at 970-249-4308 or visit [www.deltamontroseconcerts.com](http://www.deltamontroseconcerts.com).

**April 24-25**-Annual Church Rummage Sale, Hillcrest Congregational Church of Christ, 611 S. Hillcrest Drive. April 24, 8 AM - 4 PM. April 25, 8 AM – Noon Benefits Sharing Ministries and the HCUCC Women's Union.

**April 25**-Join the Black Canyon Audubon Society on April 25 for a family birdwatching event from 8 to 10 am. We will have a spotting scope and binoculars to share. Family groups must include at least one adult. Spring migration brings in new birds, and we'll see some year-round favorites too. The Marine Road Wildlife Area has wetlands and meadows, and even a bird blind. Join us at the parking area on Marine Road, 0.4 miles NW of the intersection of County Road 90 and Marine Road. Please email [black.canyon.audubon.fieldtrips@gmail.com](mailto:black.canyon.audubon.fieldtrips@gmail.com) to let us know how many will be in your group. No dogs please. There are no bathrooms at the location.

**May 7**-The next meeting for the Women's Giving Club will be on Thursday, May 7 at 5:30 PM at the Bridges Golf and Country Club. All women are welcome to attend, whether you're a returning member or joining us for the first time. New attendees always encouraged. We hope to see you there. For more information, please contact: [Givingclubofmontrose@gmail.com](mailto:Givingclubofmontrose@gmail.com).

# RED HAWKS GIRLS SOCCER: UNDER THE RAINBOW



Montrose High School Girls Soccer Team takes a shot under a beautiful rainbow in Grand Junction Tuesday night. MHS beat Palisade 3-1. Courtesy photo by CB Williams.

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