



ONLINE NEWS ASSOCIATION



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© Issue No. 693 June 8, 2026

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BOARD OF EDUCATION PLACES SUPERINTENDENT ON LEAVE PENDING INVESTIGATION AT OLATHE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



On June 2, the Montrose County School District RE-1J Board of Education voted four to three to place the Superintendent, Dr. Carrie Stephenson, (above center) on paid, non-punitive, non-disciplinary leave pending the outcome of the third-party investigation into employee complaints at Olathe Elementary School. Meeting Screenshot.

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE-The Montrose County School District RE-1J Board of Education met for a special meeting on Tuesday, June 2.

All directors were present, including 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.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the Board considered approval of the special meeting agenda.

With only three business items, Director Jody Hovde initiated discussion prior to agreeing to approve the agenda, as she wanted to amend it to include an opposing motion.

After some discussion, including advice from legal counsel, who was present by Zoom and said that the discussion would allow time for opposing arguments to be presented, the Board voted

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CONSTITUENTS SPEAK IN SUPPORT OF PRIDE PROCLAMATION

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE-Every seat was filled and all councilors were present when the Montrose City Council convened for the regular meeting of Tuesday, June 2.

Mayor Michael Badagliacco opened the meeting, "Montrose City Council is pleased to have residents here, participation...in the event that several of you are here to speak about the same topic, in the interest of time, if you could agree, please simply state as such...if not, that's okay, if you want to speak, then speak...we did not have a request, so I apologize that we did not have an interpreter (Spanish language) here tonight...

CALL FOR PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Many of those present

Continued pg 51



The majority of comments heard from constituents at the June 2 Montrose City Council meeting concerned the City's decision not to issue a proclamation in support of PRIDE Month. Meeting Screenshot.

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

[BOCC Continues Hearing On Proposed West End Health Service District!](#)

[Cartoon by Tim Jones!](#)

[Corvairs-Chevrolet's Air-Cooled Wonder of the 1960's!](#)



Ernesto Sagas Event

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6-8 p.m.

Library Meeting Room

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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,
Montrose Mirror Editor*

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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Publisher: Harry Switzer

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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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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE UNCOMPAHGRE VALLEY

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-Two Presentations on Colorado Tax System and Budget:

June 9, 6 pm

Montrose City Council Chambers, 107 S. Cascade, Montrose

June 10, Noon

KVNF Community Room, 233 Grand Avenue, Paonia, CO

Our presenter will be Chris Stiffler, economics professor, author, comedian and senior economist at the Colorado Fiscal Institute. His work and commentary have appeared on NPR, Colorado Public Radio and in publications across Colorado.

In this accessible talk, Chris will begin with an easy-to-understand background about the Colorado budget, the major cuts lawmakers made this session, and how federal changes to Medicaid, SNAP, and corporate taxes are affecting the state. The talk then explores Initiative 195, the proposed graduated income tax measure expected on Colorado's November ballot, and what it could mean for school funding, health care, and the future of Colorado's budget.



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CORRECTION

The Mirror report on the Project 7 meeting held on May 28, 2026 incorrectly stated that D.A. Davidson Representative Greg Swartz (financial consultant) was associated with Garver (project consultants).

Both Garver and D.A. Davidson were consultants and have been collectively referred to as "the management team" for the Resiliency Project; however, each entity was under a separate contract.



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DARREL D. HOLMAN, Broker/Owner

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you can access the large wrap-around deck for entertaining, bar-be-ques, or relaxing and enjoying the views and outdoors. The primary bedroom has a spacious walk-in closet with 2 entrances and larger picture windows facing the park and mountain views. The bathroom features a large, tiled, walk-in tiled shower, and his and hers tiled counters with double sinks. 2 certified chair lifts on the staircases. Located just 3 miles to the Black Canyon National Monument entrance. Outside features include wrap-around Trek decking and railing. Bring your animals! Horses, cows, or 4-H projects make it the perfect place for your animals. Wildlife is phenomenal! There are days when you can see hundreds of elk and deer grazing the park meadows. It can't be emphasized enough that this location, with its views, is one of the most sought after in Western Colorado. Excellent horse property. Totally furnished with 2 washers and dryers, and newer refrigerator.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

DELTA EGYPTIAN THEATER LAUNCHES "SAVE THE SCREEN-PROJECT THE FUTURE"

Special to the Mirror

DELTA— The Delta Egyptian Theater has launched an emergency "Save the Screen-Project The Future" campaign to raise \$70,000 by June 30 to replace its failed digital cinema projector and restore movie screenings at the historic theater.

After weeks of troubleshooting, replacement parts, and consultations with technical experts, theater staff determined that the Egyptian's aging projector has reached the end of its service life and can no longer be repaired. As a single-screen theater, the loss of the projector has forced the suspension of movie screenings and created a significant loss of operating revenue.

"The Delta Egyptian Theater has been a cornerstone of our community for generations," said Kelly Anderson, President of the Board of Directors. "We explored every possible repair option, but replacement is now our only viable path forward. We are asking the community to help us keep the screen lit for future generations."

While the theater is evaluating temporary solutions, board members believe a new projector is the most responsible long-term investment. Many used projectors available online are already nearing the end of their useful lives and may not be compatible with the Egyptian's unique auditorium size, screen dimensions, and projection requirements. A new projector would provide reliable service for the next 20 to 30 years while improving image quality and reducing maintenance costs.

We are grateful for the tremendous community support we've received so far, with more than \$13,000 already raised through individual donations. To reach our \$70,000 goal and bring movies back to the Egyptian, we are now seeking corporate sponsors, foundation support, and leadership gifts that can help us cross the finish line and secure a long-term solution for our historic theater. Donations can be made online at www.deltaegyptian.org or by mail to Delta Egyptian Theater, P.O. Box 407, Delta, CO 81416.

FREE SUMMER MEALS AVAILABLE FOR ALL COLORADO YOUTH AGES 18 AND YOUNGER

Special to the Mirror

DENVER – The Colorado Department of Education has announced that more than 600 summer meal sites are open statewide to provide meals free of charge to all youth ages 18 and younger. Parents, families, and community members can visit www.kidsfoodfinder.org to find a nearby meal site, including locations, dates and times.


The Summer Meals Program is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and administered by the Colorado Department of Education's School Nutrition Unit in partnership with community-based program sponsors. Last year, program sponsors provided approximately 2 million meals to Colorado youth.

Families may also qualify for the Summer EBT program which helps families buy food during the summer months when school is not in session. Eligible families receive \$120 per eligible child to purchase groceries, with funds placed on an EBT card. To learn more about Summer EBT, visit <https://cdhs.colorado.gov/summer-ebt>.

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MLS #832086 | 1422 Blue Creek Av | AARON TOBLER

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MLS #832385 | 62347 Nectar Court | Britany Butler

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

DON'T BUREAUCRATS SERVE AT THE PLEASURE OF ELECTED OFFICIALS (ACCORDING TO THE FOUNDERS' DESIGN)?

Editor:

Recently, our Montrose County School District Superintendent made a statement which highlighted a troubling attitude. She criticized the school board president for performing her duties as one of seven elected board members. The president acted within her role. No ethical breach occurred. Still, the grievance implied that administrators deserve special deference or detailed explanations when the elected board makes a personnel decision. This view misses the core structure of American government.

According to our Constitution, Article IV, Section 4 states that the United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government. In this system, the people choose representatives to set policy and direct government operations. Bureaucrats and appointed officials carry out those decisions. They do not dictate terms to their elected superiors.

Elected officials campaign on specific platforms. Voters grant them a mandate to implement those ideas. When new leadership arrives after an election, generally there are shifts in personnel and priorities that follow as a direct result. This process reflects the will of the electorate, not personal vendettas.

John Adams explained the necessity of virtue in self-government. In a 1798 letter he stated, "Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other." Public employees are supposed to align their service with the direction set by elected leaders who answer directly to citizens. Demanding permanence in role regardless of leadership changes contradicts this requirement.

Many government positions exist explicitly at the pleasure of an elected board, council, or executive. Legal tradition and statutes across all levels of government recognize this arrangement. The appointing body holds discretion to end the employment relationship when alignment no longer exists. One board member, **even the president**, participates in collective decisions. Individual grievances against proper board actions do not override that authority.

The same principle operates in business. Incoming boards routinely select new executive teams to advance their vision. Public service follows parallel logic because both rest on accountability to those who hold ultimate authority, whether shareholders or voters.

Change in government leadership serves the public interest as demonstrated by our last two Montrose elections. Bureaucrats (and those who oppose the newly elected people) usually resent the disruption elections bring. Yet that disruption is the point. It prevents entrenched interests from overriding the people's choices. The Founders created a system where power flows from citizens through elected representatives to administrators, not the reverse. When officials exercise their responsibility to realign staff with current priorities, they fulfill their oath, not violate fairness.

Those who prefer stable, insulated employment should seek opportunities outside government. Inside it, the design demands responsiveness to elected leadership. Discipline or removal for misalignment is therefore neither unfair nor unwarranted. It is the system the Founders built, and it remains the system we are obligated to and should maintain.

Leah Vandersluis
Montrose, CO

BOCC WORK SESSION
to include
KINKIN INFORMATION

June 8, 2026 at 9:00 am
Historic County Courthouse
320 South 1st Street
3rd Floor Board Room
Montrose, CO

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MONTROSE REGIONAL CRIME STOPPERS
see something, say something

OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

THERE IS NOTHING MORE DISINGENUOUS THAN A LIBERAL ACCUSING A CONSERVATIVE OF BEING DISINGENUOUS

Editor:

For the last two city council meetings, I sat in the audience looking forward to agendas that might inform me of ACTUAL city business that was indeed the actual "order of business." Instead, not in one, but in both meetings, many taxpaying citizens were subjected to an onslaught of 3-minute protestations by a gaggle of people who thought the absence of a city proclamation attesting to their sacred, self-declared, sexual lifestyle/proclivities was more important than city governance.

I have always supported EVERYONE'S freedom of choice and the right to pursue one's own pursuit of happiness. I would fight for those rights regardless of race, creed OR sexual proclivity. No problem. So imagine my surprise when I read Ron Sobieck's (June 1, 2026 Mirror- MJB- DISINGENUOUS AT BEST) hit-piece attempt to dismantle Mayor Badagliacco's logically factual statement on not supporting a proclamation that does not in any way create a conflict with his and city council's oath of office. I've noticed that the local leftist establishment has been elevating the temperature and vibrato of the mob-theatrics but not one legitimate solution to be advanced.

But I digress. Let's look at the true facts that vanquish Sobieck's diatribe-filled innuendo and inflammatory insult. Whether one agrees or disagrees with Pride proclamations, the letter contains a number of logical and rhetorical problems.

1. The mayor's stated argument is not that he opposes Pride or LGBTQ people. His argument is that government should not grant symbolic recognition to any particular group through proclamations. Sobieck responds as though the mayor said: "I don't support Pride." But that's not what the quoted statement says. This is close to a straw man argument—attacking a weaker version of the mayor's position rather than the actual position he articulated.

2. Sobieck claims the mayor's statement is: "disingenuous at best, and discriminatory at worst." That is a classic example of **assuming intent without proof**. Those are serious accusations. However, the letter provides no evidence that the mayor is lying, acting in bad faith, or discriminating against LGBTQ residents. The writer simply infers those motives from the mayor's refusal to issue a proclamation. A person can oppose government proclamations generally without harboring discriminatory views

3. Sobieck asks: "Using that logic, why do we as a nation celebrate Memorial Day, Veteran's Day, Labor Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day..." This comparison has several weaknesses. Many of those obser-

-Were established through legislation, not mayoral proclamations.

-Recognize contributions or sacrifices that are broadly civic in nature.

- Are federal holidays or national observances with distinct legal histories.

Sobieck treats these as identical situations when they are not necessarily equivalent.

4. Sobieck implies only two possibilities exist: Support a Pride proclamation or marginalize/discriminate against LGBTQ people. But there are other possibilities. For example, someone could support opposing government-issued identity-group proclamations of **all** kinds. Sobieck patently ignores a middle position.

5. Sobieck states an oversimplification about the 14th Amendment in his unsupported assertion: "He misses the true intent of that amendment. It was created to make us a *more inclusive society*."

The primary historical purpose of the Fourteenth Amendment **was to establish citizenship**, due process, and equal protection under the law following the American Civil War.

One can argue that inclusiveness is a consequence of those principles, but claiming

that "making us a more inclusive society" was the sole or "true" intent is historically incomplete at best and more of a contrived fallacy for a weak claim.

6. Sobieck assumes the very point under dispute: "A Proclamation supporting Montrose Pride Week speaks to that inclusiveness." That is not self-evidently true. The mayor's argument appears to be that government neutrality is itself inclusive. Sobieck never demonstrates why a proclamation is necessarily more inclusive than neutrality; he merely asserts it.

7. Strong rhetoric is not the same as strong reasoning. Sobieck uses phrases such as "disingenuous at best," "discriminatory at worst," "don't like or support certain segments," "ignore, marginalize, or discriminate." Again, this is a standard inflammatory innuendo commonly employed by the far left propaganda machine.

Lastly, The letter also suggests that refusing a Pride proclamation is evidence that someone: a) doesn't like LGBTQ people, b) wants to marginalize them, c) wishes to discriminate against them. That conclusion does not logically follow the Mayor's quoted statement.

Once again, a liberal leftist can conjure up just about any form of hyperbole and provocative grandstanding in thought, word and action. The true test is whether their rants and diatribes come out of the shadows and stand up to the disinfecting sunlight which they inevitably DO NOT. Try FACTS for a change instead of pure EMOTION.

I also have a suggestion for City Council to consider: Change the Agenda to allow the "3 minute Comment Period" to be conducted at the end of meetings so that THE PEOPLES BUSINESS may be attended to before the Kabuki Theatrics are on full display.

R.L. Michaels, Montrose

CONGRATULATIONS

2026 SCHOLARSHIP DMEA RECIPIENTS

Each year, Delta-Montrose Electric Association (DMEA) offers college scholarships to local graduating seniors and continuing education students. DMEA partners with the Montrose Community Foundation to operate the program and select recipients. Scholarship funding is provided through DMEA's unclaimed capital credit fund and Guzman Energy. These scholarships provide local students with funds to attend various higher education institutions.



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TCR: Technical College of the Rockies | CMU: Colorado Mesa University | CNCC: Colorado Northwestern Community College

Not pictured Trevor Platt: Guzman Lineworker, \$5,000

OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

CANCEL BELL'S CONTRACT AND PAY HIM OFF IMMEDIATELY

Editor:

In Colorado, the average tenure of a City Manager is 4 to 6 years with an average salary of \$121,000. Considering that, it is no wonder that more Montrose taxpayers are questioning why we have a City Manager that is in his 16th year of service with a compensation package approaching \$250,000. Over his years of City Manager, there have been many concerns raised regarding Bill Bell's decisions as well as concerns about manipulation and intimidation of both City Council members and city employees. There is no doubt that a forensic audit is certainly needed. However, I think it more important for City Council to immediately cancel Bells contract and pay him off. The longer he stays in that position the more damage he can do. Only then will Montrose be able to search for a new City Manager that can gain the respect of city employees as well as taxpayers.

Dee Laird, Montrose

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS ARE FOCUSED ON "ALL CITIZENS"

Editor:

I support Mayor Badagliacco's decision for City Council not to support Montrose Pride Week. One of the people unhappy with the decision noted National Holidays: Mothers Day, Fathers Day, Veterans Day, Labor Day, etc. These holidays are not comprised of one singular group. They are comprised of many groups; many individuals of different races, political choices, religions, sexual orientation: not specifically one group. National Holidays are focused on "all citizens." Government at all levels should not support preferential treatment as it represents "all citizens" not just a special few.

Carol McBride, Montrose

BEWARE OF THE HEARTLAND INSTITUTE

Editor:

I read the release in the June 1 edition of the Mirror from The Heartland Institute, in which that organization claims that there is no climate change, and that the climate in Colorado is basically the same as it was 125 years ago.

Consider the source. The first line in Wikipedia's description of The Heartland Institute is: "The Heartland Institute is an American conservative and libertarian 501 nonprofit public policy think tank known for its rejection of both the scientific consensus on climate change and the negative health impacts of smoking."

As Bob Dylan famously said, "You don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows."

Ron Sobieck

Montrose, CO

BUILD A BETTER WORLD WITH CULTIVATED MEAT

To the editor,

I think most people know, deep down, that the way we treat animals, especially those we eat, is wrong. What they may not be aware of is a developing technology that will make aligning our morals with our dietary habits easier. I'm talking about cultivated meat, which is grown from livestock cells, without slaughter. Even low adoption rates of the protein would save billions of aquatic and land animals every year.

Unfortunately, cultivated meat is still too expensive to mass produce. This can be overcome with further research. Compassionate legislators should support a significant increase of state and federal funding into cultivated-meat development. Let's build facilities like the Tufts University Center for Cellular Agriculture at schools across the country. As dark as things feel now, the possibility remains of building a better world.

Jon Hochschartner. Granby CT

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Dr. Katie Stephens
MD, DABFM, MBChB,
MRCGP (2012), DRCOG



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Tu: 12:00 PM – 7:00 PM
W: 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Th: 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM
F: By appointment only

REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

LEARN AND IDENTIFY BIRD SOUNDS

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-On June 11-From 7 -8:30 pm Black Canyon Audubon Society will host Sue Riffe who will speak about a different way of learning bird sounds. Sue will explore musical vocabulary to

analyze bird songs we hear and will introduce different ways to learn these songs. The next morning, you will have the opportunity to use your newly gained musical vocabulary to identify bird sounds on a field trip to Billy Creek

SWA (please register for the field trip beforehand). The Montrose Field House Summit Room, 25 Colorado Avenue, Montrose. For more information about the speaker and topic go to programs at blackcanyonaudubon.org

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

UNDERSTANDING STANDARD PRACTICE: THE JUNE 4 MCSD BOARD MEETING AND WHAT IT MEANS

Editor:

After attending the June 4, 2026 Montrose County School District Board of Education meeting, I sought to better understand the standard practices and procedures that govern workplace investigations in institutional settings. I consulted with a person well-versed in organizational policy and procedure — someone who has led multiple organizations and is currently involved in Colorado higher education — as well as another individual with substantial research background in this area. What follows is an effort to provide context for what the community observed that evening.

What Happened and Why It Matters

At the June 4 meeting, the board voted to place Superintendent Dr. Carrie Stephenson on paid, non-punitive administrative leave while a third-party investigation is ongoing. Board President Balleck stated that an employee complaint had "implicated in part" the superintendent — meaning the superintendent's conduct is relevant to the complaint being investigated, though the precise scope of her involvement has not been publicly specified. The superintendent exercised her right under Colorado law to have the matter heard in open session rather than executive session, and delivered a formal statement and grievance to the board before any vote was taken.

Both the board's decision and the superintendent's response reflected processes that Colorado law and standard governance practice contemplate. Understanding those processes helps place the evening's events in proper context.

Paid Administrative Leave During an Investigation — Standard Practice

One of the most misunderstood aspects of the June 4 meeting was the board's vote to place the superintendent on paid administrative leave. Many in attendance appeared to view this as a punitive action. It is important to understand that it is not.

Placing an employee on paid, non-disciplinary administrative leave during an active investigation is standard practice in institutional settings — whether in corporations, government entities, or school districts. The purpose is not to punish the employee or to signal that wrongdoing has been established. The purpose is to

protect the integrity of the investigation itself.

Board President Balleck's stated rationale was specific: she expressed concern that employees might not feel comfortable participating freely in the ongoing investigation while the superintendent remained in her regular role. This is a recognized and legally accepted basis for administrative leave — sometimes called a witness protection rationale. It shifts the relevant question from "did the superintendent do something wrong?" to "does her continued presence in her role create a risk to the investigation's integrity?" The legal standard for the latter question is considerably lower than the former, and the board's employment agreement with the superintendent specifically authorizes paid suspension at any time the board deems it in the best interest of the district. It bears repeating: paid administrative leave is not a finding of wrongdoing. It is a procedural step designed to allow an investigation to proceed without interference, real or perceived.

Why a Third-Party Investigator Is the Right Approach

The investigation itself is being conducted by an independent third-party investigator rather than district staff. This too is standard practice, and for good reason. Several considerations make third-party investigation the appropriate choice in situations involving senior district personnel:

Impartiality. When a complaint involves a superintendent — who supervises virtually everyone in the district — no internal investigator can credibly claim independence. HR staff, district counsel, and administrators all work within a structure the superintendent oversees. The superintendent herself recognized this, stating she had recommended the independent investigation to avoid any appearance of influencing the outcome. That recommendation was sound.

Legal protection for the district. A properly conducted third-party investigation creates a defensible record if the matter escalates to litigation or a regulatory proceeding. Courts and administrative agencies view findings from an independent investigator with documented methodology more favorably than internal conclusions.

Credibility with all parties. Employees who file complaints are more likely to cooperate fully when an outside party conducts the investigation. The subject of an investigation likewise has less basis to challenge the process when an independent professional conducted it.

Expertise. Third-party investigators — typically employment attorneys or HR consultants — are specifically trained in workplace investigation methodology, including proper interview techniques, evidence preservation, documentation standards, and legal compliance.

Witness protection. Independent investigators can receive information from witnesses with greater assurance of confidentiality and without witnesses fearing that what they say will reach people within their own organization. This is directly relevant to the board's stated concern about investigation integrity.

The Superintendent's Rights

None of the above diminishes the superintendent's procedural rights, which she exercised at the June 4 meeting. Under Colorado's Open Meetings Law, an employee who is the subject of a personnel matter may request that the discussion occur in open session rather than executive session — and Dr. Stephenson exercised that right. Her employment agreement also provides specific procedural protections, including written notice of the reasons for a proposed suspension and an opportunity to respond to the board before any decision is made. Both were provided.

I hope those who read this realize that placing Dr. Stephenson on non-punitive paid leave is not a punishment, but a standard practice to maintain the utmost integrity of this investigation. The actual complaint details were likely given in executive session where the board opted for the third party investigation consistent with Dr. Stephenson's request.

Therefore, the details are confidential and that missing piece is crucial for a fuller understanding of this. With the unanimous decision by the board to hire a third-party investigator to conduct that investigation, integrity and protection of all parties involved seems not only reasonable, but necessary.

Leah Vandersluis, Montrose, CO

REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

MONTROSE POLICE DEPARTMENT ACTIVELY INVESTIGATING SHOOTING INCIDENTS

Montrose Police Dept. News Release

MONTROSE— The Montrose Police Department is investigating a series of shooting offenses that occurred at multiple locations within the City of Montrose on May 30, 2026, between 10:15 a.m. and 10:50 a.m. There is no danger to the public at this time.

The department wishes to convey its sincere concern for the victims of these incidents and their families. The department also commends the quick actions of the responding officers during this series of events.

On Saturday, May 30, 2026, at 10:16 a.m., Montrose Police Officers were dispatched to the 69500 block of Highway 50 East, in response to reports of a motorist shooting at moving vehicles from his vehicle. The following is a timeline based on the preliminary investigation of the events.

The suspect, Eduardo Garcia Barrera, age 42, was driving westbound on Highway 50 coming into Montrose in a green Honda sedan with Wyoming license plates.

Barrera, who was reported as driving erratically, began shooting at other vehicles as he approached them from behind in the 69500 block of Highway 50 East. The first victim called WestCO dispatch to report the incident.

Officers responded to the area and met with the initial victim, who provided a description of the vehicle and suspect. The victim and passenger were uninjured, and no damage was found on the victim's vehicle.

From 10:16 a.m. to approximately 10:20 a.m., WestCO dispatch received numerous calls in response to Barrera's erratic driving as he drove along Highway 50 (E. Main Street) into Montrose.

At approximately 10:20 a.m., another call to WestCO dispatch reported that a car matching the suspect vehicle's description was driving erratically on E. Main Street, passing numerous cars, and was last seen turning northbound onto N. San Juan Avenue from E. Main Street.

At approximately 10:21 a.m., Barrera pulled up beside a 22-year-old male pedestrian in the 200 block of N. San Juan Avenue. Barrera shot through the passenger side window of the vehicle, striking the male in the lower left side of his body.

At approximately 10:22 a.m., an MPD Officer arrived at the scene of the shooting in the 200 block of N. San Juan Avenue. Two witnesses were providing aid to the victim and gave a description of the vehicle and suspect. The officer proceeded north on San Juan Avenue to find the suspect's vehicle. Two additional MPD officers arrived to assist in rendering aid. The 22-year-old male was transported to the hospital in stable condition by emergency services.

At approximately 10:34 a.m., dispatch advised MPD officers of a vehicle crash at 646 E. Main Street. Upon arrival, officers found a green Honda sedan with Wyoming license plates resting against a raised concrete platform, bollard, and decorative gas pump. Barrera, the sole occupant of the vehicle, was in the driver's seat, deceased from an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound.

Through the preliminary investigation, MPD Investigators have determined that Barrera was a part-time resident of Gillette, Wyoming, with no identifiable ties to Montrose, Colorado.

The initial investigation revealed that on May 29, 2026, Barrera purchased a 9mm handgun and a box of 9mm ammunition at a sporting goods store in Gillette, Wyoming. Barrera then left Gillette that evening, travelling to Colorado Springs, Colorado, then on to Pueblo, Colorado, and proceeding west on Highway 50 to Montrose.

The motive for Barrera's actions is still unknown. Investigators are continuing to interview victims and Barrera's family members to establish a motive for these events.

This investigation remains active. Additional information will be released as it becomes available.

For media inquiries, contact Paul Eller, Montrose Police Public Information Officer, at 970-787-8251, or peller@montrosepd.org

The Montrose Police Department encourages anyone with information related to these events, or who may have witnessed these events, to contact the Montrose Police Department at 970-252-5200 or WestCo Dispatch at 970-249-9110.



SAVE A TREE READ THE MIRROR

COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

GOVERNOR POLIS SIGNS CATLIN'S FIRST-IN-THE-NATION COLORADO ARTIST COMPANY ACT

Special to the Mirror

DENVER- Colorado Governor Jared Polis signed bipartisan legislation Tuesday creating the nation's first business structure designed specifically for artists and creative professionals.

Senate Bill 26-133 (SB26-133), the Colorado Artist Company Act, creates a new business structure that allows artists to maintain majority ownership and control of their creative work. The bill was signed at the SIE Film Center in Denver.

The new law establishes Colorado as the first state in the nation to authorize artist companies, creating a framework that recognizes the unique business and ownership needs of artists, writers, musicians, filmmakers, performers, and other creative professionals. Artist companies operate as limited liability companies while providing additional protections related to artistic mission, ownership, governance, and intellectual property.

The Colorado Artist Company Act builds upon Colorado's longstanding support for the creative economy through programs such as Colorado Creative Industries and the state's nationally recognized Creative District program. According to the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trades, Colorado Creative Industries division, arts and cultural production accounts for \$19.7 billion of Colorado's economy, representing 3.72 percent of the state's economic output and

supporting 121,228 jobs. Arts and cultural value-added ranked third among Colorado comparison sectors, surpassing both mining and transportation.

Colorado's creative economy is an important driver of tourism, entrepreneurship, and economic development in communities throughout the state.

Colorado is home to 31 certified Creative Districts, nearly 60 percent of which are located in rural communities. Senate District 5 alone includes four Creative Districts: Carbondale, Crested Butte, Gunnison, and Paonia. These districts help support local businesses, attract visitors, and strengthen community identity throughout Western Colorado.

The prime sponsors of SB26-133 are Senators Marc Catlin (R-SD5) of Montrose County and Jeff Bridges (D-SD26) of Arapahoe County, and Representatives Matthew Martinez (D-HD62) and Rick Taggart (R-HD55).

"Colorado's artists are entrepreneurs," said Senator Marc Catlin. "They create jobs, support local businesses, attract visitors, and contribute to the identity of communities across our state.

The Colorado Artist Company Act creates a business structure designed specifically for creative professionals, helping artists maintain ownership of their work while providing new opportunities to grow, collaborate, and build sustainable businesses."

"Whether it's a filmmaker on the Western Slope, a musician in a mountain town, or a visual artist in one of Colorado's Creative Districts, artists deserve business tools that recognize the unique nature of creative work," said Catlin. "Communities like Carbondale, Crested Butte, Gunnison, and Paonia show how the arts support local businesses, strengthen local economies, attract visitors, and enhance quality of life throughout rural Colorado."

Colorado State Senator Marc Catlin represents the seven counties of Delta, Eagle, Garfield, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, and Pitkin.

Senator Catlin is a member of the Agriculture & Natural Resources; Transportation & Energy; and Business, Labor, & Technology Committees. Senator Catlin also serves as a Member of the Colorado Tourism Board.



Senators Marc Catlin (R-SD5). Courtesy photo.

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For more information and tour schedule updates, please call 970-249-3098 or visit the Ute Indian Museum Facebook page.

MEDITATION S P A C E S



What is a Singing Bowl?

While often globally marketed as "Tibetan singing bowls," research shows that the true epicenter of their master craftsmanship and production resides in Nepal and Northern India. These exquisite instruments are globally revered for creating steady, long-lasting harmonic frequencies that promote deep meditation, stress relief, and chakra balancing. By placing them on the body at different chakra points, it is said to balance the energies in the body when done by a certified practitioner.

"Glass" singing bowls are actually made from high-purity quartz crystal (silica sand) that is melted at temperatures exceeding 4,000°F and blown or molded into shape, a process structurally identical to making high-grade quartz glass. These instruments are celebrated for their pure, long-lasting acoustic resonance. While listening to the clear resonance of these bowls can be calming, they cannot be placed on the body for healing like metal singing bowls.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

June is Men's Health Month Focus on Your Swing, Not Your Prostate

The Bridges Golf & Country Club

Thursday, June 18

Doors open at 4:30 PM

Presentation Begins at 5:00 PM

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For more information, contact:

urology@montrosehealth.com



MontroseHealth.com/Urology

DMEA TO CONDUCT AERIAL LINE INSPECTIONS ON JUNE 10

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-Delta-Montrose Electric Association (DMEA) will conduct aerial line inspections across its service territory on Wednesday, June 10. DMEA, along with Mountain Blade Runner of Montrose, will conduct the patrol by helicopter. Work will start at 8:00 a.m. in Montrose, and the flight pattern will proceed to Olathe, Delta, Surface Creek, and Cedaredge, then up through the North Fork Valley, and return to Montrose. The inspections are expected to conclude by mid-afternoon. Members may see and hear the inspection process, as the flights are typically low flying to allow for visual inspection.

Aerial line patrol is conducted annually as part of DMEA's system reliability program, which helps ensure the co-op delivers safe and reliable power to the homes and businesses in Montrose and Delta counties. Riding along with the pilot will be DMEA linemen who look for potential problems with lines and equipment on DMEA's system before they cause power outages. Crew members will visually inspect DMEA's pole structures, wires, and other equipment, looking for damage, wear and tear, and overgrown vegetation.

In total, DMEA will inspect more than **160 miles of power lines** across all portions of the service territory, coming away with an overall status of its distribution grid and a better maintenance plan.

To learn more about DMEA, please visit www.dmea.com.



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

CITY OF MONTROSE ANNOUNCES FULL DAY OF JULY 4 CELEBRATION HONORING “OUR HERITAGE”

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE — The City of Montrose invites residents and visitors to celebrate Independence Day in patriotic fashion this year as the community marks the 250th anniversary of the United States and the 150th anniversary of Colorado.

A full day of festivities is planned for Saturday, July 4, 2026, under the theme, “Our Heritage,” which was selected to honor the many traditions, stories, and backgrounds that make the Montrose community unique.

“Heritage means something different to everyone,” said City of Montrose Pavilion and Community Events Manager Katie Riley. “It may be cultural roots, family traditions, or a shared love for where we live. This theme invites each of us to reflect on where we come from and to celebrate our shared connections.”

Planning for the city’s annual Independence Day festivities begins each spring, and event planners say this year’s celebration will feature a packed schedule of patriotic activities from morning through night, capped off by a fireworks display at dusk.

The annual Independence Day parade will begin at 10 a.m., with spectators encouraged to line both sides of historic Main Street. The parade route starts at the intersection of Main Street and Pythian Avenue before traveling west through downtown Montrose. Dozens of civic organizations and patriotically decorated floats and vehicles are expected to participate, bringing music, cheers, and community spirit to the heart of the city. In previous years, the city has received more than 70 applications for parade entries. The City of Montrose is also partnering with the Montrose Farmers Market this year to expand activities throughout downtown. The farmers market will open at 9 a.m. in Centennial Plaza, allowing visitors to browse vendors while enjoying the parade festivities nearby.

Market activities will include food vendors, a soil health booth hosted by soil scientist Emiliano Lopez, a free children’s activity featuring clay seed bombs made with wildflowers native to Montrose, and live music by Alma Roxx. Additional information about the Montrose Farmers Market activities and other related events can be found on the [organization’s website](#).

The city is again partnering with the Montrose Summer Music Series to host a free community concert at the Montrose Rotary Amphitheater during the afternoon and evening of July 4. The music is set to begin at 6 p.m. with Wilder Blue headlining and Coral Skye & the Soul Syndicate opening. Visit the [Montrose Summer Music Series website](#) for more information about this year’s series of free concerts.

Families attending the event can also enjoy a variety of children’s activities, including face painting provided by the Montrose High School cheerleaders and Christina Pope, balloon twisting by Twisted Critters N More, inflatables from Bounce & Slide Inflatables, and games hosted by the Montrose Children’s Museum.

Throughout the day, city staff and volunteers will distribute patriotic swag items, including small American flags, Fourth of July stickers, patriotic fans, bandanas, and glowsticks for the evening festivities.

One of the featured giveaways this year will be free 3D light diffraction fireworks glasses provided by American Paper Optics. The glasses will be available at the Visit Montrose booth and are designed to give viewers a unique visual experience during the fireworks show.

City officials say the celebration is designed to bring the community together while honoring both local traditions and the nation’s history.

The Montrose Police Department would like everyone to have a fun and safe Independence Day by celebrating responsibly and avoiding drinking and driving.

“Make a plan ahead of time to have a sober, designated driver,” said Montrose Deputy Chief Tim Cox. “Having a designated driver will help everyone get home safe and avoid spending a night in the county jail.” More information about 4th of July festivities, including vendor information and parade registration, can be found on the City of Montrose [July 4 webpage](#).

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Montrose, CO

OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

COMMUNICATION WITH SCHOOL BOARD

Dear Editor: 6/2/26

Concerning our Schools. In keeping things transparent (as modeled by our RE-1J School Board), here is my latest communication with them. However, as I go to email this letter to you I just found out the School Board is having a last minute, emergency meeting TONIGHT (6/2/26) to put the Superintendent on leave!! This is very concerning for all citizens that a person with an obvious PREPLANNED agenda is trying to take over the school district WITHOUT public input, hire legal council that endorses her agenda and is plowing ahead to get rid of anyone who gets in her way.

Dear Board of Directors 5/9/2026

Thank you, to those of you having the courage to put parents'/community concerns and wishes concerning the Superintendent's Leave and elementary school closures first, above a pre-conceived agenda. Thanks for listening to the parents/public and slowing down to develop a procedure rather than be swayed by inaccurate data and timeline. If you all truly want to PUT PARENTS FIRST, it would be really good if, next time, you ALL attend all of the Parent Meetings to hear their concerns directly.

Looking ahead to the agenda this week, it appears you are going over processes and procedures. I was pleased to see in your Purpose and Commitment you are declaring to the community some very good goals. I love that "OUR COMMITMENT: WE WILL..." includes little boxes we can check off every time we see you do those things. I'll be sure to bring one of these along for each of you to the meetings. I do believe if you keep your Commitments, you will see the trust, public confidence, strong, unified Board that will result in student success that we all desire.

The Evaluation of Superintendent Criteria is clear and comprehensive. What a big job! I think this too can be used as a mirror for your own evaluation. Especially the "School Board Relations" and the "Staff and or Management" sections. Communication and workings between the Board and Superintendent is a two-way street with responsibilities flowing between. It goes without saying both are heading toward the betterment of the district and should be evaluated with the same scrutiny.

In my experience, a truly good, effective leader has two main qualities.

1. She deeply cares for and respects those she leads and serves.
2. She shares the load. She gets ideas and buy-in from the beginning, valuing other's opinions and ideas. She collaborates and shares tasks, challenges, setbacks and successes. Every decision expresses, 'we are in this together!'

I hope to see these qualities in our superintendent and Madam President of the Board of Directors.

Zoe Werden, Montrose

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

SCHOOL DISTRICT DESERVES GOVERNANCE WORTHY OF THE PUBLIC TRUST

Dear Editor,

I have followed the recent actions of the school board regarding Superintendent Carrie Stevenson with increasing concern.

My concern is not about the allegations themselves. Allegations deserve to be investigated. Staff concerns should be taken seriously. The investigation should be thorough and allowed to proceed wherever the facts lead.

My concern is the process.

Public confidence in the government depends on how decisions are made. The more serious the allegation, the greater the obligation to proceed carefully, thoughtfully, and transparently. What I observed at the recent special board meeting did not inspire that confidence.

An investigation was already underway. No findings have been issued. No conclusions have been reached. The investigator had not completed her work. Yet a special meeting was called with only 24 hours' notice to consider removing the superintendent from her normal duties before the investigation was complete.

During the meeting, some board members openly expressed confusion about critical aspects of the situation. Questions were raised regarding the investigator's qualifications, scope of work, cost, timeline, and methodology. One board member acknowledged not even knowing the investigator's name until the evening of the meeting. Another stated that she had never spoken with the investigator and had no direct knowledge of her credentials.

Those revelations are astonishing.

How does a governing board reach a decision of this magnitude when some mem-

bers do not know the investigator's identity, have never spoken with her, and are still asking basic questions about the process during the very meeting in which they are expected to vote? The meeting left me with the impression that board leadership had not ensured all members were equally informed and working from the same set of facts. A board cannot make sound decisions if some members are still trying to understand the basic contours of an investigation while others have been involved in it for weeks.

Equally troubling was the repeated assertion that placing the superintendent on leave was "non-punitive." Legally, perhaps that phrase has meaning. In the real world, however, the consequences are obvious.

When a superintendent is publicly removed from normal duties while allegations remain unproven, consequences occur whether salary continues or not.

The confusion deepened when legal counsel repeatedly explained that although the superintendent would be placed on leave, she would remain the superintendent, could still be contacted by the board, could still perform designated duties, and could still be directed to carry out functions that only a superintendent could perform.

The practical implications were equally unclear. The district is entering one of its busiest periods of the year, involving budget preparation, principal evaluations, staffing decisions, contract decisions, and planning for the coming school year. Yet the board appeared to have no clearly articulated operational plan before voting.

The resulting picture was difficult to rec-

oncile. The superintendent was being removed from her normal duties, yet the board and legal counsel simultaneously acknowledged that she would remain superintendent, could still be assigned certain duties, and would likely continue to perform functions deemed essential to district operations. That contradiction only reinforced the impression that the board was making consequential decisions before fully thinking through their implementation.

Good governance requires resisting the temptation to act first and sort out the details afterward. What the public witnessed instead was a troubling example of "ready, fire, aim" governance.

The central issue is not the investigation itself. The central issue is whether the public can have confidence that decisions of this magnitude are being made through a process that is informed, deliberate, and fair. I left the meeting with serious doubts.

My doubts concern whether the board demonstrated the level of preparation, discipline, and shared understanding necessary to justify a decision of this magnitude.

The students, staff, and taxpayers of this district deserve a board that approaches difficult decisions with rigor rather than urgency, with facts rather than assumptions, and with a commitment to process every bit as strong as its commitment to outcomes.

The district deserves governance worthy of the public trust.

David Gann, Montrose

Neighbors for Good Governance



OPINION /EDITORIAL: LETTERS

ABOUT THE LAW

Editor:

A few weeks ago, I brought forth a concern about an apparent desire to declare Montrose as a non-sanctuary city to City Council.

My concern came about because of Badagliacco's opinion piece in the Montrose Mirror citing the Constitution and U S immigration law. I particularly challenged Mr. Ulibarri and asked if the message he was sending the kids he mentors regarding the quest for self-improvement, the promise of financial security through job opportunities, or simply the wish for a better quality of life are falsehoods. He took exception to the challenge saying he teaches his kids about respect, integrity and the law. I asked him to cite a law that mandates a municipality declare itself as non-sanctuary. He didn't or couldn't.

I asked Google's AI if there were any federal laws requiring municipalities to declare themselves non-sanctuary. The answer – "There are no federal laws requir-

ing local jurisdictions to declare themselves non-sanctuary. Under the Tenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and the legal doctrine of anti-commandeering, the federal government cannot legally force states or municipalities to enforce federal immigration laws or actively declare a specific status."

Nor are we obligated by law to assist federal law enforcement in capturing and retaining those that are here illegally. Another simple Google search finds, "under federal law, state and local law enforcement agencies are not legally required to assist U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) with the capture, detention, or retention of individuals. The U.S. Constitution's "anti-commandeering" doctrine prevents the federal government from forcing local agencies to enforce federal civil laws." To do so may be considered coercion which is in itself against the law. "Coercion laws penalize forcing individuals to act against their free will

through threats, violence, or intimidation."

The point of this opinion piece is it is simply opinion. Ulibarri says he supports the law but is unable to define it.

Badagliacco is fond of quoting the Constitution and U.S. law.

I have a copy of the Constitution by my recliner as well. I just interpret some things differently than he does, in particular the equal protection clause of the 14th amendment.

Neither Ulibarri, Badagliacco nor I are lawyers. We are not trained to interpret the law nor the intent of the Articles or Amendments of the U.S. Constitution. We are simply expressing our views.

The next time you read someone's opinion on the law ask, is this person qualified to tell me what the law requires?

Do a little research and form your own opinion and don't rely solely on others to inform you of what is right or wrong.

Dave Stockton, Montrose



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: COMMENTARY



PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENTS

MONTROSE—During the June 1st work session, Councilor Reed proposed a citizen’s commission to develop the proposed charter amendments. Initially, I was open to the idea and found his detailed presentation thoughtful and convincing.

After careful research and reflection on how constitutional amendments are properly presented, I cannot support the process he proposed. We are a constitutional republic, not a democracy. In a republic, the people elect representatives to craft proposals and policy through structured deliberation. This framework promotes accountable governance. The Council was elected to represent the people of Montrose and to carry out that responsibility.

It is the duty of the City Council to craft these charter amendment proposals and present them to Montrose voters. Public input has informed our discussions and remains critical. However, delegating the core task of proposal development to an unelected commission would skirt the fundamental duty we were elected to fulfill for the people.

Delays and inefficiencies have long been the scorn of effective government. Yet avoiding our elected responsibilities by adding unnecessary layers is equally troubling. A commission would slow the process and risk missing the critical November 2026 ballot. The 2014 and 2025 charter amendments advanced to the people for a vote successfully without one. But for some reason NOW, we need one according to Reed.

One such proposed amendment would move city elections to even numbered years in November to increase voter turnout, which has often been below 20% in April elections. The November ballot with Presidential, Gubernatorial and Congressional races offers the best chance for the strongest participation allowing for the true voice of the people.

In my humble opinion, the Council should offer the proposed amendments to the voters so they can decide. The council must do the work to develop them. We cannot delegate this core responsibility to an unelected commission.

Our next Work Session is June 15 at 10 am and our next Council meeting is on June 16 at 6 PM at 107 S. Cascade.

Thank you,

Michael J. Badagliacco, "MJB"
Mayor – Montrose, CO
mjb@cityofmontrose.org

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: COMMENTARY

TREATING PEOPLE EQUALLY: THE ABSENCE OF BIGOTRY

by Michael J Badagliacco, "MJB"

I have always tried to treat every person the same way. **Same respect. Same rules. Same chance.** Yet when I do exactly that, I sometimes get called a bigot or a racist. I have even heard such inflammatory and irrational statements as, *"There will be blood on your hands. There will be murders."*

I have always believed, as a matter of personal responsibility, that the actions taken are the responsibility of the one taking that action. Statements such as the previous quote still catch me off guard even in a world where personal responsibility has become a faint reality. The very act of refusing to play favorites in some areas of life seems to trigger the harshest words from people who claim to care about fairness.

Bigotry, as it is usually defined, means clinging to strong but unreasonable beliefs while showing intolerance toward anyone who sees things differently. By that measure, treating people equally should be the clearest sign that bigotry is not present. I keep coming back to that simple truth.

The Sting of Being Labeled

What surprises me most is how often the people quickest to slap on the label of bigotry show little patience for opinions that differ from theirs. *I have felt this in conversations, in public meetings, and in the wider back-and-forth that passes for debate these days.* The word gets turned into a weapon instead of a description of real prejudice. That reversal bothers me. It cheapens the serious damage actual bigotry does to real people.

Martin Luther King Jr. spoke to this when he dreamed of a nation where his children

would be *"judged by the content of their character, not the color of their skin"*. That standard still feels right to me. It asks us to see the person in front of us, not the group they belong to.

What I am seeing

I have heard reports of disparaging comments directed at the LGBTQ+ community on social media. I have friends and family members who are part of the LGBTQ+ community and these reports disturb me deeply. Not because I have friends and family members who are part of the LGBTQ+ community, but because it is happening to anyone in our community. Such conduct is wrong; **it is rooted in hate and unacceptable.**

Every citizen deserves to live their life as they see fit as a consenting adult without fear. There are those who hold personal convictions that lead them to disagree with a particular lifestyle. *That is their right.* It is not however, acceptable to discriminate or disparage another citizen because of their lifestyle or identity. The same principle applies regardless of skin color, national origin, or sex. **Discrimination has no place in our community or society as a whole.**

What Keeps Me Steady

I measure my views against the Constitution and the laws that rest on it. Justice John Marshall Harlan put it plainly in his dissent in the Supreme Court Decision, **Plessy v. Ferguson: "our Constitution is color-blind and neither knows nor tolerates classes among citizens. In civil rights, all citizens stand equal before the law"**.

The Civil Rights Act turned that principle into everyday protection. It said no one should face discrimination because of

race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. More recently, the Supreme Court in *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard* reminded everyone that **"equal protection means treating individuals as individuals..."**.

These statements shape how I try to carry myself in public life and in private decisions.

Values That Draw Fire

I hold core values the same way most people with integrity do. They come from family, from years of service, and from watching what happens when rules bend for some but not others. When those values run into ideas that sort citizens by group identity instead of individual conduct, the criticism arrives quickly. Sometimes it sets common sense aside entirely. I have learned that holding the line anyway is part of living with principle. I would like to think, **you don't unplug your values like unplugging a toaster.** If you are a person with integrity, you will vote your values. If you do not, are they really your values, or are you simply virtue signaling for the sake of expediency or undue favor?

Why I Keep Standing Here

At the end of the day, **I will not trade equal treatment for easier headlines or fewer accusations. The label hurts less than the thought of giving up on fairness that applies to everyone.** True equality does not hand out different rules based on who someone is or what group claims them. It asks the same of all of us and gives the same chance to all of us. **That is the standard I try to meet, even when it draws fire. It is also the standard worth keeping.**

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

FOCUS ON YOUR SWING, NOT YOUR PROSTATE: MRH HOSTS MEN'S HEALTH TALK *Free community presentation at The Bridges Golf & Country Club will cover common urinary symptoms and available treatment options*

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE— In recognition of Men's Health Month, the MRH Urology Clinic will host a free community education event focused on prostate and bladder health on Thursday, June 18, at The Bridges Golf & Country Club in Montrose.

"Focus on Your Swing, Not Your Prostate," will feature presentations from board-certified urologists Craig Peterson, MD, and Michael S. Tonzi, MD, who will discuss common urologic conditions affecting men, including enlarged prostate

symptoms, bladder concerns, urinary urgency, and available treatment options.

Doors will open at 4:30 pm, with presentations beginning promptly at 5 pm. Complimentary appetizers will be provided.

Topics will include minimally invasive treatment options such as Aquablation® Therapy for enlarged prostate symptoms and Axonics® Therapy for bladder and bowel dysfunction.

"A lot of men experience urinary symptoms for years before realizing there may be treatment options available," said Dr.

Peterson. "We want this to be an approachable conversation where people can learn more, ask questions, and better understand their options."

"These are common concerns that can significantly affect daily life, sleep, travel, and overall comfort," said Dr. Tonzi. "The good news is that treatment options continue to improve, and many patients are surprised by what's available today."

The event is free to attend, but space may be limited. For more information, please call 970-497-8100.



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

GMUG PROPOSES RECREATION FEES FOR BLUE LAKES AREA COMMENT PERIOD RUNS FROM JUNE 1 TO AUGUST 31

Special to the Mirror

OURAY—The Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison (GMUG) National Forests’ Ouray Ranger District is proposing new recreation fees for the Blue Lakes area in the Mount Sneffels Wilderness.

Under the proposal, visitors would pay a fee of \$25 per site for an overnight permit and \$5 per person for a day-use permit during the peak season, which is expected to run from June 1 through September 30. Permits would be available through Recreation.gov, which adds an additional

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processing fee — currently \$6 for overnight permits and \$1 for day-use permits.

“We’ve seen unprecedented visitation in recent years, which has led to overcrowding and resource damage,” said Dana Gardunio, Ouray District Ranger. “The majority of the revenue generated from the fees would be used on-site to manage these areas, which is key to allowing us to reduce resource damage and continue providing high-quality recreation opportunities.”

The fee proposal is the next step in a larger effort to address overcrowding and resulting impacts in the Blue Lakes area within Mount Sneffels Wilderness. Fees would fund restoration of heavily damaged areas, increased ranger presence, trail and site maintenance, and improvements to recreation area amenities.

In 2004, Congress passed the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (REA) which allows the Forest Service to retain at least 80% of the money collected at recreation sites and use these funds locally to operate, maintain, and improve these sites. Revenue collected through recreation fees would help the forest improve infrastructure at recreation sites and fund additional recreation staff during the season of operation. Recreation fees help provide quality recreation opportunities that meet the modern expectations of visitors and creates a more financially sustainable recreation program for future generations.

The public is invited to comment on the proposed recreation fee changes. The comment period will start on June 1 and close on August 31. To ensure that your comments are considered, please send your comments no later than the above date to

sm.fs.bluelakes.vump@usda.gov or by mail or in person at the following address during business hours (9 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday-Friday):

Attention: Ouray Ranger District
2505 S. Townsend Ave
Montrose, CO 81401

Comments can also be provided online at <https://arcg.is/qvij80>.

In order to provide more details and answer questions on the fee proposal, the GMUG will also host a webinar on June 15 from 5-6 p.m. Link to access the meeting will be available [here](#).

For more information, visit our website [here](#).

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

FROM THE MONTROSE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Dear MCSD Students, Families, Staff, and Community Members,

On behalf of the Montrose County School District Board of Education, I am writing to share an important update regarding district leadership. At the June 2, 2026 Special Board Meeting, the

Board of Education voted to place Superintendent Dr. Carrie Stephenson on paid non-punitive, non-disciplinary leave pending the outcome of a third-party investigation, effective today, June 3, 2026.

To ensure continuity of leadership, the Board has appointed Dr. Jessica Kalb, the district’s Executive Director of Academic Services, to serve as Acting Superintendent during this period. Dr. Kalb brings extensive experience within our district, having served in key leadership roles and worked closely with our schools, staff, students, and families for many years. Because of that experience and deep knowledge of our organization, the Board is confident that she will provide steady leadership and ensure that district operations continue without interruption.

The Board remains committed to maintaining stability across the district and ensuring that teaching, learning, and student services continue without interruption. We are confident in our leadership team and appreciate the professionalism and dedication of our staff as they continue their important work on behalf of students.

We understand that this announcement may raise questions. While there are limits to the information that can be shared regarding personnel matters, the Board remains committed to transparency and will provide updates when appropriate and permissible.

We appreciate the continued dedication of our staff, the support of our families, and the partnership of our community. Together, we remain focused on providing the highest quality educational experience for every student.

Sincerely,

Neisha Balleck

President, MCSD Board of Education



REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

DOCTORS, OTHER AREA MEDICAL PROVIDERS URGED TO INCLUDE FAMILY CAREGIVERS IN PATIENT CARE

Special to the Mirror

REGIONAL-Doctors, physician assistants, nurse practitioners and others caring for a patient with a chronic condition must consider family caregivers vital in any treatment plan. The caregiver should be seen as a part of the care team, and as a patient. These recommendations and more were offered “humbly” by Laird Landon, PhD, in a recent presentation to doctors, nurses and other medical professionals at Montrose Regional Health hospital (MRH). Landon is chair of the Caregiver Support Foundation, which actively works to help family caregivers in Montrose, Delta and bordering communities. His organization’s seven board members all are or have been caregivers. “Any clinical visit is difficult when time is short, but it’s harder when you know your patient well, and the caregiver not at all,” Landon said. A useful approach would be to greet both the patient and caregiver by name upon entering the room. Then the provider could ask the caregiver to step into the hall and say something like, “In about a minute, tell me how my patient is doing.” “You would be surprised how often the provider focuses only on the patient” Landon said. Rather, the provider could include the caregiver with, for example, “This must be hard; how does it feel?” Landon emphasized he was not attempting to instruct the medical professionals, instead was advocating for hundreds of family caregivers in the area.

He cared for his wife for 10 years before she died from a neurocognitive condition. Dr. Michael Brezinsky, a Cedar Point Health physician and medical director of continuing medical education at MRH, later said, “Laird’s presentation on caregivers and the challenges they face was very impactful. Our physicians and advanced professional practitioners learned valuable tools to better support the family and friends who provide daily care for the patients we treat.” In the dynamic May 22 talk, Landon used slides on several screens to describe the family caregiver’s around-the-clock vigilance and often-heartbreaking burden. He urged his listeners to understand that family caregivers grieve for the slow decline of their loved one, but also grieve for their own loss of self, of hobbies, of relationships and of time. A handout given attendees included the telling sentence, “Family caregivers are adrift in a lifeboat, caring for a loved one who can’t be saved.” To help both occupants of that lifeboat, providers can more readily understand that the caregiver’s job is palliative — it is to provide the highest possible quality of life, not to search fruitlessly to find a fix for the disease.

However, Landon stressed, “Caregivers are the foundation of care. They are the advocate for and full-time provider of care.” Again Landon urged inclusion of the caregiver in provider meetings with the patient. In his work, caregivers have told him, “He ignored me completely. Doesn’t he know the diagnosis affects me too?” and “The advice to create a ‘care plan’ was good, except no information was given on how to develop one.” Landon took a minute to explain the work of the Caregiver Support Foundation, now five years old, and how it supports family caregivers. Its work is recognized by sustaining sponsorships from Volunteers of America and Montrose Regional Health. All foundation services are free. It sponsors confidential support group meetings for caregivers in Delta and Montrose and in two support groups of caregiver grief online. Its major public benefit is the Family Caregiver Summit each fall at the Montrose Pavilion, this year on October 16. At the summit caregivers and others attend breakout sessions on several topics, hear professional talks on caregiving and see many vendors displays.

More information is available on the website Family-Caregiver.org and by calling Colleen Steinberg, Family Caregiver Summit lead, at 309-310-8202. Contacts: Howard Armstrong, 970-901-7032, or Laird Landon, 970-275-2138



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COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

MONTROSE COUNTY INVITES PUBLIC TO ATTEND A FIRE SUMMIT ON JUNE 30

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE - Montrose County invites residents to attend a Community Fire Summit on June 30 from 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Montrose County Event Center. The summit will bring together local, state, and federal partners to discuss current wildfire conditions and what residents can do to prepare for the upcoming fire season.

Presentations will cover drought conditions, weather forecasts, fuel loads, wildfire prevention, vegetation management, acreage thinning efforts, available funding opportunities, emergency alerts, Red Flag Warnings, fire restrictions, and steps homeowners can take to harden their properties and improve wildfire resilience.


"Wildfire preparedness starts long before smoke is visible on the horizon," said Montrose County Commissioner Kirstin Copeland. "This summit is an opportunity for our community to hear directly from experts, better understand the risks we face, and learn practical steps to help protect lives, homes, and property."

The event is free and open to the public, however registration is required. Community members are encouraged to attend, ask questions, and learn how they can play a role in reducing wildfire risk across Montrose County.


For additional information and to register, please visit www.montrosecounty.net/fire or email pr@montrosecounty.net. Questions may also be directed to (970) 252-4508.

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LIBERTY ON THE LAWN

Special to the Mirror

GRAND JUNCTION-Liberty on the Lawn - America 250 will be at Mesa County Fairgrounds, Lions Club Park July 4, Noon to 7pm.


This is a community block-party event designed to bring together residents and visitors for an afternoon of connection, celebration, and local pride.

It is free to attend. Come with your neighbors, friends and family and please feel free to bring your chairs, coolers, and lawn games. Free activities, refreshments, and prizes are planned.

Event Highlights Include:

- Live local music
- Food trucks and local vendors
- Kids & family activity zone
- Community singing and patriotic moments
- Historic reenactments and readings of founding documents
- Community contests and interactive experiences

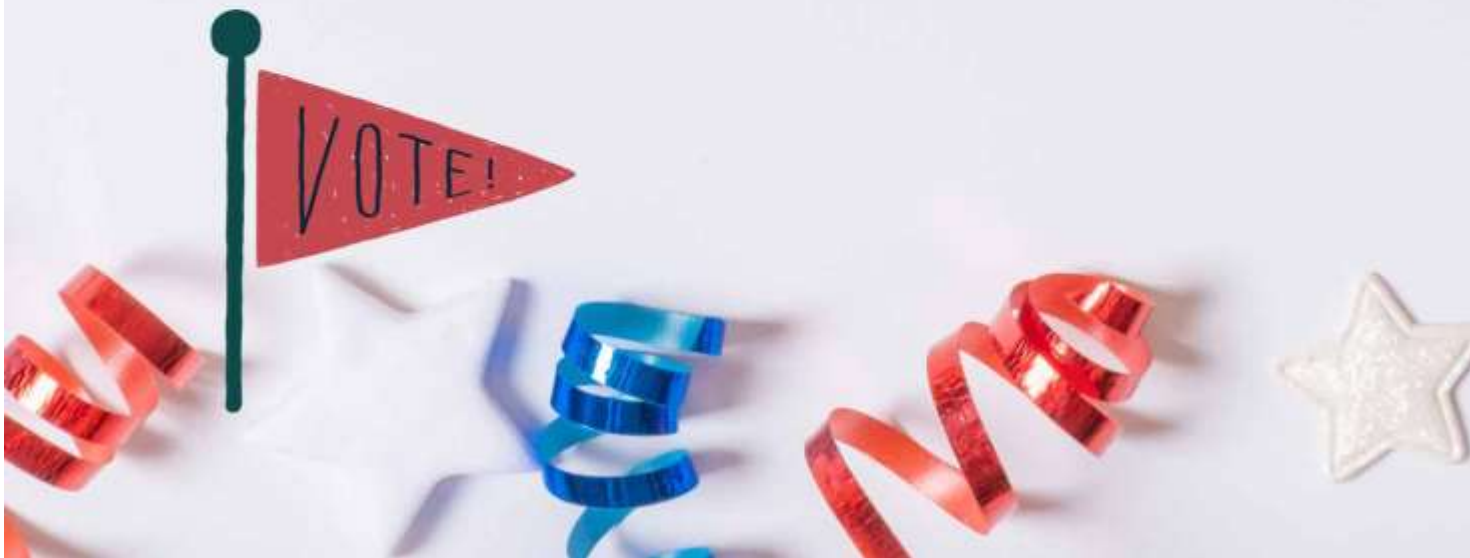
Join your community at this unique opportunity to enhance the overall July 4th experience in Grand Junction and be part of a once-in-a-generation America 250 celebration. "



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BOCC CONTINUES HEARING ON PROPOSED WEST END HEALTH SERVICE DISTRICT



Constituent Janet Chapman asked the BOCC to enact a moratorium on data centers. Meeting Screenshot.

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE-The Montrose Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) [regular meeting](#) of Wednesday, June 3 was held at 3pm, with all commissioners present. There was no invocation.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, BOCC Chair Sue Hansen opened the floor to public comment.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

First to speak was Tony Hoag, who asked Commissioners to implement a moratorium on data centers, citing the excessive use of water, electricity, and a non-transparent rate structure that passes much of the cost along to rate payers in the form of infrastructure. The City of Denver has implemented a moratorium, Hoag said, and offered examples of data center impacts to communities across the United States.

Colorado has no regulations at this time, Hoag said. He asked the BOCC to enact a moratorium before an application is received.

Next to speak was Amanda Clements. Climate change has resulted in tree loss on her family’s land, Clements said, adding that she and her husband (Tony Hoag) both have backgrounds in natural resource management. “We know that this battle is just daunting as it is,” she said, “and then along come data centers, throwing everything up in the air. We were hoping that we as a country could be on a path toward reducing emissions, and maybe turning around this trajectory of hotter, drier, hotter and drier, because it really affects us here in town. It affects the

property that we’ve invested much of our lifetime earnings in. With the data centers, it’s all up in the air again. It all looks bleak. One of the very few opportunities to kind of get a handle on this sudden, huge consumer of energy is at the county level.

“It’s really important now to grapple with this development in our culture and in our economy that is causing turmoil in all these little towns across the nation...”

Clements cited the example of Boxelder County Utah, where County Commissioners have approved a data center that will

“use more energy than the State of Utah, in one county...it’s thousands and thousands of acres...that’s the kind of capital that is being leveraged against small communities...this seems like an opportune time to try put on the brakes for a while...and make sure we’re prepared when people come knocking...”

DMEA has already received enquiries, she said, and has laid the responsibility on the County.

Next to speak was Carol Howe, who said that since the State of Colorado wasn’t able to pass any laws regulating the development and operation of data centers in Colorado, “Montrose County should be proactive in developing regulations to deal with the data centers when they come knocking on our door.”

Howe asked commissioners to consider implementing a moratorium on allowing data center development in Montrose County, to be in effect until the county can develop regulations that would address the issues that data centers require massive amounts of electricity and water to operate, and the potential noise and pollution impacts that could also be produced.

“Data Centers should not be allowed to put pressure on our already drought-impacted water supply, nor should they increase the cost of electricity to existing users or threaten the integrity of our power grid. Data centers can be and should be designed to pay their own costs, to develop power sources preferably from renewable energy sources such as solar and wind.

“They should only be located in areas that would have the least ecological and environmental impacts,” Howe said. “Data centers can provide economic benefits to the county and the community, through tax revenue and potential employment opportunities...”

She asked the county to work with a diverse committee of interested and knowledgeable citizens that would include community benefit plans and that would not result in increased costs passed on to residents.

Next to speak was Janet Chapman, who also spoke in favor of a moratorium on the development of data centers. “...data centers would take a lot of our water, and use fossil fuels, and there’s other renewable sources for energy—geothermal, solar, and heat pumps...please consider postponing until this can be decided by a law by the legislature.”

Wayne Urbanas spoke next. “...If our county can demonstrate that we currently have the competence and confidence and public support to move forward, I don’t see a problem.

“I don’t think that’s the case...”

Urbanas said that when a competitive sports team is not prepared to compete, coaches will call a time out. “...Fail to plan, plan to fail.”

Ron Henderson spoke about water and discussed Project 7’s Resiliency Project. “...it is struggling mightily to take care of the demand for potable water,” Henderson said, “...for about \$200 million they can get 20 percent of what they presently can get.”

He urged Montrose County and other counties involved to get together with Project 7’s Resiliency group in a public forum. “...because the Project is in over their head, and they need guidance, friendship, and hope...they need to get it in a good, honest to God Christian manner.”

AGENDA CHANGE

Clerk to the BOCC Melissa Howie asked to move Item D-1 to follow item Item D-5, to become Item D6.

CONSENT AGENDA

Consent Agenda items were approved unanimously.

GENERAL BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

BOCC CONTINUES HEARING ON PROPOSED WEST END HEALTH SERVICE DISTRICT

From previous pg

Commissioners voted to [ratify the County Attorney's signature](#) on a letter of engagement with Katherine Yarger for filing an amicus brief on behalf of Western Slope counties, including Montrose County, and approval of a contribution of \$7,500 towards attorney fees (in the matter of Sunco Energy U.S.A. Inc., et al. v. County Commissioners of Boulder County, et al., No. 25-170).

Commissioners approved the Chair's signature on the [amendment](#) to County Manager Joe Kerby's Employment Agreement, changing his first date of employment from June 15, 2026 to June 22, 2026. This amendment has been reviewed and approved by legal counsel.

The BOCC authorized the Chair's signature on a [contract](#) to purchase a 15-foot high by five foot wide by 52-feet long re-

inforced concrete box culvert from [Rinker Materials](#) of Grand Junction in the amount of \$103,480. The box culvert will replace an undersized corrugated metal pipe culvert (C-1868) that has failed. Due to the size of the box culvert, the County will bid the installation. This is a budgeted project.

Also authorized was the Chair's signature on the construction [contract](#) for the 2026 Road Paint Striping Project, awarding the work to [Stripe A Lot, Inc.](#) of Montrose in the amount of \$241,067.43, as reviewed by Counsel. Upon approval, a purchase order will be issued to Stripe A Lot, Inc. in the amount of \$241,067.43.

The final item was a Public Hearing, for review and determination of whether the service plan submitted by the proposed West End Health Service District complies with statutory requirements, as well as possible continuance of the Public Hearing to June 10, 2026 at a meeting to be held in Nucla.

Following presentations, public comments, and discussion, the BOCC voted to continue the Hearing and discussion until [June 10 in Nucla](#). Additional comments are included in the meeting [packet](#). With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

ENSTROM CANDIES COMPLETES 50,000 SQUARE-FOOT EXPANSION IN GRAND JUNCTION

Special to the Mirror

GRAND JUNCTION— Enstrom Candies, a 97-year-old, family-owned Colorado company known for its world-famous toffee, has completed construction on its new 50,000-square-foot expansion facility located at the corner of 28 Road and Grand Avenue.

The project, which broke ground on December 6, 2024, reached completion in May 2026. The company is now in the process of moving inventory and transitioning teams into the new space, with operations expected to begin as early as this fall. The facility will support continued growth by housing Enstrom's warehouse, distribution center, and office space for shipping, creative, marketing, and design teams.

From its Grand Junction roots, Enstrom Candies now ships to all 50 states and more than 30 countries worldwide. Its products are available through national retailers including Costco, Dillard's, QVC, Michaels, select high-end boutiques, and independent mom-and-pop shops internationally.

Enstrom Candies would like to emphasize that its retail store, candy kitchens, and corporate offices will remain in downtown Grand Junction.

"As part of the fourth generation, we're excited about what this facility allows us to do," said Jim Simons, vice president of sales and co-owner. "We've needed additional space for more than a decade, and this helps us better support our operations as we continue serving customers across the country and around the world. Beyond increasing efficiency in our operations and distribution, this expansion gives us the capacity to grow production in our downtown facilities with the additional space now available."

The fourth generation of the Enstrom family plans to continue growing the business in Grand Junction, where it was founded.

Additional updates on the expansion will be shared on Enstrom Candies' website and social media channels. More information is available at: <https://enstrom.com/pages/expansion/>



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CONSTITUENTS SPEAK IN SUPPORT OF PRIDE PROCLAMATION

From pg 1

chose to speak; the first hour of the meeting was given over to public comment.

Mayor Badagliacco read the rules for public comment and offered a statement of his own. "I have always tried to treat every person the same way, the same respect, the same rules, the same chance. Yet when I do exactly that, I sometimes get called a bigot or a racist. It still catches me off guard.

"The very act of refusing to play favorites seems to trigger the harshest words, from people who claim to care about fairness. Bigotry, as it is usually defined, means clinging to strong but unreasonable beliefs while showing intolerance for anyone who sees things differently...what surprises me the most is how often the people quickest to slap on the label of bigotry show little patience for the opinions that differ from theirs...the word gets turned into a weapon...it cheapens the serious damage actual bigotry does to real people...I've heard reports of disparaging comments directed at the LGBTQ+ community on social media. I have friends and family members who are part of that community, and these reports do disturb me extremely deeply...such conduct is wrong and it is rooted in hate and it is unacceptable...it is not acceptable to discriminate against or disparage another citizen because of their lifestyle or their identity....discrimination has no place in our community."

The comments offered by constituents covered a number of topics, ranging from the non-partisan nature of the League of Women Voters, the upcoming Montrose Summer Music Series, the proliferation of E-Bikes throughout the city, the City's tolerance for "MAGA" cruising South Townsend, to the disappointment that the City has declined to issue a PRIDE proclamation in 2026.

Still, the majority of comments concerned the PRIDE Proclamation.

Speaker Evelyn Greenman Baird read the PRIDE Proclamation in its entirety.

Others spoke of their experiences as les-

bians and gays, transgender individuals, and as family members and loved ones of LGBTQ+ people. A number of speakers talked about growing up "different," and finding acceptance within the PRIDE movement. Some spoke about learning to accept a loved one's chosen identity; one individual stated that LGBTQ+ individuals have always existed, while another recalled his religious upbringing to remind others to be tolerant. Several spoke with rage stemming from political beliefs rather than LGBTQ+ status.

The importance of being seen, recognized, and affirmed by City Council and the community was a recurring theme, as was a sense of sadness that there would be no PRIDE proclamation.

Following comments from the Public, Councilor J. David Reed read some prepared remarks of his own, noting how disappointed he was with the decision not to issue a proclamation in support of PRIDE this year. "...I want every member of Montrose's LGBTQ+ community to know that I see you, I value you, and I believe you belong here...you are part of this community...I cannot change the outcome of this decision, as much as I may want to, that's not the way our government works, and I respect that. But I can make my own position very clear. I support recognition, inclusion, and respect for every member of our community. I believe our city is strongest when every resident knows that they are welcomed, that they are valued, and that they are respected. To everyone who feels discouraged tonight, please know this: you belong in Montrose and you matter in Montrose, and there are many people in this community who stand with you tonight."

Councilor David Frank said, "...I'll see you Saturday (at the Montrose Pride Festival)."

There was applause.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Council voted to approve [minutes of the May 19, 2026](#), regular City Council meeting as presented.

RESOLUTION 2026-06

Council voted to approve [Resolution 2026-06](#), setting July 7, 2026, as the hearing date for the [El Chapin Addition annexation](#).

ORDINANCE 2715 - SECOND READING

Councilor Ed Ulibarri recused himself from Consideration of [Ordinance 2715](#), as he serves on the Mexican American Development Association (MADA) Board. Ordinance 2715 was approved with four votes and one recusal on Second Reading.

ORDINANCE 2716 - FIRST READING

Council approved [Ordinance 2716](#) on First Reading, amending Title 5 Chapter 15 Sections 7 and 22, to reflect recodification of certain sections of the Colorado Revised Statutes (Ordinance 2716 enacts a sales tax exemption for the sale of precious metal bullion and coins which is analogous to the State of Colorado).

Constituent Ryan Sedgely urged Council to vote no.

"It seems like an odd thing to exempt from sales tax; we're not talking about jewelry or other things, yeah, kind of an interesting thing to exempt, especially if we need money for the budget, it would make sense to impose a tax on that business, it's not helping the community anyway that I can think of, maybe ya'll can, but seems to be a fair tax to have..."

RESOLUTION 2026-07

Council voted to approve [Resolution 2026-07](#), authorizing the filing of a Co-Responder Program grant through the Colorado Department of Health Services.

RIO GRANDE/EAST OAK GROVE ROUNDABOUT AND PHASE I RIO GRANDE EXTENSION PROJECT COMPLETION CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT AWARD

Also approved was a [contract award to Ridgway Valley Enterprises](#) in the amount of \$2,514,523. to complete the Rio Grande/East Oak Grove Roundabout and Phase I Rio Grande Extension Project.

STAFF REPORTS

Utilities Manager David Bries presented an update on the Wastewater Treatment plant Project.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned.

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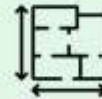
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Welcome Home

BOARD OF EDUCATION PLACES SUPERINTENDENT ON LEAVE *From pg 1*

five to two to approve the agenda, with directors Hovde and West voting to deny.

NEW BUSINESS

The first item to be considered was, "Pursuant to Section 11(c) of Dr. Stephenson's employment agreement, the Board will provide Dr. Stephenson an opportunity to meet with the Board and respond to the reasons provided for the proposed paid administrative leave and any evidence provided in support of those reasons, if applicable."

Superintendent Carrie Stephenson responded to the proposal to place her on paid administrative leave. She spoke at length, fiercely denying any reason for her being placed on paid leave, and said that she was lodging a grievance against the Board of Education and its President Neisha Balleck. Stephenson accused Balleck of taking action without board approval. "...A school board acts only when it acts together..."

Stephenson denied the allegations against her and asked the Board of Education to vote against placing her on paid administrative leave. She refuted allegations that she engaged in intimidation and influencing of staff at Olathe Elementary School.

Stephenson asked for a prompt investigation into the Board of Education, as well as mediation and Board training. "I am willing to say we got off on the wrong foot."

Board President Neisha Balleck presented the second New Business item, "To approve Placing the Superintendent, Dr. Carrie Stephenson, on paid, non-punitive, non-disciplinary leave pending the outcome of third-party investigation into employee complaints at Olathe Elementary School."

District F Director Jody Hovde presented

a Motion to not place the Superintendent on paid leave.

The Board spent time in discussion.

Board Vice President Ted Valerio said that the proposed leave is not punitive, is in accordance with the Superintendent's contract, and will allow the investigation into the occurrences at Olathe Elementary School to continue. A previously requested investigation was not done, he said.

"We expect documentation.....this is not designed to punish or retaliate against the superintendent...we're not at the point for any punitive action. She will be paid...this is where we are right now...administrative leave does protect our superintendent and our district....we need to let the investigation continue without interruption...we need to let it run its course."

District E Director Tiffany Vincent said, "This is a good way to protect everybody involved...leave is not punitive."

Board President Neisha Balleck said that the integrity of the process is really important, and the board had voted unanimously to have a third-party investigation.

The investigation will be conducted by [Sally Roller](#); her rate is \$275 per hour.

Hovde said that Board Vice President Ted Valerio said Roller is qualified. "How do we know? I didn't even know her name until tonight...we need to consider all perspectives...we don't have a lot of public trust right now as a board...we deserve to be a highly functioning board...I'm frustrated myself with this process."

The Board voted to deny Hovde's motion not to place the Superintendent on paid leave, in a five to two vote with only Hovde and West voting yes. The motion failed.

District E Director Tiffany Vincent moved to place the Superintendent, Dr. Carrie

Stephenson, on paid, non-punitive, non-disciplinary leave pending the outcome of third-party investigation into employee complaints at Olathe Elementary School.

The Board engaged in a discussion of details pertaining to the Superintendent's paid leave, including the selection of an interim administrator for the District and how workflow would be handled.

Director Hovde asked to serve as the Board representative to the Superintendent, which was agreed to by the rest of the Board.

At several points during the meeting, the audience was asked not to be disruptive, with President Balleck saying that those who continued to disrupt the meeting would be asked to leave.

The Board voted four to three to place the Superintendent, Dr. Carrie Stephenson, on paid, non-punitive, non-disciplinary leave pending the outcome of the third-party investigation into employee complaints at Olathe Elementary School.

Voting Nay were Directors Hovde, West, and Daly.

The board voted unanimously to approve the final New Business item, the designation of temporary acting superintendent coverage for District operations, subject to acceptance and further Board action as needed. Jessica Kalb was selected as acting superintendent, pending Kalb's acceptance. If Kalb does not accept, Hovde, in consultation with legal counsel, will identify and confirm temporary acting superintendent coverage subject to acceptance until the board takes further action. The Superintendent may continue to perform designated duties designated by the Board designee and/or the Board.

The Board of Education voted unanimously to adjourn the special meeting.



**The Mirror:
many views,
one newspaper.**



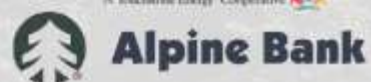
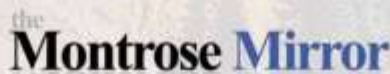
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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

CLOSURE OF MIAMI ROAD WEST OF 6700 ROAD

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-Contractors working on a nearby residential subdivision will close Miami Road immediately west of 6700 Road starting on May 6, 2026, to perform waterline replacement work. Local traffic to all nearby residences will be maintained throughout the closure; however, it will not be possible to cross the closure area on



Miami Road with a vehicle. As a result, local traffic will be detoured to Hillcrest Drive or 6700 Road as shown in the accompanying map. The closures are expected to last into mid-June.

The city asks that motorists and pedestrians please slow down through work areas and respect all closed-off areas. Any questions regarding the work may be directed to City Engineer Scott Murphy at (970)901-1792 or smurphy@cityofmontrose.org.

[Visit the MoveMo project page ...](#)

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

FRUITA FARMERS MARKET RETURNS JUNE 13 WITH FAMILY FUN DAY CELEBRATION

Special to the Mirror

FRUITA— The beloved Fruita Farmers Market is returning for the 2026 season with an exciting Opening Day celebration on Saturday, June 13 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Fruita Civic Center Park, 325 E Aspen Ave in Downtown Fruita.

Hosted by the Fruita Area Chamber of Commerce, the Fruita Farmers Market will take place every Saturday through October 31, bringing together local agriculture, artisan goods, fresh foods, live entertainment, and community connection in the heart of Downtown Fruita.

Opening Day will feature more than 80 local vendors along with a variety of family-friendly activities designed to celebrate the start of the market season.

Opening Day festivities include:

- A free bounce house provided by the Lower Valley Fire Department
- A community paint event hosted by the City of Fruita
- Live music and entertainment
- Fresh local produce and artisan shopping
- Food vendors and breakfast options

The return of the popular Farmer Fred Scavenger Hunt for kids at the Fruita Chamber tent, where participants can complete the hunt and redeem it for a free prize

The Fruita Farmers Market continues to serve as an important platform for supporting local agriculture, small businesses, and regional makers while creating a vibrant community gathering space for residents and visitors.

“The Fruita Farmers Market has become one of the signature ways our community comes together to support local,” said Kayla Howell, President/CEO of the Fruita Area Chamber of Commerce. “From our hardworking agricultural producers to our talented makers and entrepreneurs, this market helps strengthen connections between residents, visitors, and the businesses that make Fruita special. We are thrilled to welcome everyone back for another incredible season and encourage the community to shop local and support the people who help our region thrive.”

The market also proudly participates in the SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) and Double Up Food Bucks (DUFb) programs, helping increase access to fresh and local foods for families throughout the region. SNAP card holders can visit the Fruita Chamber tent during the market to utilize their benefits and shop directly with participating local vendors.

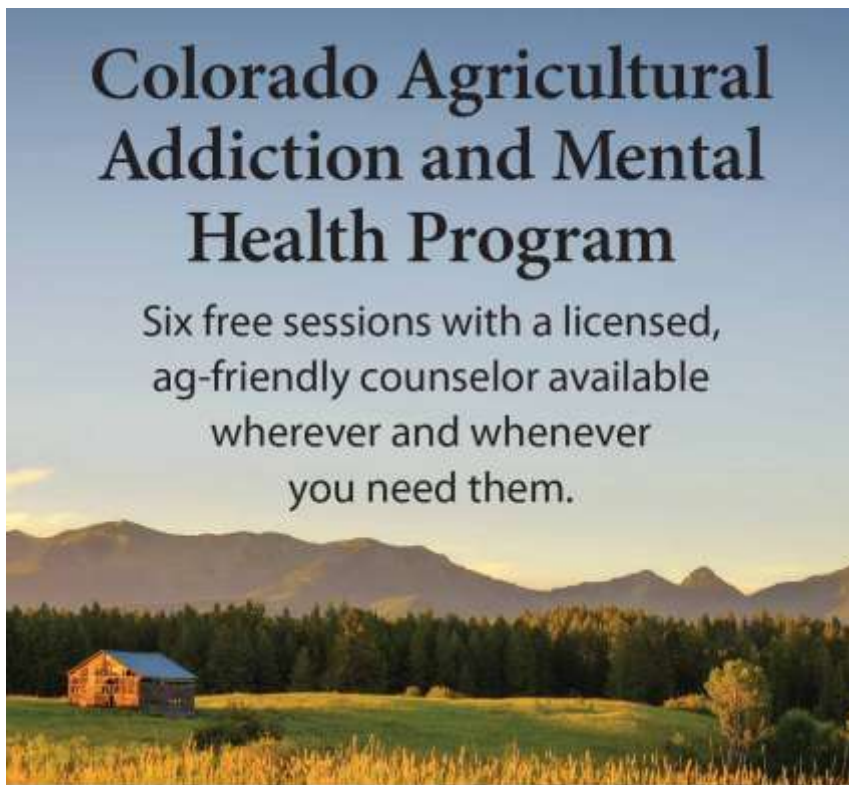
Visitors are encouraged to spend the morning exploring Downtown Fruita and supporting local restaurants, shops, and businesses throughout the community.

Community members can also visit fruitafarmers-market.org to:

- View the weekly live music lineup
- Search vendors and products
- Access the interactive weekly vendor map
- Stay updated on upcoming market events and activities

The Fruita Farmers Market serves as a community hub celebrating local agriculture, entrepreneurship, and small business growth while connecting the community with the people and products that make Western Colorado unique. We would like to thank our partners who help make this event possible – Atlasta Solar Center, our returning title sponsor of the event, US Bank, long-time partner who is presenting our free music all season, the City of Fruita, Colorado Housing and Finance Authority, FCI Constructors and Renewal By Anderson.

For additional information, visit fruitafarmers-market.org



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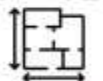
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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

“CLOWN SHOW” PERCEPTION OF THE DEMOCRAT PARTY IS TAKING ROOT

Editor:

I wrote earlier that today's Democrats have surrendered to radicals, anti-Semites, and anti-American extremists. That was confirmed this week when I watched segments of the clown show Democrats put on in Congress, grilling some of Trump's top officials. Several simpleton Democrat congress members attempted but failed to humiliate Secretary of State Rubio and Treasury Secretary Bessent. If there were any sane Democrats watching, they had to notice the clear difference in intelligence and competency levels between the Secretaries and the Democrat members of Congress. Each of the “interrogators” embarrassed themselves. The “clown show” perception of the Democrat party is taking root. In business there is the term “branding” – establishing the uniqueness of who you are and what you are selling, hopefully in a positive light. The term is also applicable to politics. Unfortunately for Democrats, their “clown show” brand has become all too obvious. The sheer moonbatterry of the left has destroyed their once great brand.

A logical question for Democrats is: When they are no longer able to win elections through fraud and deception, who are they going to rely upon to vote them back into power? They will never get the men's vote back. For decades now, a central pillar of leftist thought is that men are “toxic.” Democrats have attacked what was once their base of blue-collar men, who aren't afraid of “manliness” – self-reliance, a can-do attitude, a willingness to problem solve out of a disaster, and yes, a willingness to shake off a skinned knee or bruised ego to get something done. Most men get a little upset when they are told they have to be reindoctrinated as voters for a Democrat party that loathes them. When the left throws in criticism of private property and earned wealth (capitalism), men are naturally further alienated.

Democrats have been a little more successful in brainwashing women. Some women can't recognize misogyny when it slaps them in the face. Forcing women and girls to compete with men in their sports and share their locker rooms with men pretending to be girls is an absurdity by any meas-

ure. Perhaps even worse, can you imagine being a woman in prison and being forced to share your cell and shower room with a male sent to the women's prison solely on the basis of his identifying as a woman? Where is the Democrat party of old that at least gave lip service to women's rights? The Democrat party hypocrisy and their abandonment of women were made clear this week with their response to Graham Platner's various scandals. I've mentioned the Democrat nominee for the US Senate before – Nazi tattoo, mocking purple heart veterans, and much worse. The New York Times released an expose including allegations by several of Platner's ex-girlfriends. Those allegations came following reports that Platner sent sexually explicit text messages to several women while married to his current wife. We all remember when Bret Kavanaugh was hit with totally baseless sexual assault allegations intended to derail his Supreme Court nomination. Democrats far and wide demanded his nomination be withdrawn under the asinine notion that we should “believe all women.” Now that their Nazi-tatted Senate candidate is facing far more credible accusations, the party is suddenly changing its tune. Flip-Flop. Democrats are shrugging it off and casting Platner's female accusers as unreliable. The “party of women” will continue to defend Platner for as long as it takes. The Party chooses to believe some women only when they can be weaponized to advance their lust for power. Thinking women will recognize the hypocrisy and resist putting Democrats back in power.

Democrats will probably continue to rely upon their Jewish supporters to get them back in power. Why that might be so is beyond me. Not only has the Democrat party become more radical and Marxist starting with the Obama administration, they now love Hamas and hate Israel. In the Israel-Hamas conflict, more than seven in ten Americans stand with Israel. Yet among Democrats, support for Hamas reaches a disturbing 36 percent. Nearly four in ten Democrats aligning with a terrorist group against the Middle East's only thriving democracy signals something rotten in that party. Logic says that Jews will cease sup-

porting the party where denying Israel's right to exist, applying double standards to the Jewish State, and framing it as a colonial oppressor are all too common among its membership.

The hatred toward Israel is to some extent no different than Democrats' resentment toward the values that made America great: self-reliance, innovation, Western heritage, and the right of free people to defend themselves. The more people recognize that, the less likely Democrats will regain power. Not insignificantly, Democrats are now having to finance their own campaigns after the Trump administration shut down their USAID slush fund. Among the greatest early accomplishments of the second Trump administration was the shuttering of USAID. It's great partly because it saved billions of taxpayer money going to such things as transgender operas in Columbia. Just as importantly, it shut down innumerable Democrat NGOs and “non-profits” funding the Democrat party and their cronies in America with taxpayer money. The Democrat National Committee went broke within a month and had to borrow millions just to keep the lights on. Senator Fetterman says he was the only Democrat on the Senate's Fraud Exploratory Committee to vote in favor of opening an investigation into Malia Obama's suspicious USAID grants when she was still living at the White House in 2017. “She was just a kid,” said Fetterman, “So shouldn't we be looking at how a high-school girl snatched \$2.3 million for writing pen pal letters to a few dozen kids in Africa?” Democrats can no longer rely on the votes of Americans who have clearly recognized the total corruption of the Democrat party.

On a lighter side, Hillary Clinton tried to lecture Trump about the White House renovations and his plans to stage a UFC fight on the grounds. Trump fired back that he may name the ballroom the “Monica Lewinsky Ballroom.” Others mentioned the Clinton's attempt to steal valuable furniture as they exited the White House. People upset about the UFC fight were also reminded about Biden inviting drag queens and topless women onto the White House grounds. *Ed Henrie, Montrose*



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS



JUNE UPDATE: IT'S REALLY HAPPENING!

Dear Editor:

As we reflect on the June 6 anniversary of the D-Day landing and eventual liberation of France, we are so grateful for the supporters of the Montrose Veterans Memorial. Having a place to honor the Greatest Generation, many who served and lost their lives in WWII, will be a part of the legacy of this memorial.

Over the last three months many pieces of the Montrose Veterans Memorial have come to fruition. This month we are pleased to report that construction is going smoothly, and it is moving on time. After talking to our friends in New England, PG Memorials, the honor panels along with the 2,800-pound welcome artwork are scheduled to arrive in Montrose on Sept. 2. Upon delivery, they will set them in place.

Memorial grounds will be a place of reflection, healing, learning



-A 30-foot flagpole with the USA flag atop will tower over a gathering area—ready for Veterans Day and other ceremonies. Right now, we are researching the pole and have located options.

-The Huey helicopter will be the highlight of the last section. Mounted high, it will be a symbol that veterans and active-duty military experienced Huey's medivac and close air support missions that were life-saving. Experiences that are never forgotten.

This week's tasks

Two of our Board Members, Troy Meyer and Dave Powers—both engineers, visited the Memorial site on Wednesday, June 3, 2026, and learned from the Stryker Co. crew that the tasks for this week include survey layout and footer excavations. These excavations will be the homes for the entrance stone, helicopter, Bald Eagle and honor panels.

Groundbreaking, ribbon cutting, brick-laying

Thanks again to everyone who attended the May 15 ground-breaking ceremony. We are looking forward to the ribbon cutting ceremony late summer/early fall

and the brick laying ceremony. We envision larger crowds than we saw at ground-breaking, and we will notify every one of the details as building

progresses.

We continue to raise funds, just as we promised the City of Montrose and Montrose County through our memo of agreement. If you would like to donate or buy a brick, please visit www.montrosevmc.org.

Here are several patriots we would like to honor. Some who have made this all possible with generous donations either through in-kind product donations and/or cash donations:

-Western Gravel for their generous donation



-Home Depot donating building materials and labor, and plans to donate more.
-Kaylor Fencing eagerly signed up to fence the Memorial site.

- San Juan Gardens offered many plants and trees with gratitude.
- Turner Toyota, GMC and Chevrolet for generous donations since the beginning
- Bolinger & Queen for their generous donation
- Alliance Concrete from Olathe generously providing tons of concrete.
- DMEA for monetary support
- Spectrum started us out with a significant donation.

We will continue to list donors in future updates

Amy Eifling, MVMC BOD secretary/treasurer, said the other day a woman came into the Welcome Home Alliance For Veterans Warrior Center to give a check as a donation. She apologized that the check "was small." We want to assure all that—no matter how large or how small—their donations are appreciated and will be used to honor our veterans and active-duty military. So many people have contributed to this effort and have stepped up to make this happen. We encourage you to keep them in mind when you need their products or services.

With greatest appreciation on behalf of the MVMC BOD,

Les Williams, MVMC President

J. Bob Brueske, MVMC Chairman

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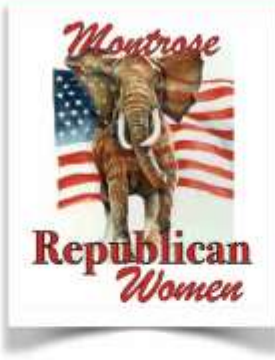


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OPINION/EDITORIAL: COMMENTARY

WHERE HAVE THE MEN GONE??

THIS ISN'T A RHETORICAL QUESTION...SOMETHING IS VERY WRONG. WHAT'S BEHIND IT ALL?

By David White

A recent email from a friend of mine included a link to a May 2026 article titled "Where have the Men Gone" by a gentleman by the name of Jeffrey Tucker that first appeared in the newspaper Epoch Times and since its publication, has appeared in many other publications. To say that the title piqued my interest is to put it mildly.

After reading the article (excerpts & comments from it are found below), I discovered that Mr. Tucker (age 62) is an American libertarian author, publisher, and economist associated with the Austrian school of economics and advocacy for free markets, digital innovation, and individual liberty. He is the founder and president of the [Brownstone Institute](#), established in 2021 as a think tank focused on social and economic research that critiques government interventions, emphasizing empirical evidence of their disproportionate harms to the economy and society in general (which we know creates its own issues as Ronald Reagan once quipped about when he made the comment "we're from the government and are here to help you" being the scariest words one could hear).

So...what's behind Mr. Tucker's question? Let's see if what he has to say makes sense to you.

"The Department of Labor keeps careful track of employment and the demographics thereof. Their latest report on men in the labor force is both mysterious and deeply alarming. It turns out that the labor force is missing about 7 million men who would otherwise be working. This means close to one-third of all men are not included in the labor force. The labor force participation rate among "prime age men," age 25 to 54, in the 1950s approached 100 percent. Now it is 89 percent, meaning roughly 11 percent are not in the labor force (neither working nor looking for work). Among all men older than 16 years of age, the rate is a devastatingly low 66 percent, so about one-third are gone. Among U.S.-born men, nearly 22 percent are gone."

Why??

"The explanations for this are all over the map. Disability ranks at the top. But we aren't really talking about wooden legs and paraplegics here. This traces to mental disorders, substance abuse, obesity and chronic disease, low motivation, pharmaceutical injury, and general lethargy and demoralization.

How do they pay the bills? The lucky ones have trust fund flows. The conventional ones live with Mom and Dad and take disability benefits. The really unlucky ones are simply homeless."

But it doesn't stop there according to Mr. Tucker...

"The number of men who live with parents has tripled since the 1950s... There is overlap here with men falling out of the workforce. Men (especially non-college) living with parents are 20 percent less likely to be in the labor force than those living independently.

We all have stories. In fact, you are thinking of some men you know now and how it happened that they just lost interest in the normal flow of life. Instead, they spend their time with gaming, scrolling, porn, OnlyFans, and some other pointless or destructive pursuit. They rely on substances and drugs to dampen the pain. They have given up."

So, posits Mr. Tucker, what are the factors that have driven men into having given up? Here's where it gets controversial. For those in the workforce (male or female), see if what he says rings true...

"The full feminization of the workplace is only a few decades old now, with every firm being lorded over by human resources, which is dominated by women; 70-80 percent of HR personnel are women. They serve as breeders of conflict such that any offense is immediately reported if it usually involves men as the target." "College students have been taught for years that the word "toxic" and "masculinity" are inseparable, while the phrase "toxic femininity" does not exist. Indeed, it is commonplace for



WHERE HAVE THE MEN GONE?? From previous pg

for any competent man in the workforce to be falsely accused of absurdities. No company is willing to risk the litigation costs, and so it throws the guy out even with zero evidence of wrongdoing."

"Is the corporate workplace today hostile to men? To say absolutely is a huge understatement. It should not be shocking to discover that millions of men have simply said they want no part of it. Years ago, I heard one guy in an investment bank say that every man in his office regards women as essentially inanimate, like statues with whom never to engage at any level. He added that no responsible man would ever get on an elevator if there is a woman alone in there. Doing so risks your career because you can be accused of anything to your doom."

"You also have a major problem with what is called the reservation wage. This is the level that one expects to get paid even when market conditions are not cooperating. Sure, some guys can take their lumps and start delivering or driving rideshare. But for many men, taking such a job is an assault on their personal dignity. They won't do it. In the end, we really are talking about a volitional choice to drop out."

So how do we fix this (assuming that Mr. Tucker's observations are correct)? He goes on to say that...

"Talking with others about this, we all know cases in point. They are embarrassed, isolated, and in a spiral of demoralization that is hard to fix.

I was listening to a podcast the other day by an influential guy who said something that really spooked me. I somehow can't shake his words. He said that realistically there is nothing to do. Nothing. He continued to explain that you can hang out at home and play on the computer or go to a restaurant. After you eat, you can go home again and play on the computer. He said some people recommend travel, but he said this is pointless because it is the same whether in Milan or Milwaukee: you sit in your room or go eat. Nothing else. These are astonishing words to me. For how many others is he speaking? Have we really come to this place as a culture?

What would you suggest to this young man? You can of course yell and say, "Get a life!" The trouble is that we have an entire generation or two of men who don't even understand what that is."

Ideally, if we could go back in time, men would get a serious job like construction at the age of 15 or so. That doesn't help the late 20-something who sees no real point in waking up. What to do?

What Mr. Tucker proposes to fix this problem with men, primarily young men, is to create what he calls a "re-homesteading movement" that unscrambles the roles that men find themselves playing today in a world that has been reshaped through the financial and domestic necessity for both men and women to have meaningful employment in a world that has long ago lost the economic and social battle that allowed for stay at home wives and mothers while the man of the house alone earned an income sufficient to support himself and his dependents. That world isn't coming back as he explains:

"For the past year, I've been working on a book that explores an interesting thesis: namely, that there is a crying need these days for men to lead a re-homesteading movement, starting right now in one's apartment or wherever you live.

The book traces the history of domesticity and how tasks have been allocated by gender and how technology and demographics have scrambled these roles in ways to which society has yet to adjust.

Just to cite one obvious point, in the 1950s, four out of five households with children under 18 had one stream of income provided by the husband/father. Men knew their roles and responsibilities, long inherited from history, when men were in the fields and factories and wives and mothers took care of vast domestic responsibilities.

Today, that figure is only two in five. Two-thirds of households with children have two income streams, with both parents pursuing some professional life outside the home.

This happened because of declining real household income. Mainly it was inflation

and not feminist ideology that drafted adult women into remunerative labor outside the home.

The result created a loss of purpose for men, many of whom feel lost and useless."

He concludes with the following that seeks to counteract the box men have found themselves in:

"Going back to the podcast guy who complains there is nothing to do, my answer would be to look around where you live. The window blinds have a coat of dust and grime on them. Your clothes have holes that could be sewn.

The laundry is backed up, and stains are everywhere. Make a roast. Look up how. You could have people over and then take responsibility for ensuring that everyone has a good time.

Believing that these are not the jobs of men is part of the problem.

My solution might sound mundane, but at least it begins to address the real issue: the lack of purpose and meaning. Re-homesteading isn't the whole answer, but it is a beginning.

Now that a third of working-age men have slipped into a life of lethargy and nihilism, it's time to sound the alarm. We have to start fixing this."

The problem needs a solution.

Do you think Mr. Tucker's thoughts on the "men" problem is justified and worth a turn around? For the sake of our society, I think it better.

Here's a link to the entire article if you're interested in reading it... <https://www.thelibertybeacon.com/where-have-the-men-gone/>

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.

REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

MRH UROLOGY CLINIC EXPANDS ADVANCED TREATMENT OPTIONS FOR BLADDER HEALTH AND INCONTINENCE *New minimally invasive therapies offer relief for enlarged prostate symptoms and urinary incontinence*

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE— In recognition of Men's Health Month in June, the MRH Urology Clinic is highlighting expanded treatment options for enlarged prostate symptoms, overactive bladder, and urinary incontinence. The clinic now offers Aquablation Therapy® and Axonics Therapy®, providing patients with advanced urologic care close to home. Located within the Ambulatory Care Center at 3330 S. Rio Grande Ave., the clinic is led by board-certified urologists Craig Peterson, MD, and Michael S. Tonzi, MD.

Aquablation Therapy is a minimally invasive, robotically assisted treatment for benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), commonly known as enlarged prostate. Performed by both Dr. Peterson and Dr. Tonzi, the procedure uses a high-velocity, heat-free waterjet guided by real-time imaging and robotic technology to precisely remove excess prostate tissue causing urinary symptoms such as frequent urination, weak urine stream, difficulty starting urination, and frequent nighttime urination.

"Aquablation Therapy allows us to offer men an effective treatment for enlarged prostate symptoms while helping preserve quality of life," said Craig Peterson, MD, urologist at Montrose Regional Health. "I'm a strong proponent of this

technology because it combines precision, safety, and durable results for many patients."

A key benefit of Aquablation Therapy is the preservation of sexual function following treatment. Studies show the procedure has no reported impact on overall sexual function or satisfaction. In addition, 99% of men with benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) did not experience incontinence following treatment.

The clinic is also offering Axonics Therapy, a minimally invasive treatment for bladder and bowel control disorders, including overactive bladder, urinary incontinence, and fecal incontinence. Dr. Tonzi performs Axonics Therapy procedures at the clinic, and he has completed 133 Axonics procedures with a 96% trial-to-implant success rate since he began practicing in Colorado.

Axonics Therapy uses a small implant placed under the skin in the upper buttock along with a thin wire that delivers mild electrical stimulation to the sacral nerve. This stimulation helps regulate communication between the brain and bladder, reducing urgency signals that can occur too frequently or at inappropriate times.

"Axonics Therapy allows us to offer patients an option that can restore bladder control and significantly improve quality of life," said Michael S. Tonzi, MD, urologist at Montrose Regional Health. "For

many patients struggling with overactive bladder or incontinence, Axonics Therapy can provide meaningful symptom relief and help restore confidence in daily life."

Both therapies are designed to help reduce symptoms and improve daily function for patients experiencing bladder and urinary conditions.

Community members interested in learning more about bladder health, enlarged prostate symptoms, urinary incontinence, and available treatment options are invited to attend a free community presentation hosted by the MRH Urology Clinic on Thursday, June 18, at The Bridges Golf Course. Doors open at 4:30 p.m., with the presentation beginning at 5 p.m. Appetizers will be provided.

For more information on Aquablation Therapy, Axonics Therapy, and other services offered at the MRH Urology Clinic, visit MontroseHealth.com/Urology.



Axonics Therapy technology.
Courtesy image.

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COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

VERNON BENNIGSDORF *April 1, 1934-June 5, 2026*

Vernon (Vern as he was known to family and friends) Bennigsdorf, 92, of Montrose, Colorado passed away at his home on June 5, 2026.

Vern was born on April 1, 1934, in Dow City, Iowa. He was one of ten children born to Herbert and M. Lucille (Carlson) Bennigsdorf. He grew up in West Central Iowa. He attended a country school. Following his education, Vern began working with local farmers before later joining the Co-Op in Ida Grove, IA.

On June 12, 1955, Vernon was united in marriage to Edith Sumpter at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Ida Grove, Iowa. The couple were blessed with five children: Lynne, Lou Ann, Lori, Brian, and Steve. In 1970, he moved his family to Montrose, Colorado, where he began a career with Rocky Mountain Natural Gas. Through hard work, determination, and dedication, he worked his way up to the position of manager. He spent his entire career working in the propane/natural gas industry. Vern retired in 1999 but continued to work part time for an additional five years as a sub-contractor for a pipeline company.

Vern enjoyed camping, fishing, gardening, vacations with family, wintering in Texas and trips to Las Vegas. Vern also enjoyed attending high school and college sporting events, and, most of all, spending time with family. Vern was always willing to offer a helping hand to family, friends, and neighbors whenever needed. A faithful Presbyterian for years, his faith helped guide the way he lived his life.

Above all, Vern was kind-hearted. His family looked to him for guidance, wisdom, and support. He was deeply involved in the lives of those he loved, and his kindness, generosity, and unwavering commitment to family created a legacy that will live on for generations.

Left to cherish his memory include his wife of 70 years, Edith of Montrose, CO and his children: Lynne (Danny) Hawks, Lou Ann (Larry) Gavell, Lori Frost, Brian (Barb) Bennigsdorf and Steve (Tracy) Bennigsdorf; grandchildren, Michael (Laura) Hawks, Kellie (Eddie) Reed, Travis (Jackie) Hawks, Amy Gavell, Megan Gavell, Scott Gavell, Brandon (Aimee) Frost, Kevin (Elishah) Frost, Jennifer (Kelly Kibel), Kristen (Kevin English), Tyler (Heather) Bennigsdorf, Heather Bullis, Brad Bennigsdorf, Zach Lyons, Ryan McMullan, in addition there are nineteen great grandchildren and one great-great granddaughter and many nieces, nephews, extended family and friends.

Surviving brothers include Darrell and Lonnie (Marva) and one sister, Carol Miller. Vern was preceded in death by his parents, Herbert and Lucille Bennigsdorf, siblings Dorene, Bob, Leila, Ruth, Gary, their spouses and Russell Bennigsdorf. He was also preceded in death by one grandson, Timothy Hawks and son-in-law Bill Frost.

Funeral arrangements are under the direction of Crippin Funeral Home. Services will be held at the First Presbyterian Church in Montrose, CO, date and time to be determine.

Memorial donations, in lieu of flowers, can be made to: First Presbyterian Church Deacons Fund or Hope West Hospice.



Now more than ever...

Thank you for reading

THE MONTROSE MIRROR

COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

RAMONIA "MONIE" CHRISTINE HOWARD

May 12, 1940 — May 22, 2026

The force that was Monie Howard was, perhaps, a little untraditional, but also a whole lot of wonderful. She valued family, tradition, and community, and she spent her life investing in all three.

Someone recently said, "If you weren't touched by Monie, you probably didn't live." Although hyperbolic, there is a nugget of truth there. And if you knew Monie Howard, you probably have a story.

Maybe it was a meal she prepared, a ride on one of her school buses, a conversation at church, or a moment when she quietly stepped in to help without being asked. Serving others wasn't something Monie did—it was simply who she was.

Ramonia Christine "Monie" Howard was born on May 12, 1940, in Chickasha, Oklahoma, and moved to Gunnison, Colorado, with her family in 1950. She was the youngest of four children; her older siblings are Betty Weaver, Delmar McKelvy, and Janella Tate. She graduated from Gunnison High School in 1958 and, later that same year, married the love of her life, Crandall Howard, on December 28. Together, they built a life centered on faith, family, hard work, and service to others.

Monie and Crandall spent their early years in Powderhorn, where they raised their three children and operated the J Bar Horseshoe Ranch and resort. She cooked for hunters, welcomed guests, and became part of the ranching community she loved so dearly.

After the Powderhorn school closed, the valley children had to be transported to Gunnison for school. Monie began what would become a long and beloved career in bus driving by taking local children to Highway 149 in a Suburban so they could catch the Lake City bus into Gunnison.

Later, after moving to Olathe in 1974, she continued driving for Olathe Schools. She faithfully served this role for many years. Additionally, over the years, she worked several jobs – at the Apple Shed, the school cafeteria, and the Olathe Variety Store. In addition to this, she faithfully

volunteered for Sharing Ministries for 29 years.

Whether driving children to school, volunteering at Sharing Ministries, or helping with church events, she approached every responsibility with the same qualities: loyalty, dependability, kindness, and a genuine love for people.

But if you asked those who knew her best what they would remember, they probably wouldn't start with dates or accomplishments.

They would remember a woman who never met a stranger. A quick trip to Walmart could easily turn into a two-hour adventure if Monie happened to meet someone from Gunnison or Chickasha. What started as a simple greeting could become a lengthy conversation filled with family connections, shared memories, and enough stories to make her grandkids wonder if they would ever make it home. On the other hand, keeping up with her quick stride was nearly impossible, so sometimes the break was a welcome relief for the legs. It's always been puzzling how someone so small could outstride almost anyone.

They would remember hours of helping her feed clothes through a wringer washer. Long after the convenience of an electric washer, the old wringer washer would be faithfully pulled out several times a year to wash the stuff that the "new-fangled" electric washers could never wash properly. Only a few hands were trapped over the years—a statistic she would probably have considered a pretty good success rate.

They would remember sitting on the patio with her, enjoying a cold Diet Coke and a cheese sandwich while talking about family, neighbors, church, and life. Monie had a gift for making ordinary moments memorable. She didn't need elaborate plans or grand adventures. She simply loved being with people.

Her faith became the defining center of her life after she came to know the Lord through a small ladies' Bible study in Pow-

derhorn. From that day forward, her faith shaped the way she lived. She faithfully served at Trinity Baptist Church in Gunnison and later at Rosemont Baptist Church, where she taught, organized, sang, volunteered, and filled countless needs behind the scenes. If something needed to be done, Monie was usually already doing it. Monie was loyal, dependable, genuine, and fiercely devoted to her family. She was always thinking of others and looking for ways to serve—whether it was her husband, her children and grandchildren, her church, or her community. She was the kind of woman who quietly made life better for everyone around her through simple acts of love, faithfulness, and generosity.

Monie's life was not measured by titles, accomplishments, or recognition. It was measured by the people she loved, the meals she prepared, the children she safely transported, the churches she faithfully served, the volunteers she encouraged, and the countless quiet acts of kindness she performed without ever seeking attention.

It is also measured in her legacy. She is survived by her beloved husband, Crandall Howard; her daughters, Amy Eifling and Susanne (Scott) King; her grandchildren, Phylcia (Tate) Hermanson, Blake (Lisa) Eifling, Kaylee (Steve) Vanden Hoek, Stephanie (Peter) Vanden Hoek, and Brandon (Sam Dalsing) King; and her eleven great-grandchildren, Coralee, Jaina, Sarah, Micah, Marcus, Delaney, Zane, Jaxon, Addison, Brooks, and Ainsley.

She was preceded in death by her son: Ken Howard, sister: Janella Tate, brother: Delmar McKelvy, and beloved sister-in-law: Suzy Parker



COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

JOSE LEONDR O ARCHULETA *March 7, 1946 – May 22, 2026*



JOSE LEONDR O ARCHULETA of Montrose, Colorado, passed away peacefully on May 22, 2026, at the age of 80. He was born on March 7, 1946, in Pitkin, Colorado to Arsenio Archuleta and Marie Espinoza. He spent his childhood in Pitkin and graduated from Gunnison High School; Class of 1964. After high school, Leon proceeded to honorably serve his country with the Department of Army during the Vietnam war, serving five years.

On October 11, 1969, Leon married the love of his life, Vera Mae Duran (passed on October 6, 1988). Leon and Vera went on to have three children: Leondro M Archuleta, Michael Archuleta, and Rose Archuleta. He worked as a Miner for most of his career and as a truck driver for a brief period before retiring.

Leon loved playing horseshoes, pool, and tennis when he was younger. He was a proud member of Calvary Chapel of Montrose, Colorado and St. Peters Church in Gunnison, Colorado and will be remembered as a devoted child of God.

He leaves behind his three children, nine grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren. He is also survived by his four siblings Marie Rossmiller, Raquel Archuleta, Elizabeth Christensen, and Fred Archuleta.

Family and friends are invited to celebrate the life of Leon on June 13, 2026, at Calvary Chapel of Montrose, 2201 S Townsend, Suite D, Montrose, CO 81401 at 10:30 AM, officiated by Ben Garate. Internment of ashes and a Military Tribute is to follow at 3 PM at Gunnison Cemetery, 41001 Hwy 50, Gunnison, CO 81230.

NANCY SOPHIE BEAL *December 30, 1932- May 10, 2026*

NANCY SOPHIE BEAL passed away quietly at 12:59PM, May 10, 2026, at 93. She was born December 30, 1932, in Schenectady, NY. She was a 1st-generation American of Sicilian parents, Theresa (Nocero) and Dominick J. Foti. She married Bobby Ray Beal (October 15th, 1931-October 25th, 1986) on April 29, 1952. They had 3 children, Linda Ann Beal, Bobby Ray Beal, Jr. (deceased December 27, 2002) and Craig Patrick Beal. She is survived by 5 grandchildren, Jessica Lynn Mahaffey, Christopher Glenn Mahaffey, Bobby Ray Beal III, Jamie Beal and Maddux Beal; 13 great, grandchildren; and 3 great, great, grandchildren. Her family was very important to her, and she always reminded us how important we are to each other. Her claim to fame was being in Times Square during Victory Europe Day, she recalled never seeing so many happy people. When she retired from the Accounting Department at Montrose Memorial Hospital, she traveled extensively with family and friends. She will be missed every day. It is hard to forget someone who gave us so much to remember.



COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

KAREN SUE (KIDD) DEEDS

April 18, 1942 — May 22, 2026



KAREN SUE (KIDD) DEEDS, 84, passed away peacefully on the afternoon of Friday, May 22nd at her home in Montrose, CO surrounded from near and far with love from her beloved friends and family. She was born on April 18, 1942, in Beech Grove, IN, and was the youngest of four children born to Florence Lucille (Fetters) and Harold Ethan Kidd.

She had a wonderful childhood and graduated from North Central High School in 1960. Following high school, she attended Butler University and earned her Bachelor of Science in Education in 1964 and began teaching 2nd grade at the White River Elementary School in the Metropolitan School District of Washington Township in Marion County from 1965-1969 while working on her Master of Science in Education which she received from Butler University in 1969. After earning her master's degree, she went on to teach for the Dept. of Defense Overseas Dependent Schools Program in Okinawa from 1969-70 and in Germany from 1970-1972. In 1972 she returned to Washington Township schools and taught 1st through 3rd grade at White River & Crooked Creek elementary schools.

On October 24, 1978, she was married and sealed to Samuel D. Deeds in the Washington D.C. Temple of the Church of

Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and they enjoyed 39 wonderful years of marriage until his death in July 2018. Following her marriage, Karen retired from teaching and lived with Sam near Sweetser, IN, enjoying time with their girls and grandkids while being very active in the Marion Ward of the LDS. In 1998, they relocated to Montrose, Colorado and while there, they formed countless cherished friendships with their church family and many others. Karen's faith was a cornerstone of her life, and she served her church in many capacities during her years as a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in both Indiana and in Colorado. She also served in the Chicago, IL, Denver, CO & Grand Junction, CO temples for many years.

She worked in various callings within the church with primary children, young women and the Relief Society. She was a very engaged volunteer during her life, especially in Colorado. She volunteered at Montrose Regional Hospital for over 25 years as well as at the Family History Centers in both Marion, IN and Montrose, CO. She loved working on genealogy not just for herself but for others as well. In November 2023 she was honored to receive the Montrose County Civic Award for Community Service by the Montrose Republican Women.

To know Karen was to love her. She had a great sense of humor and a fun-loving nature that let her connect with everyone she met, especially her students and the children in the church. Her kindness was never-ending and her vibrant personality touched everyone she encountered. Her home was always open to anyone who needed to talk, discuss life's challenges or just sit and visit. Karen's positive attitude and strength exuded to the very end. She was a happy, positive, and independent person who was always ready, willing and able to help. When she was able, she enjoyed traveling home to Indiana and spending time with her many friends (some of them going back to elementary school!) and, of course, her family.

Left to cherish her memory are her daughters Deborah Jo Bronson and Pamela June (Steve) Tucker both of Kokomo. She will also be lovingly missed by her grandchildren Christopher Adam (Audreana) France; Samuel Lea (Adrian) France; Jessica Lynn Figueroa; Kimberly Sue (Andrew Strow) Brown; Brian Patrick (Tristen Hart) Tartal and Jacob Mace (Aubrey) Tucker. Additionally, she is survived by 12 great-grandchildren: Braylon, Emily, Nathan, Allyson, Anakynn, Isabella, Khaleesi, Rylen, Evelyn, Amelia, Elizabeth, Caleb & one more that's still on the way. Karen is also survived by her dear sister and best friend, Nancy Jo Harvey, in Carmel, IN as well as nieces & nephews: Debra (John) Vander Linden, Travis "Bart" (Jean) Kidd, Jr., David "Kip" (Jennifer) Kidd, Denise "Kim" Kidd, Kathy Jane (Skip) Partelow, Dianne (Greg) Christianson, James Edward Bowling, Susan Parsons and Carol (John) Ray. Many great-nieces and nephews will also miss her deeply.

Karen was preceded in death by her husband, Samuel D. Deeds, her parents, siblings: Travis Kidd & Judith Cutright and niece Nancy Sue (Patrick) Markey.

The family would like to express our sincere gratitude to Nikki Zwaschka & Tamarra Hamner for all of their tireless assistance during Karen's illness and also to the ladies from HopeWest Hospice for their patience and help when it was needed the most.

Karen's Celebration of Life will be held on Monday, June 8th at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Marion, Indiana (1465 E. Bradford Street).

Friends may call at the church from 10 am – 12 pm and the service will start in the church's Chapel at 12:00 pm. Burial will follow at the Gardens of Memory cemetery north of Marion. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made in Karen's memory to HopeWest Hospice (hopewestco.org), Tunnels to Towers (t2t.org), St. Jude Children's Hospital (stjude.org) or to a charity of the donor's choice.

COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

SHERRY ALINE KITSMILLER *March 5, 1950 – May 27, 2026*

SHERRY ALINE KITSMILLER, 76, went home to be with her Lord and Savior on May 27, 2026, under the care of hospice in the home she cherished and lived in for the past 30 years. She was surrounded by the love of her daughter, Tanya Hawk, and granddaughter, Markie Hawk.

Sherry was born on March 5, 1950, in New Mexico to Tom and Margret Waide. At the age of six, she moved to Hotchkiss, Colorado, where she was raised and spent her childhood participating in rodeos and enjoying the close-knit community she would always call home. She graduated from Hotchkiss High School in 1968.

In June of 1968, Sherry married Mark Hawk, and together they welcomed two children, Tanya and Brent. Following Mark's tragic death in a motorcycle accident in June 1981, Sherry continued to raise her family with strength, faith, and determination. Later, in November of 1982, she married Jerry Kitsmiller, with whom she shared many years of marriage.

Sherry devoted more than 25 years to serving the Montrose School District as a health technician and substitute. Her caring heart, dedication, and compassion touched countless students, families, and colleagues throughout her career.

A faithful member of Celebration Church, Sherry found great joy in her weekly Bible studies, lunches with friends, and time spent in fellowship. She was an avid Denver Broncos fan and rarely passed up a good glass of iced tea. Most importantly, she treasured her family and the many memories they created together.

Sherry is survived by her daughter, Tanya Hawk of Montrose, Colorado; her son, Brent (Collene) Hawk of Castle Rock, Colorado; her granddaughter, Markie Hawk of Montrose, Colorado; her stepdaughter, Neysa (Matt) Smith of Mayport, Pennsylvania; her grandsons, Jeremy and Christopher of Pennsylvania; and her brother, Allan (Roxy) Waide of Castle Rock, Colorado.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Tom and Margret Waide; her first husband, Mark Hawk; and her second husband, Jerry Kitsmiller.

Sherry will be remembered for her unwavering faith, warm smile, generous spirit, and deep love for her family and friends. While she will be deeply missed, her family finds comfort in knowing she is reunited with loved ones who have gone before her and is resting in the presence of the Lord she faithfully served.

A private family gathering will be held to celebrate Sherry's life and spread her ashes.



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

ISSUE 576 June 8, 2026

ART & SOL

YOUR BRAIN ON NATURE – BRAIN DANCE PART 1



By Dr. Lauren Hall Ruddell, PhD.

Greetings Mirrorites!

I was recently listening to a podcast by a speaker who I learn a great deal from and agree with 90% of the time. A part of the 10% that I don't agree with hit me by surprise and with force just a couple of weeks ago. Nate Hagens, creator and presenter of [The Great Simplification](#), was dissing the brain's default mode network (DMN), one of my favorite parts of the brain and the system that benefits most from time in nature. Say it ain't so, Nate, say it ain't so!

When I feel fried from too much voluntary (forced) attention spent on a task, especially at the computer, my attention is depleted from overuse. This is truly a chemical thing, measurable through fMRIs and other high-tech gadgets. It's not my imagination, quite the opposite. To rest and replenish this capacity, I know I need to be in a restorative environment, such



A great space in which to enjoy the DMN! Courtesy photo.

as on a goat hike or spending time in the garden. And it works every time. So, here's my hero talkin' smack about the default mode network and instead praising the task-positive network (TPN, voluntary attention) for its ability to keep us in the present, while the DMN keeps us pondering (and worrying about) the future. Was he right and had I fallen behind on the current research? Well, yes and no. I will share with you what I have discovered in a two-part contribution, because it's a fairly weighty (read geeky) topic.

The DMN was originally identified as a network that becomes more active during rest and less active during demanding, externally focused tasks, which is why it was historically contrasted with a "task-positive" system. It's essentially the brain's waking autopilot. The TPN is commonly described as engaging when attention is directed outward toward a specific goal or stimulus, the brain's cognitive turbo mode. However, there is a natural and essential continuous switching between the two. A sort of dance, if you will.

The interaction between the TPN and the DMN is therefore best understood as a dynamic balance between externally directed attention and internally directed thought. In most healthy cognition, the two networks tend to alternate: the TPN supports goal-directed, task-focused processing, while the DMN supports self-referential thought, autobiographical memory, future simulation, and mind wandering. It's the mind-wandering aspect that has been the focus of much of the research on the benefits of restorative environments for creative thinking and outside-the-box problem solving.

These functions make the DMN central to what is often called "mental time travel," meaning the brain's ability to reconstruct the past and simulate the future. This assists humans in learning from past mistakes and speculating about future actions to improve personal performance and avoid such mistakes again. In addition to allowing the TPN to rest, these functions are critical for human thriving.

Continued next pg

YOUR BRAIN ON NATURE – BRAIN DANCE PART 1 From previous pg

The TPN, by contrast, supports focused attention, working memory, and active current problem-solving. When a person reads instructions, solves a math problem, navigates heavy traffic, etc., the TPN becomes more engaged and the DMN is typically muted. The importance of this dance is in its ability for an equal and opposite reaction by both parties. Each component has to rise and fall in the exact measure as its counterpart.

This switching is important because cognition is not purely external or internal. Even during focused work, the brain may briefly recruit DMN processes to use past memory, simulate outcomes, or integrate meaning, while the TPN maintains task control. In that sense, the two networks can cooperate as well as compete. A healthy transition requires the equivalent of a switchboard operator. Evolution has provided us with one that researchers call the salience network (SN). This operator helps detect behaviorally relevant events and then shifts the brain from internally oriented DMN activity toward externally oriented control in the TPN. A sudden sound, a critical email, or a meaningful social cue can activate salience mechanisms that suppress the DMN and recruit task-control circuits.

OK, what I have learned here is that the interplay, the dance, is both sensitive and critical for efficient mental functioning. A flexible DMN–TPN balance supports adaptive behavior. Too much dominance of the DMN can lead to excessive mind wandering, rumination, and difficulty sustaining attention. This is a difficulty for folks with ADHD. A DMN with compromised, abnormal connectivity issues has also been implicated in bipolar disorder. So, in this respect, Dr. Hagens is right. The DMN is not the guaranteed happy place for everyone, like it is for me. This is why many researchers now describe healthy cognition as a *dynamic interplay* rather than simple opposition. The brain needs both inward and outward modes, and it needs to switch efficiently between them.

Dr. Hagens is a huge fan of spending quality time in restorative environments for the purpose of promoting mindfulness and a sense of being completely present in the moment. I am a fan too, but my research lies in a slightly different, but related, arena.

I had very little exposure to the finer points of the TPN as an academic. My jam, as mentioned above, was understanding (and doing) attention restorative activities in nature as a means of allowing the TPN to recharge, while allowing the DMN to run wild and even silly. So Nate Hagens was mostly right, he just emphasized mindfulness over attention restoration. But are they as separate as he seemed to imply in the episode I linked to above? I suspect not, but I will unpack this in the next article.

For now, I urge all you all to go outdoors and play in the DMN whenever possible and advisable!

Best regards,

The Mindful Naturalist



*Save a tree –
Read the Mirror!*

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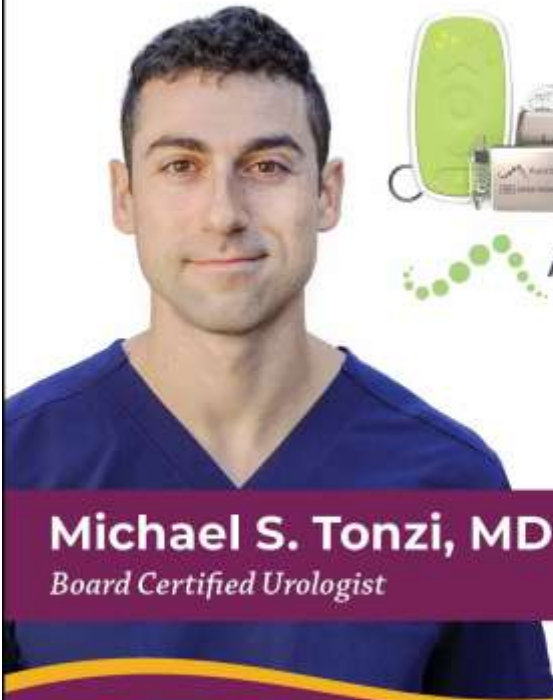
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Magic Circle Players: HONK! JR

Thu Jun 11, 2026 - Sat Jun 20, 2026

Ugly looks quite a bit different from his darling duckling brothers and sisters. The other animals on the farm are quick to notice and point this out, despite his mother's protective flapping. Feeling rather foul about himself, the little fowl finds himself on an adventure of self-discovery, all the while unknowingly outwitting a very hungry Cat. Along the way, Ugly meets a whole flock of unique characters and finds out being different is not a bad thing to be. Score by George Stiles and Anthony Drewe. Directed by Dru Weaver. Tickets at magiccircleplayers.com. Magic Circle Players, 420 S 12th St, Montrose. Box office: 970-249-7838. Family discounts available through the box office!

Thursday, June 11, 2026 - 07:30 PM MDT

Friday, June 12, 2026 - 07:30 PM MDT

Saturday, June 13, 2026 - 02:00 PM MDT

Saturday, June 13, 2026 - 07:30 PM MDT

Sunday, June 14, 2026 - 02:00 PM MDT

Wednesday, June 17, 2026 - 07:30 PM MDT

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COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

BUDDY DAVIS TO TALK ABOUT HIS GREAT GREAT GRANDFATHER

Special to Art & Sol

NATURITA-Leslie Ament of Naturita and Art Goodtimes of Wrights Mesa will be hosting Emmett "Buddy" Davis talking about his great-great grandfather, Comanche leader Quanah Parker, at West End Stories & Poems session at the Naturita Community Library June 11 at 6 pm. Davis will draw from S.C. Gwynne's *Empire of the Summer Moon* about Parker -- a Pulitzer Prize finalist being made into a movie in the next year or so.

West End Stories & Poems, happening on the second Thursday of each month, is free and open to all ages, thanks to the generosity of the library, a Town of Telluride CCAASE grant, private donors and Talking Gourds' Fischer and Cantor poetry contests. The library provides free refreshments.

For more information on poetry contests and Talking Gourds programs, visit the website www.tellurideinstitute.org/talking-gourds. For questions about the event, text 970-729-0220 or email Goodtimes at Aart@tellurideinstitute.org



West End Stories & Poems

Art Goodtimes & Leslie Ament with Special Guest: **Emmett "Buddy" Davis**

Great, great-grandson of **Quanah Parker**

Thursday, June 11th 6 pm

@Naturita Community Library

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Naturita, CO 81422
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NATURITA COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Logos: Talking Gourds, Telluride Foundation



CORVAIRS – CHEVROLET'S AIR-COOLED WONDER OF THE 1960'S And Montrose Hosted 50 of Them for a Special Anniversary!



By David White

For those old enough to remember, the Chevrolet Motor Division of General Motors introduced a unique compact car for the 1960 model year called the Corvair. The Corvair was a rear engine car powered by a 6-cylinder air cooled motor like those that powered VW Beetles and Porsche's of the era.

The Chevrolet Corvair was produced from 1960 to 1969. It was designed to compete with smaller, fuel-efficient vehicles, particularly the Volkswagen Beetle. The Corvair was notable for its innovative engineering and unique design, which included a horizontally opposed engine. Approximately 1.8 million Corvairs were produced during its decade-long run. The Corvair was available in various configurations, including four-door sedans, two-door coupes, convertibles, vans, pickup trucks and station wagons.

The Corvair has for years had a cult following. They have been an underappreciated classic car, but that is changing. Corvair clubs have become more and more popular to support what is still a relatively inexpensive classic car to own, restore,

drive and show.

This year, Montrose was chosen to host the 50th anniversary meeting of the Tri-State Corvair Club and the Pikes Peak Corvair Club. The Tri-State Corvair Club is an organization dedicated to Corvair enthusiasts from Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah. Its primary mission is to promote the preservation, restoration, and enjoyment of Corvair vehicles. The club organizes annual meets that bring together members and fans to celebrate their shared passion for these unique cars and have been doing so since their founding in 1976. They will meet again next year in Moab, Utah.

By all accounts, the meeting and festivities including a car show at Cerise Park on Saturday, June 6th, were a success. Photos of the event are shown.

If you own a Corvair or know of someone who does, tell them about these organizations. Saving one of these classic cars is worth it in order to preserve more of our automotive history.

<https://pikespeakcorvair.org/>

<https://>

www.rockymountaincorsa.org/

As a postscript to this report, remember that this coming weekend (Friday, June 12th through Sunday, June 14th) is the 31st Annual Colorful Colorado Auto Show sponsored by the Black Canyon Classics Car Club. There will be a car show and mingle event on Main Street in Downtown Montrose (Friday, June 12th – 4PM – 8PM) and the big car show on Saturday, June 13th in Cerise Park off of Chipeta from 8:00AM – 3:00PM. There will be a road trip for those wanting to go on Sunday, June 14th from 9:00AM – Noon. Meet in Cerise Park with your special ride! <https://www.blackcanyonclassics.org/>

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




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COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MONTROSE THIS SUMMER? PLENTY!!!

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-Join The Forum on Wednesday, June 10, 8-9 AM to get all the details from...

Dave Bowman - Montrose Summer Music Series, July 4 concert, and the kick off concert for Func Fest featuring:

Incredible live music, amazing food & drinks, family fun, and unforgettable summer nights! – June through September at the Montrose Amphitheater in Montrose, Colorado!

Fair Board President Molli Yorchack and Treasurer Jennifer Sherwood - Montrose County Fair & Rodeo as they share:

the latest updates on the 2026 Montrose County Fair & Rodeo. Learn about this year's events, opportunities for exhibitors, volunteers, sponsors, and how the Fair Board works year round to preserve and grow one of Montrose County's most cherished traditions. The Montrose County Fair & Rodeo, celebrating more than 140 years of community heritage, will take place July 17-25 and features livestock shows, rodeo events, exhibits, entertainment, and activities for all ages.

Tom Cenicerros, City of Montrose - 4th of July, Func Fest and Other City Happenings:

July 4th: "Our Heritage" themed parade, family festivities, and a massive fireworks display over Sunset Mesa
FUNC Fest: Vendors, water sports, kids activities, food trucks, live music, and much more during the two-day Fun on the Uncompahgre "FUNC Fest"

DART, City of Montrose - Truck Stop and Montrose Art Crawl

....add to that:

The Black Canyon Classic Car Club's 31st Annual Colorful Colorado Truck and Rod Show on June 12-14 and **The Black Canyon Quilt Show** July 10-12 at the Montrose Pavilion and so much more!

Just a reminder *the Montrose Lifestyle calendar is a great resource for the many events happening in town!* You can find it at <https://montroslifestyle.com/event/the-forum-summer-events/>

Don't miss Forum if you want to be in the know. Hope to see you on Wednesday, June 10, 8 AM.



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Dr. Augustine Lee, MD, FACS, FASCRS



Dr. Vanessa Lee, MD, MS



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Victoria Oliva, DNP, APRN, FNP-C



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MIRROR CHURCH DIRECTORY

ALL SAINTS ANGLICAN CHURCH

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

Office Hours: By appointment.

Contact Information: (970) 249-2451

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

Worship Service Times: Sundays 9AM,

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

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

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

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

BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH

Independent Baptist

112 Main St.

P.O. Box 262

Olathe, Co 81425

Tuesday-Friday Phone: 970-808-1021

www.biblebaptistchurcholathe.com

Pastor Gabe Skillo

Sunday School 9:15 a.m.

Sunday 10:30 a.m.

Sunday 6 p.m.

Wednesday Bible Study/Prayer 7 p.m.

CEDAR CREEK CHURCH

affiliation: Evangelical Free

Address: 222 South Townsend Montrose,
CO 81401

Office Hours: 10am-2pm Tuesday- Friday

Contact: 970-252-1163

ccc@cccmontrose.org

Pastor: Curt Mudgett

Sunday worship:

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

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

Wednesday Prayer: 5:30-6:15pm

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

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

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

Please make plans to come check us out
soon!

CELEBRATION CHURCH

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

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

Office Hours: By appointment

Phone: (970) 497-4925

Email: celebrationmontrose@gmail.com

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

celebrationmontrose.org/

Worship Service Times: 9am and 10:45am

Senior Pastor:

Pastor Brandon Mathis

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

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

Demographics: Multi-generational

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

Student (middle & high school) at 9am.

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

CHRIST'S CHURCH OF THE VALLEY

Name of Church: Christ's Church of the
Valley

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

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

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

Contact information:

Phone: 970-249-0530

Email: CCVMontroseCO10@gmail.com

Website: ccvmontrose.org

Name of current Senior Pastor: Ken Law-
rence

Worship service times: 10:30 a.m.

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

in our Lord Jesus Christ to the glory of
God.

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

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

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

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

Contact: 970-633-0226

Website: www.montroselutheran.org

Email: montroselutheran@gmail.com

Pastor: Tim Onnen

Worship: Sundays at 9 AM

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

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

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

MIRROR CHURCH DIRECTORY *From previous pg*

COMMUNITY SPIRIT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST (UCC)

Address: 504 N. 1st Street (HAP Building)
Office hours: Call or text for appointment
 Phone: 970-765-7070
Email: spirit@communityspiritucc.org

Website: communityspiritucc.org
 Current Pastor: Rev. Wendy Kidd
Worship service: Sundays at 11:30 am
 Mission: Our commitment to a more inclusive and accepting world is steadfast, and we will continue to work towards a

future where everyone can live freely and authentically.

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

COVENANT HEBRAIC FELLOWSHIP

Denomination affiliation. No affiliation
Address Office hours N/A
Contact: 720-951-9941,
office@ccfmontrose.net,
www.ccfmontrose.net

Name of current Senior Pastor. Led by elders
Worship service times. Noon on Saturdays. Children's Church will be offered as needed.
 Covenant is a Hebraic roots community

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

FIRST CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

Denomination: Church of the Nazarene
 Address: 705 South 12th Street
Office Hours: Tuesday - Thursday 9 am - Noon and by Appointment
Contact Information: Office Phone 970 249 -9213, mncfirst@gmail.com,
www.montrosenazarenechurch.org
Pastor: Pastor Ian Hyde

Services Sunday: Worship 10:30 AM, Discipleship Hour: 9:30 AM. Discipleship Hour has classes across all age groups. Nursery for children UNDER 3 is available during Worship and Discipleship 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-form@fpcmontrose.com,
www.fpcmontrose.com
 Pastor: Rev. Dr. Jesse G. Mabanglo
Worship Service times: 9:30AM,
We strive to encourage, challenge and

support one another through spiritual growth, worship, and service in our community, country, and world. We also encourage children and youth to grow their relationship with Christ through our children and student ministries.

HILLCREST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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

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

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

MONTROSE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

montroseumc.org
Current Senior Pastor: Rev. Kevin Young
Worship service times:
9:15 AM to 10:15 AM: Children's, Youth, and Adult Sunday School; Christian Education & Fellowship.
10:30 AM: Sanctuary & Virtual Worship
 Montrose UMC is a leader in being fully

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

ROSEMONT BAPTIST CHURCH

Affiliation: Southern Baptist
Address: 1598 E. Niagara Road, Montrose, CO 81401
Office Hours: Tues-Thurs, 9am-4pm
Contact information:
Phone: 970.249.4887
website: www.RosemontBaptist.org
youtube.com/@rosemontbaptistchurch
facebook.com/RosemontBaptist

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

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

VICTORY BAPTIST CHURCH OF MONTROSE

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

6874; email at info@vbcmontrose.org; website: vbcmontrose.org
Current Pastor: Roland Kassales
Worship Service Times: Sunday School at 9:30am, Sunday AM Service at 10:30am, Sunday PM Service at 6pm, Wednesday Night Service at 6:30pm (all services include childcare)

Victory Baptist Church exists to exalt God, edify saints, and evangelize the lost. Demographics: Victory Baptist serves everyone with age-appropriate classes, groups, and activities. Families with children make up the majority of VBC with young adults, singles, middle-aged couples, and seniors comprising the rest.

Church Directory

Mirror Editorial Staff

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

Mirror:

- Name of church
- Denomination affiliation
- Address Office hours
- Contact information (phone number, email address, website)
- Name of current Senior Pastor
- Worship service times

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

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

Do your church services include Sunday School and childcare?

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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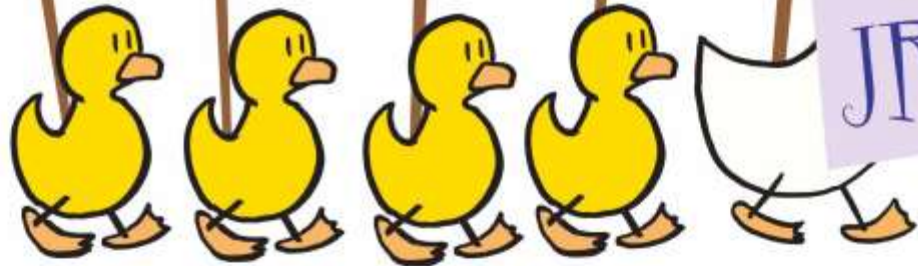


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SAVE THE DATE! LOCAL EVENTS CALENDAR

ONGOING-

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

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

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

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

MONTROSE FARMERS MARKET (970) 249 0705 Centennial Plaza, 433 S. 1st St. Montrose, CO 81401 www.valleyfoodpartnership.org. Year-Round Farmers Market, Saturdays 9am-1pm (Summer), every other Saturday 10am-1pm (Winter). Accepts SNAP and Double Up Food Bucks.

MONTROSE HISTORICAL SOCIETY meets 1st Wednesday of the month @ Friendship Hall, 1001 North Second, Montrose, 7 pm (970) 249-2085 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

June 11-From 7 -8:30 pm Black Canyon Audubon Society will host Sue Riffe who will speak about a different way of learning bird sounds. Sue will explore musical vocabulary to analyze bird songs we hear and will introduce different ways to learn these songs. The next morning, you will have the opportunity to use your newly gained musical vocabulary to identify bird sounds on a [field trip](#) to Billy Creek SWA (please register for the field trip beforehand). The Montrose Field House Summit Room, 25 Colorado Avenue, Montrose. For more information about the speaker and topic go to programs at blackcanyonaudubon.org

June 12-13 - Car show. Black Canyon Classics 31st Annual Colorful Colorado Car, Truck, and Rod Show, Montrose CO. Friday downtown Main Street closed off for free car entry and public display at 4pm until dusk. Saturday show at Cerise City Park, 8am -3pm, register your car online at blackcanyonclassics.org. Kids events, pin-up girls, food vendors. Call 9705964523 for more information.

June 27-Sharing Ministries presents the Back to the Future Festival-Food, Shelter, Hope. 8:30am to 4:30pm. Museum of the Mt. West 68169 Miami Road.

June 28-Sunday, 3pm, Montrose Pavilion- **Free Patriotic Concert**, Montrose Community Band. We have chosen songs that exemplify the patriotism, grandeur, and history of our wonderful country.

June 30-Montrose County invites residents to attend a Community Fire Summit on June 30 from 7:30 am. to 11:30 am. at the Montrose County Event Center.

The event is free and open to the public, however registration is required.

For additional information and to register, please visit www.montrosecounty.net/fire or email pr@montrosecounty.net. Questions may also be directed to (970) 252-4508.

READER PHOTO SPOTLIGHT: OUT & ABOUT!



At left, Photographer Deb Reimann captured this photo of an unexpected and first time visitor. A stunning Western Tiger Swallowtail.

Below right, B. Switzer snapped this photo of Mixed Bag playing cool jazz at the Montrose Amphitheater Friday evening.



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