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"IT'S FOR ALL PEOPLE TO ENJOY" - FORMER OWNER SPEAKS OUT ABOUT SNO BALL TROLLEY, VENDORS BEING OUSTED FROM DEMORET PARK



Former Owner Lesley Hallenborg in her Taste of New Orleans Sno Ball Trolley at Demoret Park in 2016. At the July 21 City Council Meeting, Hallenborg raised concerns about the longtime vendor and others being removed from Demoret Park this year. Mirror file photo.

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE-Chambers were full once again as the regular meeting of the Montrose City Council convened on Tuesday, July 21, with constituent seats filled and all Councilors present.

As has been the case during recent meetings, the regular business portion of the meeting did not begin until nearly 8pm, following extensive commentary from the public.

The first speaker, Kim Spangrude, was escorted from the floor by police, as she refused to keep her comments within the three minutes allotted. Spangrude's comments about Mayor Michael Badagliacco's resume are included in the meeting packet.

Badagliacco responded directly to Spangrude's allegations, which he said were not correct.

While many of the remaining public comments were directed at Council and the possibility of a November

Continued pg 51

THIRD PARTY INVESTIGATION INTO OES EXPECTED TO WRAP UP SOON, BOARD OF EDUCATION PRESIDENT NEISHA BALLECK SAYS

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE-The Montrose County School District RE-1J Board of Education held a special meeting on Tuesday, July 21. Board President Neisha Balleck called the meeting to order.

All directors were present. The board includes President Neisha Balleck; Vice President Ted Valerio; District D Director Tom West; District E Director Tiffany Vincent; District F Director Jody Hovde; District G Director Shane Daly; and District C Director Scott Scarborough.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the board considered the meeting agenda. District F Director Jody Hovde asked about Public Comment, which is included at the Board's discretion during special meetings. President Balleck said that she had chosen not to include public comment. "I do value public comment, and I do think it is important, but this evening with the agenda, and one (item) got added, I just didn't see the reason to

Continued pg 43



On July 21, the RE-1J Board of Education approved the Montrose Classical Academy's request to extend to Aug. 13 the deadline for satisfying all requirements in the applicable pre-opening condition related to facility occupancy approvals and supporting facility documentation. Montrose Classical Academy photo.

Dr. Lauren Hall Ruddell, PhD:
Your Brain on Nature!

Word From the West:
with Wendy Videlock!

Cartoon by Tim Jones!

Regional News Briefs!
Letters to the Editor!



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

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PALISADE— The orchards are full, roadside fruit stands are opening daily, and one of Colorado's sweetest traditions is officially underway. Palisade is celebrating an exceptional peach harvest this summer and inviting visitors from across Colorado, Utah, and beyond to experience the community's abundant orchards, award-winning wineries, local businesses, and small-town hospitality.

Although portions of Colorado have faced significant wildfire activity and ongoing drought concerns, the Palisade area has remained unaffected by active fires and continues to welcome visitors under blue skies and warm summer sunshine. Local businesses, orchards, wineries, restaurants, and attractions remain open and ready to share one of Colorado's most iconic harvest seasons.

For visitor information, harvest updates, and Palisade Peach Festival details, visit www.palisadecoc.com or www.visitpalisade.com.

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RULES FOR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Wes Abbott, Nick Kiefer, Erik Eckman, Billy Baxter, Manuel Vargas, Guillermo Barba, Jonathan Murgier

Dear Readers:

We appreciate your letters! We like reading and hearing opinions from all perspectives. We are sharing herewith our updated guidelines:

In the past we have had one rule, to be implemented at the editor's discretion. We are now including two more suggested "Rules" for letter writers.

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

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

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

Thank you,
 Caitlin Switzer,

the Montrose Mirror

Fresh news for busy people

Serving Colorado and Beyond Since 2010!

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

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We welcome community contributions and commentary! Please note, submitted content does not necessarily reflect the views of the *Montrose Mirror* or its editorial team. In addition to the Online News Association, we hold memberships in the Colorado Press Association and Society for Professional Journalists.





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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

DON'T FORGET THE WEST END

Editor's Note and Correction—In last week's issue this letter was printed in partial format by accident. Here is the full letter. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused.

Editor:

As the Montrose County Commissioner representing District 3, I believe the people I serve deserve to know when decisions are being made that affect our communities, especially when those decisions involve organizations and families that have depended on county support for years.

For decades, Montrose County has maintained what are commonly known as community contracts.

Those contracts help support organizations that provide services many of us take for granted.

On the West End, they help organizations like Basin Clinic, West End Family Link, Hoof and Paw, Senior Meals, and they provide support to the Towns of Nucla and Naturita.

Some may see those as just another line item in the budget.

I don't.

I see them as an investment in communities that have already sacrificed more than their share.

The West End helped build Montrose County. For generations, the mines, the power plants, and the workers in places like Uravan, Nucla, and Naturita helped create the economic foundation that benefited the entire county. Then the coal mine closed. The power plant shut down.

Hundreds of good paying jobs disappeared. Families moved away, businesses closed, and our tax base shrank. Those decisions weren't made by the people of the West End, but we've lived with the consequences every day since.

If there was ever a time to stand beside the West End, it is now.

I also believe the public deserves to know about another decision.

For many years, Montrose County has supported our youth by purchasing livestock at the county fair. Last year, I attended the San Miguel County Fair on behalf of the county. We purchased a market beef, had it processed into ground beef, and donated it to West End Family Link, where it helped feed local families in need.

That single purchase supported a young livestock exhibitor and provided food for families throughout our community. It wasn't just the purchase of a market animal. It was an investment in one of our young people, and that investment came back to feed families right here on the West End.

This year, without any discussion with me or any involvement on my part, I was informed that Montrose County would not be participating.

I believe the people of District 3 deserve better than that.

As the District 3 Commissioner, it is my responsibility to represent the people of the West End, and I take that responsibility seriously. Decisions that directly affect my district should never be made without including the commissioner who represents it. Government works best when those conversations happen openly and transparently.

I will continue fighting for the West End because these aren't just numbers on a spreadsheet.

They're the organizations helping families through difficult times.

They're young people raising livestock and learning responsibility.

They're seniors who deserve the peace of mind of knowing a life-saving medical facility is there when every minute counts, especially in one of the most rural and isolated parts of Montrose County.

They're families, relying on West End Family Link to put food on the table.

They're volunteers caring for lost and abandoned animals because there is no county animal shelter on the West End.

They're our neighbors.

And they're worth fighting for.

The West End has never asked for special treatment.

We've simply asked not to be forgotten.

Sean M. Pond

Montrose County Commissioner, District 3

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This 5-Bedroom, 2-Bath, 3-Car garage home is located in the desirable Raven's Crest Subdivision. The home was recently painted, and sits on a corner lot. The home is very open. The kitchen opens into the large living room with sliding glass doors to the private backyard. There is a lot of tile throughout the home, on the floors, baths and showers. There are 5 bedrooms making for a great family home. The kitchen is very open with lots of space and cabinets. There is a wood-burning stove in the living room that heats the whole home. The main Bedroom is large with walk-in closets, and the bath has a large soaker tub. The location is about as good as it gets, close to schools and shopping. The backyard is very private for those fun get-togethers and bar-be-ques.



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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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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

DO THEY BOTHER SMELLING THE SMOKE?

Proud Hypocrites:

Did you miss the subtle connections in the July 20 edition letter “ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM, MASSIVE WILDFIRES, AND NOW THE GORP ACT! HAD ENOUGH YET??” (page 26)? The letter stated the sponsors of the GORP Act met with the owner of the lumber mill going out of business. The largest lumber mill in the area, which processes lumber from all over the state, going out of business means hundreds of direct jobs gone, and likely thousands of jobs indirectly impacted with many lost. The proud fathers of bastard GORP, senators Bennet and Hickenlooper and congressman Hurd, most likely claim they are all for business stability, health and growth in Colorado. One stated reason the mill is going out of business is lack of access to lumber. The GORP Act locks up some 730,000 acres in our area. It prohibits harvesting timber. That can be rephrased as denying the lumber mill access to beetle killed trees in those 730,000 acres; beetle killed trees that encourage wild fires. Hickenlooper and Hurd are running for re-election. Can they spell hypocrite? Do they bother smelling the smoke?

Richard Wojciechowski, Ouray County

WHEN ACCOUNTABILITY GETS CALLED INTIMIDATION

Editor:

Recently, Leah Vandersluis made inaccurate comments about Alice Murphy and my teenage son. It was unclear whether she was suggesting Alice was spending time with my son, or that he was somehow involved in matters concerning the school board. Neither is true. Ms. Vandersluis initially offered to write a retraction but later changed her mind. Despite that, we've had several respectful conversations, and I appreciate that we are finding common ground. That is a step in the right direction.

I also read Dawn Schieldt's recent letter in the Colorado DOGE Report (not a publication I follow—it was shared with me). Words like “stalking,” “threatening,” and “unlawful” are serious accusations. If crimes occurred, they should be reported to law enforcement. But when citizens attend public meetings, request records, ask questions, and document public events, that is not intimidation—it is civic engagement.

Please look for my individualized reply to

Ms. Schieldt in the Colorado DOGE report.

Public officials should expect scrutiny. Parents have long been encouraged to stay informed and hold elected leaders accountable. Those principles shouldn't change simply because the questions are directed at Board President Neisha Balleck and Vice President Ted Valerio. Unfortunately, they have chosen not to speak with the press, local radio, or many of their constituents. At the last board meeting, public comment was omitted, and important questions went unanswered.

The public deserves to know the board's vision. After months of legal consultations and public expense, what are the goals? I am not asking for privileged legal advice. I am asking our elected leaders to explain how their decisions will benefit students, educators, schools, and our community.

Criticism is not harassment, and political disagreement is not a conspiracy. If actual threats occurred, they should be reported and investigated. If public accusations are

made, they should be supported by evidence.

My record is clear. I have consistently supported our public schools, our recreation center, and our library because children, families, and seniors all deserve places that strengthen our community.

One thing I took away from speaking with Ms. Vandersluis during the board's executive session was that we have more in common than we first realized. We talked about our families, our experiences in public schools, and our shared interest in children. We even agreed to volunteer together at a school this fall. That conversation reminded me that the divide isn't always as wide as it appears.

Perhaps that's the lesson for all of us—including our elected officials. Sit down with a neighbor over a cup of coffee. Listen before assuming. Answer questions honestly. Together, we can move the needle in support of every student in our community.

Peace,

Ellen Angeles, Montrose



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MLS #831729 | 1422 Blue Creek Avenue | DAVID KIENHOLZ

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MLS #832086 | 1422 Blue Creek Avenue | AARON TOBLER

Take a look at this rare 4-bedroom ranch-style home in Bear Creek! With its charming stucco and stone exterior, it's timeless, low-maintenance, and durable. Offering a spacious 3-car garage, this home immediately stands out. Inside, you'll love the open floor plan featuring a vaulted ceiling in the main living area and 9-foot ceilings throughout the rest of the home.



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

RESPONSE TO DAVID WHITE'S OPINION PIECE

Dear Editor,

I'm writing in response to David White's opinion piece in the July 20 edition, "Good Governance – Based on Whose Standards?"

Mr. White is entitled to his views on Neighbors for Good Governance and the local advocacy groups he names. But the piece leans on a characterization of Saul Alinsky that doesn't hold up. Alinsky is described as an "American communist radical." He wasn't.

Alinsky was a community organizer who worked largely within Democratic and Catholic-labor coalitions and was, by most historical accounts, at odds with actual Communist Party organizers of his era. Attaching the word "communist" to a 1971 organizing manual, and then to the local groups Mr. White names, does real work in the piece — it invites readers to associate those groups with something they were never connected to. That's worth correcting on the record.

The piece also leans heavily on association rather than evidence. Mr. White cites Alinsky's more provocative-sounding tactics — "leveraging ridicule," "personalizing targets" — as though they describe what NFGG, Indivisible, or the League of Women Voters have actually done locally. But no specific instance of any of these groups using those tactics is cited. Their stated mission language is quoted and then dismissed as insincere ("I've got a bridge to sell you") without any example of the gap between what they say and what they've done. That's assertion, not argument, and readers deserve to see the difference.

I'd welcome a piece — from Mr. White or anyone else — that engages with what these groups have actually said or done, on the record, rather than with the ideological lineage he assumes they belong to.

P.S. Joseph Goebbels famously said "If you repeat a lie often enough, it becomes the truth".

Sincerely,

Kim Spangrude

Montrose, Colorado

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CITY CHARTER ARE SIGNIFICANT AND AFFECT US ALL

Dear Editor:

For those not yet following the latest debate on the Montrose City Council, take note: the proposed changes to the city charter are significant and affect us all.

Montrose Mayor Badagliacco, along with city council members Woodden and Ulibarri, appears to dismiss resident participation as essential to sound policymaking. Their approach reduces residents' roles to merely casting a yes-or-no vote on proposed changes to the city charter. Let's be clear: voting in an election is not a substitute for meaningful public input on crucial policies, including public safety and elections.

Direct community involvement is the cornerstone of effective governance, ensuring that public policies reflect the lived experiences and diverse realities of our community. When residents participate and share their perspectives, local leaders gain vital firsthand knowledge that grounds policies in real needs, leading to decisions that are more practical, fair, and truly representative. This input ensures that policies do not disproportionately harm or overlook marginalized groups and increases the likelihood of policy success because the community understands and supports them.

Public trust—the foundation of good governance—can only be built through genuine engagement. Under the direction of the newly elected councilors, trust in our city's government has been eroded.

Councilors Badagliacco, Ulibarri, and Woodden believe they should oversee public safety and elections—issues that extend far beyond the typical responsibilities of a city council. These councilors lack the expertise and experience needed to make decisions that affect all residents. Placing such critical matters in their hands puts our entire community at great risk.

The mayor's plan to rush this process by scheduling a few special meetings for public comment, when key officials will be absent, falls short of genuine public engagement. Simply offering the chance to attend a meeting does not provide our community with the thoughtful, accessible opportunities to weigh the pros and cons of proposed changes that we deserve and seek. This process lacks transparency and inclusivity and reeks of hidden agendas and conservative propaganda.

Voters: pay close attention. What's at stake is nothing less than the future integrity, safety, and inclusivity of our city's government.

Karen Sherman Perez

Montrose, CO



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

HEAVY CAN BE THE HONEST MIRROR

Editor:

Elections matter.

Vainglorious candidates feel vindicated with electoral success. When their ego or avarice become blinding, remind them that their duty is to all constituents.

Candidates professing religious devotion solely to receive adherents' votes are frauds. They should be questioned on the authenticity of their espoused religiosity when their actions and words conflict.

Cognitive dissonance both locally and nationally has rarely been more evident. If you voted for candidates who are culpable in further dividing this country's populace by acts of egoism and self-righteousness, then consider the following realities and question your elected:

-To Congressman Hurd: As a Catholic, does deporting persecuted and elderly Priests align with this Administration's rhetoric to only pursue the expulsion of "violent criminals"? Was Pastor Nalwam-

ba, while retired and still providing in-home care for a person with disabilities, threatening America, or was he honoring his religious commitments?

-To Neisha Balleck: Are we to believe that you, as School Board President, are without an agenda and are promoting the necessary and expected long-term societal benefits that arrive from a well-rounded public education system? Your actions are surreptitious, and your leadership lacks the transparency required of public office.

-To Mayor Badagliacco: Why are you fearful of citizen charter committees? Since being elected, your actions do not follow your advertisements encouraging more citizen involvement.

-To those lauding their first tax refund check resulting from the OBBB: How easily can you justify that your personal tax refund was the consequence of a drastic reduction in available food benefits for already hungry children?

-To climate change deniers: Does the increase in fatalities owing to reduced environmental protections and the consequent surge in climate change disasters justify your belief that a growth in shareholder returns supersedes all?

Votes have consequences. Are the actions of those you elected serving to better themselves, solely a limited population, or the entirety of America? If you regret your vote, then I encourage you to lift up that heavy mirror and self-reflect. Whether intended or not, you are complicit. We all make mistakes. If your vote resulted in unintended consequences, then speak up now. Have the humility to admit your faults, so that the millions of others across this country who feel that they too have been misled do not feel alone. Patriotism is not zero sum.

In the absence of accountability, there will be no responsibility.

Hayden Janssen, Montrose

DON'T BE THE FROG

Editor:

The City Council Meeting from July 21, 2026 reminds me of the parable about the frog and the scorpion. The frog is readying himself to swim across the pond. The scorpion asks if he could ride on the frog's back. The frog says no, you are a scorpion and you will sting me causing both of us to drown. The scorpion says trust me; I would never do anything to my own peril. Half way across the scorpion stings the frog, who says why did you do that? You said you wouldn't. Now we are both going to die. The scorpion says, hey, I'm a scorpion, you should not have trusted me.

Both I and another speaker called out the mayor on the lack of trust in him and two others on Council. We both said their actions dictate that trust in them is unwarranted. My comment was with respect to a decision they made two weeks earlier regarding the ballot initiative. I said, *"Your last-minute decision to add this item to the agenda suggests you did not want it widely disseminated, that you did not want to entertain thoughtful public comment. You have essentially voided any trust I may have had in you."*

Trust is built on four core elements: competence (the ability to do the job), consistency (acting in a reliable and predictable manner), character (acting with integrity and honesty) and finally having compassion (genuine caring for others). There may be flashes of some of those elements in the Councilors I mentioned but they are not something they consistently live by while performing their duties as our civil servants.

City Council will be hosting some special sessions to discuss the seven proposed changes to our Charter. The most contentious proposed changes are to move the PD and City Clerk under Council's control. There are a host of reasons not to which I will speak to at a later time. I will say, however, Mayor Badagliacco has stated many times he will not use his position to coerce the Chief of Police to do something in violation of his oath. I don't trust that to not happen.

Don't take anything at face value. Do your research, I am.

Dave Stockton - Montrose

PUBLIC NOTICES: CHANGE OF NAME

☒ County Court ☐ District Court ☐ Denver Juvenile Court Montrose County, Colorado Court Address: 1200 N Grand Ave Bin A Montrose CO 81401	▲ COURT USE ONLY ▲ Case Number: 26C98 Division E Courtroom 1C
In the Matter of the Petition of: ☒ Adult: Christopher David Yniguez or ☐ Parent/Petitioner: for Minor Child: For a Change of Name to: Christopher David Trujillo	
PUBLIC NOTICE OF PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME	

Public Notice is given on JULY 7, 2026 (date) that a Petition for a Change of Name of a ☐ Minor Child or ☒ Adult has been filed with the Montrose Court.

The Petition requests that the name of

Christopher David Yniguez
 First Name Middle Name Last Name

be changed to

Christopher David Trujillo
 First Name Middle Name Last Name

By [Signature]
 Clerk of Court/Deputy Clerk



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



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

CITY COUNCIL FALL MEETING SCHEDULE

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-In an effort to allow for ample, robust and inclusive public input on the proposed Charter Amendments, while minimizing disruption to the travel schedules of Council and senior staff, we will be adding additional special meetings dedicated specifically to public comment on individual items. Structuring the meetings this way will allow for focused discussion and debate on each proposal.

Following the full discussion of all proposed items, in order to be fully statutorily compliant, 1st reading will occur on Aug. 18, 2026 and 2nd reading and final vote Sept. 1, 2026, will be held to vote on whether to advance each amendment to the ballot.

This schedule will give the public additional time to research each subject individually and will allow Council members to continue gathering input as they formulate their decision on how to vote on each proposal.

Meeting Schedule

Wednesday, July 29, 2026 – 6 PM (Special Meeting)

-Moving City Elections from April to November (even years)

-Term Limits: Lifetime 8-year limit for all seats; removing the 6-year at-large consecutive limit so it aligns with the 8-year total limit without a required break

Monday, August 3, 2026 – 10 AM (Regular Work Session)

-Changing the Municipal Judge residency requirement from Montrose County to a reasonable distance, to expand the candidate pool

-Removing the possibility of Ranked Choice Voting by amending the charter to allow only the current district election structure

-Updating "he/she" language in the charter to be title-specific

-Returning the Chief of Police's hiring, firing, and accountability authority from sole City Manager authority to a joint Council-Manager process (pre-2014 status)

-Returning the City Clerk's hiring, firing, and accountability authority from sole City Manager authority to a joint Council-Manager process (pre-2014 status)

-Moving City Elections from April to November (even years)

-Term Limits: Lifetime 8-year limit for all seats; removing the 6-year at-large consecutive limit so it aligns with the 8-year

Tuesday, Aug. 4, 2026 – 6:00 PM (Regular City Council Meeting)

-Returning the Chief of Police's hiring, firing, and accountability authority from sole City Manager authority to a joint Council-Manager process (pre-2014 status)

-Returning the City Clerk's hiring, firing, and accountability authority from sole City Manager authority to a joint Council-Manager process (pre-2014 status)

Thursday, Aug. 13, 2026 – 6:00 PM (Special Meeting)

-Changing the Municipal Judge residency requirement from Montrose County to a reasonable distance, to expand the candidate pool

-Removing the possibility of Ranked Choice Voting by amending the charter to allow only the current district election structure

-Updating "he/she" language in the charter to be title-specific

Tuesday, Aug. 18, 2026 – 6 PM (Regular City Council Meeting)

-1st Reading for each ordinance/potential ballot measure

Tuesday, Sept. 1, 2026 – 6 PM (Regular City Council Meeting)

2nd Reading and final Vote for each ordinance/potential ballot measure



OPINION/EDITORIAL: COMMENTARY



SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS ON PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENTS

The following is the complete listing of meetings in relation to the proposed charter amendments.

Wednesday, July 29, 2026 – 6:00 PM (Special Meeting)

-Moving City Elections from April to November

-Term Limits: Lifetime 8-year limit for all seats

Monday, August 3, 2026 – 10:00 AM (Regular Work Session)

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-Term Limits: Lifetime 8-year limit for all seats

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-1st Reading for each ordinance/potential ballot measures

Tuesday, Sept 1, 2026 – 6:00 PM (Reg Council Meeting)

-2nd Reading and final Vote for each ordinance/potential ballot measures

At all meetings It is important to: Please refrain from any personal attacks and disagreements, the use of profanity or ethnic, racial, or gender-oriented slurs as they may be considered "disorderly conduct" which violates state or local law.

Thank you,

Michael J. Badagliacco, "MJB"

Mayor – Montrose, CO

mjb@cityofmontrose.org



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

COBBLE CREEK NEIGHBORHOOD DOG PARK UPDATE

Editor:

Thanks to those who offered remarks in person, via email, Next Door and comments posted on my YouTube channel 'CobbleCreekClub'. Your encouragement about a Cobble Creek Neighborhood Dog Park is appreciated.

That is in contrast to the few that have condemned my work, vandalized HOA Community Dog Waste Stations and personally menaced me. In a connected matter, and sadly, The Club at Cobble Creek Board of Directors has elected to set aside multiple congenial and gentle mediation attempts from me and instead get litigious. To attempt to dismiss a legitimate Montrose District Court Complaint. That Dismissal attempt will likely fail. Meanwhile, the BODs spend Member \$\$\$ to have a legal fight they will most likely lose. In time we will know what underlies these efforts as the BODs and others will stand before a Judge and swear an oath to 'Tell the Truth, the Whole Truth and Nothing but the Truth'. There the rubber hits the road.

What we KNOW: The Club at Cobble Creek is constituted as a Colorado Non-Profit and subject to compliance (first and foremost) with TITLE 7 of Colorado Statute Law. In legal hierarchy, that stands above articles of incorporation, bylaws, rules etc.

That 81 page TITLE 7 LAW requires:

"...(a) (I) (A) ALL REGULAR AND SPECIAL MEETINGS of the residential nonprofit corporation's board of directors or executive committee, or ANY committee of the board ... MUST BE OPEN to attendance by all residential members or their representatives. The board shall make agendas for meetings of the board, and agendas for meetings of committees of the board that are authorized to take final action on the board's behalf, reasonably available for examination in advance by all residential members..."

ALSO we KNOW:

"...(c) The board of directors or any committee of the board may {ONLY} hold an executive or closed-door session and may restrict attendance to board members and such other persons requested by the board during a regular or specially announced meeting or a part thereof. The matters to be discussed at such an executive session may include ONLY matters enumerated in paragraph (d) of this subsection (3). (d) Matters for discussion by an executive or closed session are limited to: (I) Matters pertaining to EMPLOYEES of the residential nonprofit corporation or the managing agent's contract or involving the employment, promotion, discipline, or dismissal of an officer, agent, or employee of the corporation; (II) Consultation with LEGAL COUNSEL concerning disputes that are the subject of pending or imminent court proceedings or matters that are privileged or confidential between attorney and client;..."

PLUS A COUPLE OTHER HIGHLY Restricted SUBJECTS ONLY

We could say; "BODs need to tend to management business" or "those four dedicated men are helping The Club succeed" Maybe. But, we don't know what we don't know...

We may SPECULATE is that the Club BODs PERHAPS in their zeal to do their best at ensuring survival of their organization, have overstepped their bounds. With good intentions. Maybe. Whether that is true or not, will likely come to light in the court under oath, at trial.

Now, in reflection, I would offer this for your consideration;

In the 400 odd households of Cobble Creek there are HUNDREDS of both employed and retired, capable and astute professionals. These professionals have the ability to make Community contributions that have effectively limited by the closed nature of operations of The Club at Cobble Creek. If you are one of the 300 odd Members of The Club at Cobble Creek, when was the last time anybody asked you what you thought, see as important and what you would like to see different? And did more than politely listen at a Quarterly Meeting and then set the thoughts aside without so much as even recording it in the minutes.

Stay tuned as next week more will unfold owing to Judicial timetables...

Randy White, Cobble Creek

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PUBLIC NOTICES: NOTICE OF DIRECTOR APPLICATIONS



PUBLIC NOTICE

MONTROSE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, INC. NOTICE OF DIRECTOR APPLICATIONS

Montrose Memorial Hospital, Inc., a Colorado community nonprofit corporation, is now accepting applications to fill available positions on its Board of Directors.

Application packets are available for download at www.montrosehealth.com, by email request to BODapplications@montrosehealth.com, or pick up at the Montrose Regional Health Administration office, located at 800 South 3rd Street, Montrose, Colorado, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The deadline for return of completed applications is **Friday**, August 14th at 5:00 p.m. at the MRH Administration office.

Elections will be held by the Board of Directors at its annual meeting in October.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "m/vader", is positioned above a blue horizontal line. Below the line, the text "Mary Vader, MD" is printed in a small, blue, sans-serif font.

Dr. Mary Vader, Chairperson
Nominating Committee
Montrose Memorial Hospital, Inc.

800 S. 3rd Street • Montrose, CO 81401
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OPINION/EDITORIAL:COMMENTARY

A FEW QUOTES

By Don Stott

James Madison: "History proves that the money changers have used every form of abuse, intrigue, deceit, and violent means possible, to maintain their control over government, by controlling money and its issuance."

Ernest Hemingway: "The first panacea of a mismanaged nation is inflation of the currency. The second is war. Both bring a temporary (and false) prosperity; both bring a permanent ruin. Both are the refuge of political and economic opportunists."

Ludwig Von Mises: "Government is the only agency, which can take a useful commodity like paper, slap some ink on it, and make it totally worthless."

Voltaire: "Paper money eventually returns to its intrinsic value...zero."

Congressman Jerry Voorhis: "The banks...commercial banks and the Federal Reserve...create all the money of this nation, and its people pay interest on every dollar of that newly created money. This means that private banks exercise unconstitutionally, immorally, and ridiculously, the power to tax the people. For every newly created dollar, dilutes to some extent, the value of every other dollar already in circulation."

Alan Greenspan: "The abandonment of the gold standard, made it possible for the welfare statists to use the banking system, as a means to an unlimited expansion of credit. In the absence of the gold standard, there is no way to protect savings from confiscation through inflation. There is no other safe store of value. Deficit spending is simply a scheme for the hidden confiscation of wealth. Gold stands as a protector of property rights."

Enough quotes for now. The plain fact is that when you borrow money from a bank, don't pay your credit card in full, or use any type of unsecured credit, the issuer of that credit, if it isn't paid in full at the end of the billing period, you are adding to inflation. Banks and credit created out of thin air, and backed by nothing, simply adds to the money supply.

The large commercial banks, or for that matter any bank which doesn't loan to you from their customers' savings, is creating money out of thin air. A car loan or mortgage is backed by physical items backing the loans, and the loaner has protected itself by attaching a lien on that car or home.

In the D.C. 'swamp,' politicians vote for, and the president signs, volumes of bills

requiring payments to those who benefit from those bills, and keeps the Senators and Congressmen or Women in office, bragging about 'how much I have done for you.'

They have merely increased the deficit, increased inflation and taxed you.

Next to FDR, I believe Donald Trump has added more un-backed money into circulation, thereby causing inflation, than any other president I can think of, but maybe the reader of this can point out another president who ballooned the money supply more than Trump. Trump's tariffs are not being paid by those who supposedly are harmed by them, but by Americans, who pay for the tariffs, in increased dollar prices. Trump's War will add a half trillion dollars to the debt.

You are forced to pay for inflation, making you a victim of the D.C. swamp and its members. The provider of that inflation is your government and the Federal Reserve, which creates its own prosperity, with the printing press or computers.

Is there any other protection you can conceive of, other than home ownership, or gold and silver? All three go up in dollar value, as fast as the dollar value goes down, and you have no premiums to pay. It's automatic!

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

WHY IS THE MAYOR IN A RUSH?

Editor:

The City Charter is a vital, legal document. Think of it as the city's constitution, setting the framework for how everything works locally.

A review of the Montrose City Charter is welcome but why is the Mayor in a rush to have proposed amendments on the ballot this November?

Citizens of Montrose, Montrose City Councilors David Reed and Dave Frank have repeatedly asked Mayor Badagliacco "What's the rush?"

On July 21st, despite the concern repeatedly voiced by members of the Montrose community about Mayor Badagliacco's intent to rush making changes to the City Charter, and no response from the Mayor as to: "What's the rush?", the Montrose City Council voted 3-2 to submit a request to the Montrose County Clerk to place proposed amendments to the Montrose City Charter on the ballot in November 2026.

Charter amendments play a crucial role in shaping the governance of local governments.

The process of proposing amendments to the Montrose City Charter can be enhanced through a citizen-led Charter Review Commission providing input to the City Council prior to placing the amendments on the ballot.

During the June 15 Montrose City Council work session, Delta Mayor Ron White spoke during public comments about the city of Delta's recent experience with forming a citizen-led Charter Commission. To summarize, Mayor White stated that citizen input during the charter revision process enhanced the formulation of amendments that were placed on the city of Delta's municipal ballot in April 2025.

Montrose City Councilors David Reed and Dave Frank have spoken in length during Montrose City Council meetings on the value of a citizen-led Charter Review Commission in providing input to the City Council prior to placing the amendments on the ballot.

An excerpt from a presentation by Montrose City Councilor Reed during the July 07th City Council meeting:

"When we discuss changes to our Charter, we are not making ordinary policy decisions. **We are considering changes to the fundamental rules by which this community governs itself.**

Those decisions deserve not only legal analysis and policy discussion, but also meaningful public engagement."

In contrast to opinions expressed by the public, Montrose Mayor Badagliacco has held a position that the city council should directly place amendments to the charter on the ballot without input from a citizen-led advisory committee.

On July 07th, the Montrose City Council voted 2-3 against forming a Charter Review Commission.

As a result of the recent 2-3 vote (to defeat the formation of the Charter Review Commission) and 3-2 vote (to request that the proposed amendments to the City Charter be placed on the November 2026 ballot), the Montrose City Council will be working with a rushed deadline and without a citizen-led Charter Review Commission to propose amendments to the City Charter.

A mayor who won his seat in the April 2026 municipal election by a margin of only 21 votes (when only 35% of eligible voters returned their ballots) is openly disregarding concerns by the Montrose community.

View the Montrose Public Meetings Portal for the 'Special Meetings' schedule to discuss the proposed amendments to the Montrose City Charter.

Attendance by informed citizens is strongly encouraged!

Neonila Martyniuk, Montrose



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

POLICE CHIEF AND COMMAND STAFF TO SPEAK AT FORUM

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-The goal of Chief Hall and his team is to increase public safety for everyone and ensure law enforcement is administered fairly for the entire Montrose community through community policing and focused efforts towards reducing crime.

On Wednesday July 29, the Chief and his Command Staff: Deputy Chief Tim Cox, Deputy Chief Larry Witte, Commander Jonathan Roberts and Commander Chris Velasquez will provide a report at the Forum on their progress this year and highlight other developments in the department including staffing, statistics, law changes affecting Colorado law enforcement, and the strategic priorities of the police department in 2026 and 2027.

Chief Hall began his law enforcement career in 1997 when he was hired as a police officer by the Montrose Police Department. He became the police chief for the City of Montrose in 2018 and has served the community for 29 years.

He is a graduate of Colorado State University (Global Campus), earning a bachelor's degree in criminal justice management and a master's degree in management/law enforcement administration. He is also a graduate of Northwestern University's Police Staff and Command School and the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Academy.

We hope to see you this coming Wednesday for this 2026 update from the Montrose Police Department.

MRH RELOCATES RIDGWAY BLOOD DRAWS TO RIDGWAY ELEMENTARY ACHOOOL

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-With the Ridgway Event Center continuing to serve as the incident command center supporting wildfire response efforts, Montrose Regional Health has now relocated their Aug. 1 Ridgway Blood Draws to Ridgway Elementary School, 1115 Clinton St., Ridgway. The date and time remain the same: Saturday, Aug. 1, from 7-10 a.m. A huge thank-you to the Ridgway School District for opening its doors on short notice so we can continue offering this annual event in Ridgway rather than asking residents to travel elsewhere.



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

WHAT THE SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT HAS DONE RIGHT

Editor:

I want to address the articles in *The Mirror* asking School Board President Balleck to step down. Many "facts" are inaccurate and, apparently the authors are connected (i.e. LinkedIn) with the group that has been fighting to unseat her since she was voted President of the Board.

Also, I was asked at the last school board meeting to name three good things that President Balleck has done since taking office. This has prompted me to compile a list to present to the public to what she has done right.

1. The President has enabled more communication and organization than any previous Board.
2. She has improved how protocol and policies are followed, not only for the Board, but for the District as well.
3. She has met with staff and parents regularly, and has been active in making the District more accessible to families.
4. She has moved Community Input to the beginning of meetings instead of the end, giving a better voice to the community.
5. She has done her best to respond to calls, emails and texts.
6. Transparency has improved on the Board, particularly having open discussions/dialogue about agenda items, whereas before there was rarely any. For example, hiring a new law firm was not required to be brought before the public, but she felt that transparency was important. We know dialogue has increased because of responses, both positive and negative.
7. She has remained professional and respectful, even in the face of attacks and accusations, and has responded with grace and integrity.
8. She has been willing to take on controversial situations such as Montrose Classical Academy, hiring a new law firm, potential closure of a school (not initiated by the Board), and pursuing an investigation of the Superintendent and the Olathe Elementary principal. She placed herself in a very challenging position and made herself a target.

Being a Board President is very different than being a Board Director and requires a lot more knowledge. She has worked hard to learn what is required to lead the Board, and she has admitted several times that she is still learning.

Anyone who knows President Balleck knows that she has a heart to serve our community, our students and teachers. Remember, she receives no salary for this (in this case) thankless position.

Respectfully submitted,

Leah Vandersluis, Montrose



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT NEISHA BALLECK

Editor:

The good citizens of Montrose County elected last November Neisha Balleck and her conservative colleagues to the Montrose County School District. Their election victory was not to continue the status quo, but to deliver positive change for the benefit of the students and taxpayers. Not to benefit a small yet loud minority of malcontents (a number of the same individuals who are also targeting our newly elected Mayor and previously a County Commissioner) who have failed to accept the election results by exhibiting alleged threats, intimidation tactics, and now calling for a recall or the removal of Neisha Balleck - elected by her peers as School Board President.

Neisha is a professional and as noted above was elected to bring positive change to the School District. The noted malcontents disapprove of Neisha and the Board placing the current school superintendent on paid administrative leave while an investigation is being conducted. The response by her supporters is quite revealing. With or without the current investigation, the School Superintendent is subordinate to the School Board. In other words, the Board is her supervisor or employer. Unfortunately, the previous Boards allowed the Superintendent to act as if she was the employer and the Board reported to her. Furthermore, her supporters have overlooked the fact that previous Boards condoned the perpetual failing student test scores under her leadership. This was and is unacceptable. In fact, the Board had every right to termi-

nate the Superintendent's employment just based on the record of student test scores.

Her record is compounded by the fact that a Sex Survey that asked young children (i.e. under the age of 13) about various sexual acts was introduced allegedly without parental consent and through the backdoor without the Superintendent's knowledge. Or did she have foreknowledge and condoned this survey being introduced to three schools in the District (it was also distributed to other school districts by the author) until it became public knowledge? For those that may not know, it was an "extremist MAGA" individual that discovered and reported this abominable news of sexual exploitation against young children.

There are malcontents crying foul for Neisha seeking or retaining legal counsel as is her and the Board's prerogative. The Board is not under any legal or ethical obligation to retain the former legal counsel.

And the voters elected the Board knowing the new members would approve the new Charter school known as Montrose Classical Academy. This is a choice and an opportunity to provide a classical education without increasing taxpayer cost available to all students on a first apply first acceptance basis; however the malcontents favored the Superintendent who has worked against the new Charter School. A violation of her duties and a direct conflict against her supervisors, i.e. the newly elected School Board. This action by itself is sufficient cause to termi-

nate the Superintendent, which has not taken place so far; but again her supporters are bent out of shape that she is on leave during an investigation regarding other matters.

The majority expressed their will for the new Board last November and we will not be the silent majority while the malcontents promote misinformation and advocate for the old status quo of failed policies or attempts to remove the School Board President.

To the conservative School Board members, you were elected because you promised change.

Therefore, be strong, stand for what is right, and support the Board President that you elected.

Finally, there is already just cause, in my opinion, to terminate the Superintendent now based on her actions and conduct despite the current investigation. However, this has not taken place and why not? Yes, elected office is not easy and unfortunately it brings false and misleading accusations by the opposition.

Winning an election, though, is only the genesis; because the real work, challenges, and battle is when you are actually in office as an elected official.

You have only one chance to get this right or else the malcontents a.k.a. the radical Left will win, i.e. reinforce the failed policies of the current Superintendent. If this occurs it will be to the detriment of the students, our community, and potentially deprive our country of future leaders in industry and government.

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PROJECT 7 MEETS, RATE INCREASE PROPOSED



The Project 7 Water Authority held their monthly board meeting on Thursday, July 23. Jay Thoe, proponent of Project 7 and a member of TAG, gave the board his researched 10-page "Resiliency Project Historical Synopsis." The board was appreciative of Thoe's efforts and the overview. Photo by Gail Marvel.



The Project 7 Water Authority met on July 23. With the exception of Olathe Representative Jake Foreman, all other board members were present in person, or on Zoom. Photo by Gail Marvel.

Changes to the Agenda:

Added was, "Discuss Confidential memo from the contract with [attorney] James." Legal: Value Worksheet under Old Business.

Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

Manager's Report – Adam Turner.

Consumption/Process Control Report for June 2026

Turner said, "Consumption Report through June was close to June of 2025. Usage is right where you expect."

Ron White said, "Were you expecting conservation from those numbers? I was expecting reductions."

Turner said, "We've seen it before with drought on the Front Range and their messaging. It's right about what we expected. People are just being conservative. Process control is a really good report. Near the seven-year average for June. Treatment operations did a great job. A really good, finished product. Really good water being produced."

Updates for June 2026

Turner reported on the low water levels in area reservoirs, with Ridgway Reservoir being the exception. Turner said, "Ridgway is looking really good, 80 percent. The helicopter accident associated with the Gold Mountain Fire, there were 200 gallons of fuel lost, spilled into Silver Jack. There was no sheen on the water and there were booms all around the aircraft. The water did not get into Cerro Reservoir. Big thunderstorms are washing

By Gail Marvel

MONTROSE-Project 7 Board meetings, which are held on the fourth Thursday of every month, begin at 4:30pm. Meetings are open to the public and are available on Zoom. Board packet materials, which are unavailable to the public, are circulated to board members prior to the meeting.

Background:

The Resiliency Project, which was first presented in 2023, was to build a second water treatment plant south of Montrose that would have direct access to Ridgway Reservoir.

Current Status:

The status of the proposed second water plant south of Montrose is unclear. While some board members thought the project was off the table, others describe it as "on hold".

The Technical Advisor Group (TAG), which is comprised of experts from all six member entities, is in the process of accepting responses to a Request For Proposals (RFP). The RFP has two components for the Master Plan — one for rec-

ommendations on the existing water treatment plant, and the other for evaluation/recommendations for the transmission system. Previously the TAG group determined the Gunnison Tunnel was at low risk.

July 23, 2026 meeting:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Vicki Ripp. City of Montrose Representative David Bries attended on Zoom, Olathe Representative Jake Foreman and his alternate were absent, all other board members/alternates were present in person. Attorney Tim Flynn attended on Zoom as a stand-in for vacationing James Silvestro. The less than two dozen attendees included members of TAG and interested citizens.

Presentation of June 25, 2026, meeting minutes:

Matt Miles objected to the oversimplification that 55 percent of the funds spent on the project are recoverable. Miles said, "There is no way this is right. It's not a factual statement." After discussion, the minutes were amended to include "...with some virulent disagreement."

PROJECT 7 MEETS, RATE INCREASE PROPOSED From previous pg

burn scars and flash floods. We'll wait and see. The RFP on the Master Plan opens next Monday. TAG will offer recommendations at the next board meeting. In [a previous] Executive Session there was a medical situation that we'll report on later. Jay Thoe gave us a 10-page memo in the meeting packet. He shared it with Gail from the *Mirror*. It's trying to show where we got to, where we are."

History of the Resiliency by Jay Thoe, TAG member from Menoken

Thoe did not make a formal presentation, but his written synopsis was in the board packet.

Ripp said, "I appreciate the time it took to put this together."

White agreed with the appreciation. He said, "This filled in a lot of gaps."

CFO Report – Aaron Hancey, Hancey Consulting.

Financial Report.

Going through the financial spread sheets Hancey said, "There is nothing abnormal or unexpected. We're paying our bills. Everything looks reasonable. There is an uptick with chemicals in water usage." Hancey reviewed cash flow, revenue, and reimbursement. He said, "There is \$18 million in assets, face value, so far with the Resiliency Project."

Presentation of the 2025 Audit Tim Mayberry (Zoom) and Aaron Hancey.

Mayberry said, "My intent is to give you an update, but not keep you here until midnight." Throughout his presentation, Mayberry noted his struggle to unravel portions of the information needed for the audit, i.e. determining the value of the Resiliency Project that is on hold.

White said, "This is Greg Swartz's [former financial advisor] opinion? The value assumes the project is moving forward."

Mayberry noted the land purchased for the Resiliency Project has value as we go forward.

The 2025 Audit was approved contingent on staff correcting wording in one paragraph.

Legal Update – Attorney Tim Flynn (Zoom).

Flynn said, "I don't really have anything of significance."

David Bries asked that a confidential

memo sent to the board by Attorney James Silvestro be disseminated to the staff of the entities. Bries said, "I represent the City of Montrose. It's not for me to have a view. I have to run it by legal and the [city] manager. It puts me in a tough spot."

Action on the memo, which was not time sensitive, was tabled until Silvestro, as author of the memo, could speak to the issue.

Old Business:

Review of three options for 2027 Rate Structure

Hancey said, "This is the first stab at this [rate increase discussion]." Hancey gave three options, zero, 12 percent, and 25 cents.

Miles said, "This is the last thing we need to do is talk about a rate increase when we don't know where we're going!"

Hancey gave reasons for starting the discussion on rate increases.

Bries said, "The founding documents say we can only have seven percent of our gross revenue in reserves. We may have our hands tied even if we wanted to do a rate increase. We need to re-evaluate as we get more information. We don't know what type of project we're going to have. Hold this back for 2027 and look at 2028."

Ripp wanted the board to at least consider a "cost of living" rate increase.

Bries said, "But are we going to raise rates even if we know we are in violation of the founding documents?"

In a moment of comic relief, a chuckle went through the room when Miles quipped, "Could we cut rates then?"

Value Worksheet

Hancey said, "The Resiliency Project, \$19 million [spent] has been put on hold. How do we evaluate? What value of assets do we have? Greg Swartz [former financial advisor] says we have 55 percent of those costs."

White said, "There is no value for design if we picked it back up and moved forward. It applies to that site."

Miles said, "This is taken out of context. We sat here and heard TAG, there are all kinds of reasons. It's absurd to say there is 55 percent value."

Turner said, "Greg is shooting from the

hip."

Miles said, "He's shooting from the hip, but he presents it as gospel. This is not worth the paper it's written on. This is why people don't trust the government!"

White laughed and said, "That's why at the top of the page it says 'opinion'. There is zero chance that we will get 100 percent of that residual value."

Ripp said, "We did not do this willy-nilly. Going forward with this, we'll get info from TAG to go forward."

Note: On July 1, 2026, the Montrose Mirror met with Jay Thoe, proponent of Project 7 and interested citizen. A copy of Thoe's "Resiliency Project Historical Synopsis" was given to the Mirror and given to the Project 7 board members in their July 23, 2026, meeting packet.

Excerpts from Thoe's synopsis:

"The six public entities that comprise Project 7 collectively own about 28,000 acre feet of water rights in the Ridgway Reservoir. The City of Montrose owns about 700 acre feet of Cimarron River water, storable in the Cerro Reservoir. The City of Delta owns 50 cfs (36,000 acre feet/year) of water rights in the Gunnison River. Menoken Water owns 485 acre feet in the Blue Mesa Reservoir. 100% of the domestic water utilized in public domestic water distribution systems in the Valley originates from the Gunnison River by way of the Gunnison Tunnel and the Water User's Association's South Canal, from which it is piped to the Fairview Reservoir prior to being treated in the existing water treatment plant east of town.

"...Thus, domestic water for the entire population in this Valley is entirely dependent upon continued operations of the Gunnison Tunnel. Discussions about building resiliency/redundancy into local water supplies started in earnest in the early 2000's and focused upon the question of what should be done if the Gunnison Tunnel were to suffer a catastrophic failure.

This led to discussions about how to access and treat water from the Ridgway Reservoir, and/or how to move water from the Uncompahgre Valley River to the existing treatment plant, perhaps in conjunction with using the existing canals in the valley..."

PROJECT 7 MEETS, RATE INCREASE PROPOSED From previous pg

The motivation for building a second water treatment is two-fold — resiliency (adapt and recover from a catastrophic failure), and access to the Ridgway Reservoir water. While the messaging for public consumption has focused on resiliency, access to the Ridgway water is of equal, or more importance, to some.

Adjourned

Following the meeting, one attendee described the Resiliency Project for the second water treatment plant, “Nothing is happening — but the idea is not dead.”

Project 7 Contact Information:

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

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

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

The City of Delta Ron White ronwhite@cityofdelta.net

The Town of Olathe Mayor Jake Foreman 970

323- 5601 jacob.foreman@geocities.com

The Tri-County Water Conservancy District Vicki

Ripp 970 874-5127 info@tricitywater.org

The Chipeta Water District Matt Miles

matt@leadershipcirclellc.com 970-249-3398

The Menoken Water District Randy Meaker 970 249-5118

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



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

COMMENTS ON PROJECT 7 WATER AUTHORITY RESILIENCY PROJECT

Dear Editor,

I think one would find broad agreement within our community that it would be prudent public policy to have more than one source of drinking water available for everyone in the Uncompahgre Valley. Being entirely dependent upon the continued safe operation of the Gunnison Tunnel for drinking water for our entire population has long been a concern among people who understand how our water system works. The question that remains unanswered is, "How much would we be willing to pay achieve that goal?"

To that end, since 2007 the Board of Directors for Project 7 has examined about a dozen different options for an alternate water source, trying to find the sweet spot between a perfect solution and one that is financially realistic.

The difficulty with this process is that in order to estimate construction costs for any project, there first needs to be a complete set of plans, an engineered design.

In 2019 the Board of Project 7 began an effort to figure out how to access and treat water from the Ridgway Reservoir, in which our cities and water districts collectively own about 28,000 acre feet of water rights that cannot currently be accessed, treated and distributed throughout the valley.

Based upon preliminary cost estimates in the \$90 to \$125 million range for pipelines and a treatment plant, the Board of Project 7 initiated work to design of a new system to utilize those Ridgway water rights. After evaluating several options to get water to the plant, it became evident that piping water from the dam to a treatment plant south of Colona would be the preferable option.

In order to obtain firm cost commitments, in 2022 the Board contracted with a design build-firm, McCarthy CDM Smith, to proceed with detailed design. Up to this point there was substantial consensus within the Board of Directors.

As the design work progressed, in the inflationary post-Covid time frame, the estimated cost to construct the system steadily escalated. By the end of 2024 the design-build firm delivered a complete set of plans for pipelines and a treatment plant which the firm was prepared to build for \$172 million.

As costs had escalated during the design process, concerns about the expense of the project developed within the Board of Project 7. In the face of lack of consensus among the 6 public entities that control Project 7 (Montrose, Olathe, Delta, Tri County Water, Chipeta Water, & Menoken Water) about whether or not it would be prudent to proceed, the Board decided to pause the process in January of 2025.

The Valley remains vulnerability to having only a single source of drinking water. The concept for utilizing Ridgway water remains sound. Plans have been completed, and the project could be built. The process is on hold. Whether or not it ever gets built remains to be seen.

There has been a great deal of criticism of the Board of Project 7 about the expense incurred in preparing the design, and about the decision to not proceed with the construction. Concerns about costs are valid, and perhaps the process could have been managed differently. None the less, the Board has made a series of good faith decisions to address a serious vulnerability that hangs over our valley. Criticisms of those decisions should be tempered by understanding that the Board was trying to do the right thing for our population.

I am an outsider. I have never been on the Board. I am not employed by any of the six entities the comprise Project 7. I have made a study of this situation for my own purposes, and choose to share it in hopes of putting the situation into perspective for those of us who live here.

Respectfully,

Jay A. Thoe

Registered Professional Engineer

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

NEIGHBORS FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE

Editor:

"Bullying, fascist, or communist tactics are not the solution, but a threat to our Constitutional Republic". I couldn't agree more. But that is exactly what happened and the Central Committee allowed Mijares and Pond to act without repercussion. The party failed to properly vet its candidates, and the consequences were predictable.

The outcome reflected the choices that were made, and those responsible must now own the results. By supporting Scott Mijares and appointing Sean Pond, the committee helped create public controversy and embarrassment for the county. In times when good people are bullied or falsely accused, it is not enough to remain silent. Standing by and doing nothing only allows injustice to flourish and sends the wrong message to our community. We each have a responsibility to speak up against lies and intimidation, support

those who are targeted unfairly, and defend the principles of fairness and respect. When we choose not to stand by, we help build a stronger, more honorable society for everyone.

Good governance depends on commitment to truth, transparency, and reliance on facts and data rather than assumptions and unfounded rhetoric. When leaders and community members fail to educate themselves or disregard factual information, the resulting discourse can create unintended consequences that harm the very people they are meant to serve. When trust is eroded and lies and rhetoric are allowed to prevail without attempting to silence it; is the duty of the citizens to demand accountability.

Neighbors for Good Governance is a group of "Local voices for representative leadership in Montrose County" or "Our work is non-partisan. We do not endorse political parties or ideological platforms —

only the values of transparency, accountability, and community." If that is the case, then count me in. There is a reason why 52% of Coloradans are unaffiliated. And issues like this are why the numbers keep growing.

As we look toward the future of Montrose County, it is essential that we place candidate credibility and principled leadership above partisan loyalty.

The true measure of a candidate should not be their party affiliation, but their commitment to integrity, transparency, and service to the community. When we focus on principles—honesty, accountability, and a dedication to the public good—we empower our community to thrive and restore faith in our local government. Let us demand leaders who earn our trust through their actions and values, not just their political labels.

*Neighbors for Good Governance-
Aimee Tooker*



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT IS A GRADUATION REQUIREMENT IN MONTROSE COUNTY

Editor:

In the July 13th issue Leah Vandersluis wrote an editorial which contained the following quote, "Today, however, civics is not taught in our public schools with the exception of most charter schools. The pledge and prayer went out of the window. Civics classes diminished over the years and what, at first, was required, then became optional, and finally not available. Most of our kids do not know the three branches of government, how laws are created, the Articles of the Constitution or who the president is."

I do not why she believes this but it is not only false about requirements but incorrect about the level of knowledge our students have. American government is a graduation requirement in Montrose County, and every student must pass the class in order to graduate. The scales in the class require learning everything on her list and much more. Not only are many kids learning the basics they are excelling, over 85% of the 144 students who have taken AP American Government over the last three years have earned college credit based on the level of knowledge they showed on the AP exam. This does not sound like the deficit she presents but rather a strength of Montrose County schools. I am not sure what she thinks charter schools can do to improve this level of knowledge, but I would love to talk to her about the actual curriculum and knowledge our students need to demonstrate at Montrose High School. She is also welcome to come into Montrose High School and try one of the practice tests in my classroom, to see if she has the same level of knowledge that the students she is critiquing have.

Kurt Scriffiny, Montrose



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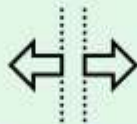
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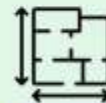
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INVESTIGATION INTO OES EXPECTED TO WRAP UP SOON From pg 1

have public comment this evening," Balleck said.

The Board voted to approve the meeting agenda.

OLD BUSINESS

Balleck discussed the third-party Investigation being conducted into a situation at Olathe Elementary School. RE-1J Superintendent Carrie Stephenson has been on leave pending the results of that investigation.

"This has been really hard," Balleck said, "Waiting for this third-party investigation to be done."

The investigation is expected to wrap up shortly, she said. The next step will be for President Balleck and District F Director Jody Hovde to meet with the Investigator, Sally Roller, and with Legal Counsel Bryce Carlson, to discuss logistics of an Executive Session to go over the results of the investigation.

The Board spent time in discussion. District E Director Tiffany Vincent reminded all that there will be pressure on the board to leak the findings of the investigation. It would be unethical to do so, she said.

NEW BUSINESS

The Board considered possible approval of an Oct. 1 entrance-age date for kindergarten and first grade at the Montrose Classical Academy.

After discussion, the board voted to amend the suggested motion, which would approve October 1, 2026, as Montrose Classical Academy's entrance-age date, so that children may enter kindergarten if they are five years old on or before that date and first grade if they are six years old on or before that date, to include the words, "*as a one year exception or a non-automatic waiver, is established within the year for the 2026-2027 school year.*"

The addition to the amended motion passed, with Hovde and West voting to deny.

The Board then voted to approve the entire motion, with Hovde and West voting to deny.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the Montrose Classical Academy's request to extend from Aug. 1, 2026, to Aug. 13, 2026 the deadline for satisfying all re-

quirements in the applicable pre-opening condition related to facility occupancy approvals and supporting facility documentation.

The Board discussed having Interim Superintendent Jessica Kalb develop a message to the community regarding the District's focus on students and staff, for a positive start to this school year.

Comments included District E Director Tiffany Vincent's suggestion that including information about Kalb's background and qualifications would be helpful.

District F Director Jody Hovde said, "This is an unprecedented and challenging time...I think we need to be committed to some stability and continuity for strong leadership across all our buildings..."

Administrators, teachers and paras have been professional, resilient, and dedicated, Hovde said. "They want what's best for kids and they're living in a sense of fear..."

The strategic plan should be a focus as well, Hovde said. "...And that we need to be there for each other even during this time of uncertainty and time of fear..."

District D Director Tom West said, "...We got to guarantee that our teachers and our administrators are the best people we have...and school's going to happen. They're going to walk in that front door come school time..."

Board President Neisha Balleck said that principals and teachers do a great job every day and will continue to do a great job.

Board Vice President Ted Valerio said, "I keep hearing, 'living in and having a sense of fear.' And everyone's afraid. We've got teachers afraid, we've got administrators afraid."

"I contend, as we've got good leaders, why are our teachers afraid? I get it, there's uncertainty...and fear seems to be peddled. So as good administrators, as leaders, as principals, that's your job to take care of your teachers and help them to do their job."

"Open up, split the waters, to help them have the tools that they need...there's obviously forces that are pushing fear and uncertainty and all these different types of things," Valerio said. "I'm hoping that administrators, teachers, principals are not participating in that. And anybody

who's been a part of any leadership training knows, it's up to that administrator to be that rock for them. That Principal to help smooth those things, that Principal to be that buffer for those teachers. That is your job....and yeah there are some things that are unprecedented, some really important things that are happening.

"But that shouldn't filter down as absolute fear for the whole district," he said. "If that's happening, there's something wrong; there's something wrong in the style of leadership that's being exhibited. And I don't know each principal, I don't know exactly what they're doing or not. And there could be other forces that are exacerbating that."

"But I would say that as a leader, it's up to you..."

Interim Superintendent Jessica Kalb is in charge, and she was chosen because she does a good job, he said. "...I think it's up to our individual leaders across the district to help not only our teachers, but if our teachers are angry, scared, upset, or whatever else it is, yes, that does affect our kids."

District F Director Jody Hovde said she has been out and about in the community, talking to educators and principals, and principals have been nothing but professional. Teachers are on board and they're trying.

Hovde said, "But when they know that there is this big carrot holding up here swinging around, when they don't know what the answer's going to be, as I don't know what the answer is going to be when this investigation's over...there is a lot of uncertainty..."

Families don't see the board as being visible, she said, and out there talking to them like she has been, "answering their questions, answering their emails..."

"That's what they want. They want you to tell them, 'Don't worry about it, I got your back,'" Hovde said.

from the audience, Hayden Janssen called out, "And not having public comment doesn't help!"

Interim Superintendent Jessica Kalb asked several questions of her own, and she and the board discussed the process and the timeline.

The Board took a recess before entering

INVESTIGATION INTO OES EXPECTED TO WRAP UP SOON

From previous pg

Executive Session pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(f) to discuss a personnel matter concerning Acting Superintendent Dr. Jessica Kalb's temporary additional duties, and pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(e) to determine the Board's position, develop negotiating strategy, and/or instruct negotiators regarding a proposed amendment to Dr. Kalb's employment agreement addressing those duties and related compensation.

Upon return from Executive Session, the Board of Education voted unanimously to approve Dr. Jessica Kalb's amended contract while covering as acting superintendent.

With no further business, the Board voted to adjourn.



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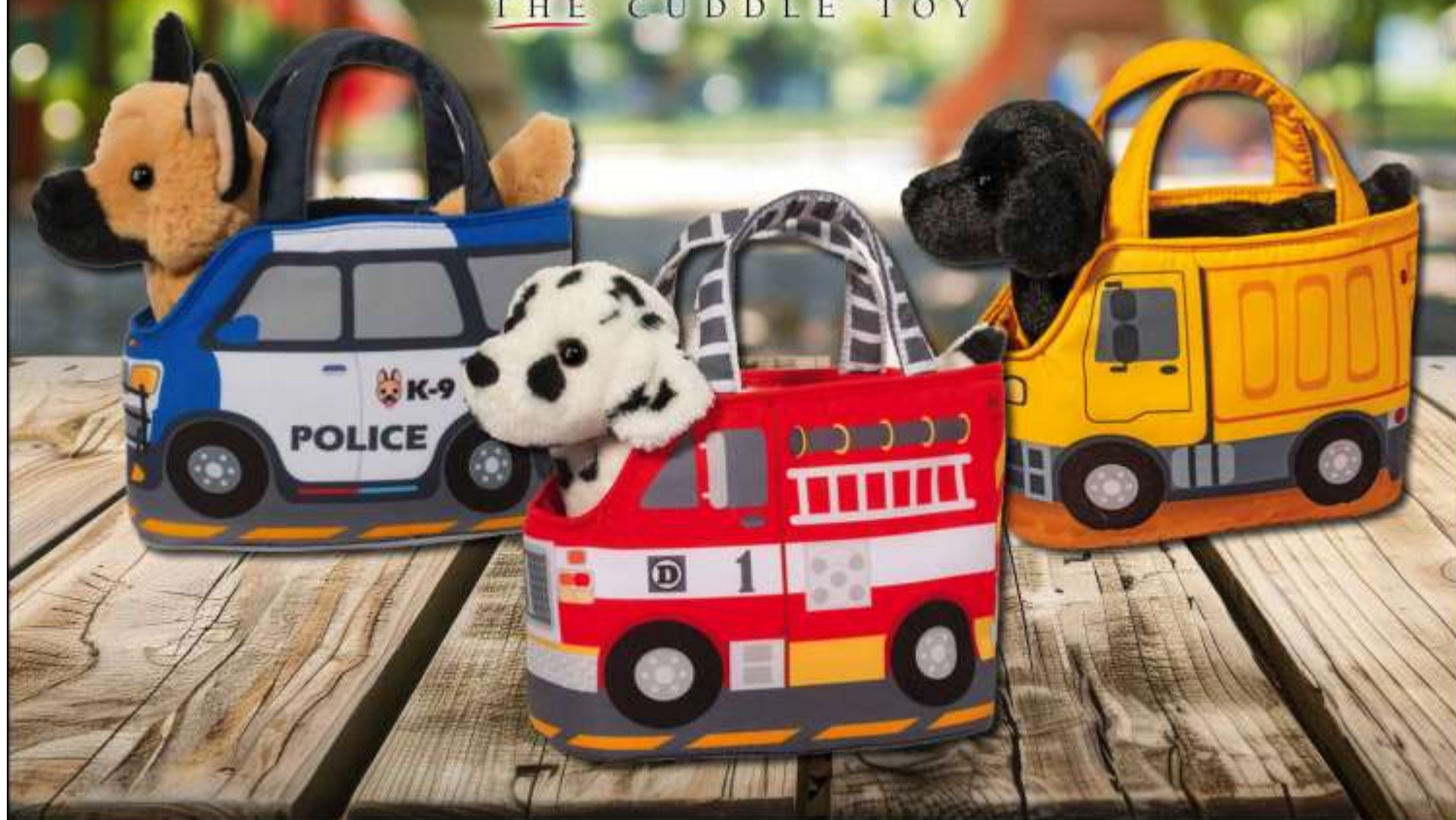


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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

PUBLICLY STATING OPINIONS AND STATING ACCUSATIONS DOES NOT STRENGTHEN PUBLIC DISCOURSE, IT UNDERMINES IT

Editor:

I am writing regarding the July 20 letter to the editor titled "Public Service Shouldn't Require Body Armor."

This letter identifies me publicly by name and association and asks whether I was involved in coordinating a fake Facebook account known as "Claire Johnston." It states:

"Concerns have been raised: Is Joelle Recalde... involved in coordinating or encouraging such content?"

While this is phrased as a question, the article places my name directly alongside allegations of harassment, fake account creation, stalking, and defamation without presenting any evidence that I was involved in any of those alleged activities. I want to be clear: My goal first and foremost has been and continues to be, the students and the future of our district. Anyone who has attended school board meetings over the past several years knows I have not been shy about expressing my concerns with district leadership, including individual school board members and the superintendent. All of my opinions have always been expressed under my own name and with a firm standing behind my own words.

At the same time, I have made a genuine effort to build relationships with the very people I sometimes disagree with. I've attended meetings, community events, joined committees and even line danced because I hold strong in my belief that we are all neighbors first. I have always believed that trying to understand one another is so much more productive than treating people as enemies simply because we hold differing opinions. Unfortunately, someone took my willing-

ness to engage openly with people I wanted to understand better and turned it into suspicion.

I have never created or operated a fake Facebook account, nor have I coordinated or encouraged anyone else to do so.

I also chose not to return to line dancing, not because I had anything to hide or because I felt guilty, but because I no longer felt it was a safe or welcoming place after a face-to-face conversation in which my truthful denial was not accepted. No one should have to withdraw from their community because of false public insinuations that continue to be spread after multiple attempts to dispel them.

The most disappointing part to me is the irony. The original letter calls for civility, accountability, and face-to-face conversations. And yet instead of engaging with me directly, it invited readers to publicly question my integrity without presenting any factual evidence. This approach to publicly stating opinions and stating accusations does not strengthen public discourse, it undermines it. Ironically, while the letter discusses the harm caused by harassment and online targeting, the publication of the letter has resulted in exactly that happening to me. The publication of those allegations has had real-life consequences through no action of my own. I have received numerous texts and private messages accusing me of conduct I did not engage in.

As someone who supports freedom of speech and open dialogue, I appreciate the important role the *Montrose Mirror* plays in reporting on issues that affect our community. My concern is not that differing opinions were published- in fact I strongly encourage that- it is that a pri-

vate citizen was publicly identified and associated with serious allegations without verification or an opportunity to respond. I welcome healthy disagreement. I welcome healthy debate. What I cannot accept are serious public accusations presented without evidence against someone who has always been willing to speak openly, under their own name, and take responsibility for their words. Our community benefits immensely from vigorous public debate, but that debate should also be fair, accurate, and grounded in facts. If we choose to ask people to answer difficult questions honestly, we also have a responsibility to accept those answers given unless tangible facts demonstrate otherwise.

I am going to continue to advocate for what I believe is best for our schools and our students. Public disagreements or not, what I believe is the best interest of the students in our district is where my priority lies. My advocacy has never and will never be about personalities or politics, it has and always will be about our kids.

I have never hidden behind a fake identity to advocate for our schools or our students. Every opinion I have ever expressed has been under my own name, and I have always accepted responsibility for my words and I will continue to do so.

I understand that letters to the editor represent the opinions of the author. However, when a publication prints statements that identify a private citizen and directly imply involvement in potentially unlawful or unethical conduct, I would expect those claims to be verified or supported before publication.

Sincerely,

Joelle Recalde, Montrose



Montrose County HOUSING MARKET

THEN AND NOW

The Montrose real estate market has shifted from a frenzied seller's market into a more balanced, healthy market. Here's how the landscape has changed—and what it means for you.

2021–2023 THE FRENZIED MARKET



EXTREMELY LOW INVENTORY
Very few homes available.
High competition.



MULTIPLE OFFERS
Common on most listings.
Bidding wars were normal.



RAPID PRICE APPRECIATION
Double-digit increases
year over year.



HOMES SOLD FAST
Many homes sold in
days, sometimes hours.



SELLERS HAD ALL THE POWER
Few contingencies.
Cash offers prevailed.



BUYERS FACED INTENSE PRESSURE
Waived inspections,
offered over asking,
and moved quickly
to compete.

2026 THE BALANCED MARKET



MORE INVENTORY
Significantly more homes
to choose from.



FEWER BIDDING WARS
Well-priced homes get offers,
but multiple offers are less
common.



PRICES HAVE STABILIZED
Appreciation has slowed to
1–2% year over year.



LONGER DAYS ON MARKET
Buyers take more time
to decide.



NEGOTIATION IS BACK
Buyers can negotiate on
price, repairs, and closing
costs.



BUYERS HAVE MORE POWER
More choices, less pressure,
and more favorable terms.

“

Well-priced, well-presented homes are still selling.
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”



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VENDORS BEING OUSTED FROM DEMORET PARK *From pg 1*

Question, Citizen Lesley Hallenborg questioned why the Sno Ball Trolley, a very popular seasonal fixture in Demoret Park starting more than 30 years ago, is no longer allowed to occupy its traditional location.

"...The kids would see that come in in the spring, and they'd know Summer's on the way. And then they'd see it leave in the fall, and Winter's on the way," Hallenborg said. "... All of the tourists who came to town saw it, even behind that freakishly large statue, you could still see the trolley. And now it's relegated to some little off the beaten track. You can't even see it unless you know it's there, and it's just not right...There have always been vendors in Demoret Park. It's called the park, it's for all people to enjoy, not just a business to take over. Whoever made that decision, I would like them to reconsider," she said. "I think it's Eatery 66 who's going to have outdoor seating, well there's plenty of space for both."

Mayor Pro Tem Ed Ulibarri said that City Manager Bill Bell would be the person to contact.

Other citizen comments included a thank you to City staff, concerns over the use of electric dirt bikes on streets, sidewalks, and City pathways, the fact that Councilor Adam Woodden's wife is a Republican, a thank you to the City for helping to fund The Shepherd's Hand, a thank you to Council for increased attention to citizen interaction, pros and cons of possible ballot measures, and one comment that Montrose has a "problem with white supremacy."

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Council voted unanimously to approve minutes of the July 6, 2026, special City Council meeting as corrected, and minutes of the July 7, 2026, regular City Council meeting as presented.

BALLOT QUESTION FOR NOVEMBER 2026 COORDINATED ELECTION

Mayor Badagliacco introduced a discussion to consider giving notice to the Montrose County Clerk regarding the addition of a question on the Nov. 3, 2026, Coordinated Election ballot related to amending the Montrose City Charter.

City Attorney Chris Dowsey presented an overview of the reason for the discussion; although no ballot question has been se-

lected, notice must be given to the Montrose County Clerk to meet the statutory deadline for giving notice (the deadline is July 23, which is 100 days before the election). Dowsey discussed other deadlines related to a ballot measure.

After Dowsey spoke, Councilor J. David Reed said, "Mr. Mayor I have some prefatory comments on it."

Mayor Badagliacco reminded Reed that it is the Mayor's prerogative to speak first. He said that the item is strictly to reserve space on the ballot if Council chooses to place any item on the ballot after ample, robust, and inclusive discussions. "This is purely for that."

After Badagliacco spoke, Reed said he would take a few moments to address the item. Reed then gave an 11-minute speech in opposition.

Also speaking in opposition was Councilor Dave Frank. "I have the same heart and the same mind as my friend Mr. Reed...in that I find this entire process to be incredibly rushed...I cannot support this ballot question, I think they we should take our time," Frank said.

Badagliacco said that the people are allowed to vote on any ballot questions that are placed on the ballot, and that citizens have the opportunity also to place items on the ballot themselves. "That option is there for every citizen to pursue without us...this is setting aside a time to be able to have a ballot measure in November...we will be having many meetings to be able to do so...the people will have their ability to discuss...each and every single item that is proposed. They'll have multiple opportunities to do so..."

Citizens Bob Nicholson, Cliff Faurer, Dave Stockton, Mark Gregory, Beth McCorckle, John Brown, Ryan Sedgeley, Laurie Cannel, Connie Pittenger, Holly Speaks, Dave Bowman, Ron Smith, Kim Spangrude, Dee Laird, Robert Kelley (aka Sam Aster) Phoebe Benziger, Karen Sherman Perez, and Heather Scott commented on the proposed measure.

Council then voted on the measure, which was approved in a three to two vote.

GOOGLE WORKSPACE EXPENSE AUTHORIZATION

Prior to voting on the Google Workspace item, City Manager Bill Bell asked about

upcoming meetings as he will be gone driving his children to college for much of the month of August. Councilor J. David Reed also said that he will be traveling, "It is noted," Mayor Badagliacco said, "You can Zoom in..." Badagliacco said that there will be meetings each Tuesday and acknowledged that special meetings would be held as well.

Councilor Reed said that the proposed meeting schedule was very disturbing, "Of course you have the three votes to make sure that happens!"

City Attorney Chris Dowsey said that special meetings may be called by the Mayor with 24-hour notice.

Badagliacco said that the meeting schedule would be posted.

Council voted to approve the purchase of Google Workspace Enterprise software licenses at the total cost of \$54,432.

2026 STREETLIGHT UPGRADE AND REPLACEMENT AUTHORIZATION

Council voted to approve the 2026 Streetlight Upgrade and Replacement Authorization in partnership with the Delta-Montrose Electric Association for the not-to-exceed amount of \$240,000.

PAVILION DESIGN (PHASE 1) CONTRACT AWARD

Council voted to approve the authorization of \$400,000 for the first phase of design work on the Montrose Pavilion Renovation, including a contract with Blythe Group and Company.

HILLCREST SIDEWALK REPLACEMENT CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT

Following comments by Kim Spangrude and Jim Haugsness, City Council approved the award of a contract to Precision Dirt Work in the amount of \$489,577 for construction of the South Hillcrest Drive Sidewalk Replacement Project.

2026 ANNUAL COLORADO FLIGHTS ALLIANCE CONTRIBUTION

Councilor J. David Reed recused from the vote on the annual contribution to the Colorado Flights Alliance, as he is their legal counsel. The contribution was approved with one abstention. The contribution of \$300,000 is included in the City's 2026 budget.

ORDINANCE 2725 - FIRST READING

Council voted to amend Title XI Chapter 7, Zoning Regulations; Title XI Chapter 11, Supplementary Uses; and Title XI Chapter

VENDORS BEING OUSTED FROM DEMORET From previous pg

Chapter 15, Definitions, to allow for Temporary Workforce Housing within the City of Montrose. Constituent Aaron Ranstrom asked several questions prior to the vote, and Councilor Ed Ulibarri voiced concerns about the impacts of such housing. A developer associated with a project also spoke. The Ordinance was approved in a four to one vote with Ulibarri voting to deny.

ORDINANCE 2717-SECOND READING
Council voted to approve Ordinance 2717 on second reading, for the annexation of the El Chapin Addition.

ORDINANCE 2718 - SECOND READING
Also approved was Ordinance 2718 on second reading, zoning the El Chapin Addition as an R-3, Medium Density District.

ORDINANCE 2719 - SECOND READING
Council voted to approve Ordinance 2719 on second reading, amending the zoning district designation of a portion of Lot 39 of the Amended Ponderosa Ranch Subdivision Filing No. 2 Lots Park and 39 from R-6, Medium Density/Manufactured Housing District to B-3, General Commercial District.

ORDINANCE 2720 - SECOND READING
Council approved Ordinance 2720 on second reading, designating the Lathrop Hardware, with the historic address of 439 East Main Street, as a City of Montrose Historic Property pursuant to § 11-3 of the Official Code of the City of Montrose.

ORDINANCE 2721 - SECOND READING

Ordinance 2721 was approved in a three to two vote, with Mayor Badagliacco and Councilor Wooden voting to deny.

Ordinance 2721 designates the E.A. Lee Garage, with the historic address of 219 East Main Street, as a City of Montrose Historic Property pursuant to § 11-3 of the Official Code of the City of Montrose.

STAFF REPORTS

Sales Tax Manager Leeanne Whittaker delivered the Sales, Use and Excise Tax Report for May, by fund and by area.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mayor Pro Tem Ed Ulibarri thanked the Police for their successful Tips for Cops program with the Special Olympics.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

PARTNERSHIP PROGRESS WITH COMMUNITY HOSPITAL AND MONTROSE REGIONAL HEALTH

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE – Community Hospital and Montrose Regional Health continue making steady progress toward a definitive agreement to create a new tax-exempt nonprofit parent organization that would strengthen healthcare across western Colorado while allowing both health systems to remain independent and locally governed.

Since announcing the proposed partnership earlier this year, leaders and teams from both organizations have continued working together to prepare for the next phase of the process and identify opportunities to better serve patients and the communities they call home.

In June, leaders from both organizations gathered for a joint leadership meeting to strengthen relationships, share perspectives, and begin shaping a shared vision for the proposed partnership. Since then, teams across both organizations have continued working together to identify opportunities to improve efficiency, enhance operations, and position both health systems for long-term success.

At the governance level, both boards continue reviewing the foundational documents needed to support the proposed parent organization. Work is also underway to explore branding and naming concepts, with additional details to be shared as key milestones are reached.

Both organizations remain on track to finalize a definitive agreement this fall and are committed to providing additional updates as key milestones are reached. To learn more about the proposed partnership, visit <https://montrosehealth.com/partnership/>.

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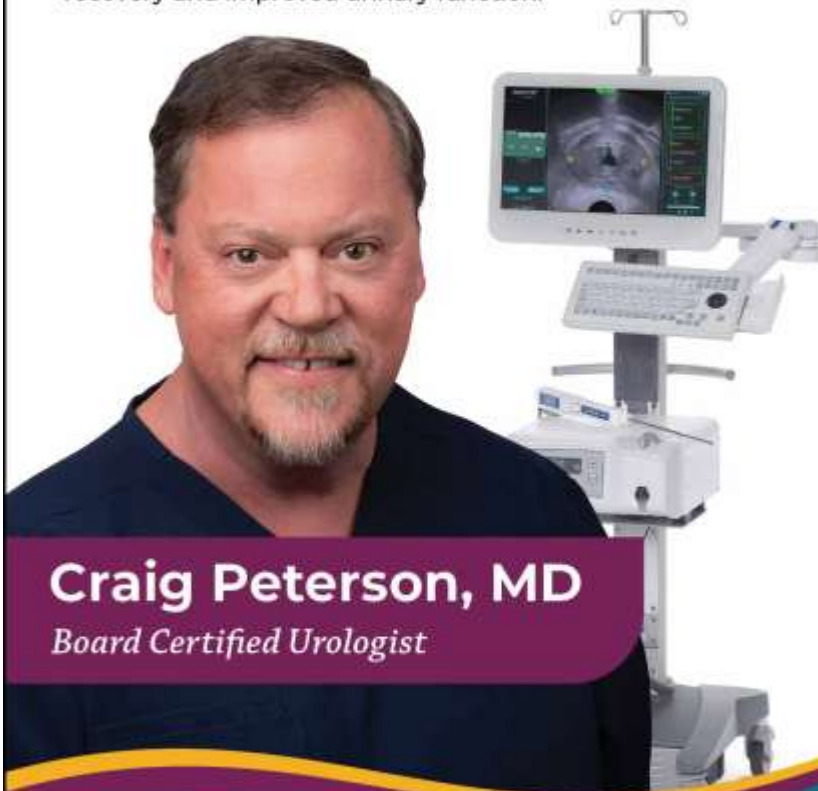
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OPINION/EDITORIAL: COMMENTARY

MONTROSE COUNTY HAPPENINGS OF LATE

What County Leadership is Doing for You or Not

By David White

As with the City of Montrose and other taxing authorities in Montrose County, there's always a lot happening with these local governmental entities that often times isn't well known by the public. Since the recall election last of year a County Commissioner and the seating of an until then virtually unknown resident in the form of Kirstin Copeland, Montrose County, has, for the most part, dropped out of the headlines that were commonplace in the months leading up to that election. While the local print media and their staff fueled and then kept the recall fires burning as they supported those whose vision of what "good governance" should look like (i.e. "We're progressives and we want change." "We want you to govern the way we want you to." "It's fine that you listen to other people and points of view, but you'd better vote the way we want you to or else." And much more), the County's employees as well as many citizens suffered through, yet another round of conflict and uncertainty created by the less tolerant in our ranks.

Like the City of Montrose, there's often too much going on to be able to follow events closely, so here are some examples of recent events that have happened in Montrose County government and some observations regarding them:

Board of County Commissioners:

As many readers now know, Commissioner Sue Hansen recently announced her "retirement" from public office. While Ms. Hansen is seen as a take charge, let's get the job done kind of political leader (which she is and has been successful in taking the bull by the horns during her time in office). For this reason, she has received many accolades from community members, organizations and others outside of Montrose County. Most are well deserved. Like any other politician, she does have her detractors who have seen her as heavy handed, controlling with the "my way or the highway" mentality as well as

"chauvinistic" in her approach to how things get done but in a female kind of way. The behind-the-scenes person that she is can be quite different. Occasionally, we get a glimpse into what her alter ego is all about and it isn't anything like the public persona that she presents.

Internally, she has banished most all of the males in the County's Administrative Offices with the exception of Commissioner Sean Pond for obvious reasons, although as most can observe, he's been marginalized as she and Commissioner Copeland run the show. Employees have been known to refer to current leadership in unflattering ways that aren't suitable for printing in this publication. If you're not a member of her club (as that's the best way to describe it), look out. Recently hired County Manager Joe Kerby is coming in at an opportune time as Ms. Hansen exits the County stage. Good fortune had his back.

On July 15th, Ms. Hansen, as the then Chairman of the Board, announced at a BOCC meeting that there was going to be a "reorganization of the Board" that evening. Kirstin Copeland, who replaced Scott Mijares back in November of last year, was nominated to Chair the Board with Commissioner Sean Pond named as Vice Chair. This shuffling of the deck chairs was followed by Ms. Hansen's resignation effective August 31st as she stated in a County press release "*I look forward to spending more time with family and pursuing new opportunities.*" To most observers, the relevant phrase here is that there's a new position in her future. It most likely won't be too long after her resignation date when the "new opportunity" will be made known.

In conjunction with her resignation, Ms. Hansen announced that she was "gifting" Caryn Webb Gibson, the unopposed Republican nominee for Ms. Hansen's term limited seat, an early appointment to the Board. Interestingly enough, that's something she cannot do and she knows it! As a

currently registered Republican (she flipped back to being a registered Republican after having become a registered Unaffiliated voter while she worked behind the scenes with her Democratic Party friends Linda Gann and Phoebe Benziger to recall Commissioner Scott Mijares a year ago), she's bound by party rules. Mrs. Webb Gibson should never have been placed in this uncomfortable position as it relates to a "gift." The Republican Party's Vacancy Committee will meet to make the appointment just as they did when they appointed Ms. Hansen a Commissioner in 2018 after Glen Davis resigned his Commissioner seat. That's how it works.

I'll stop here for now. My bet is that on September 1st, the skeletons, of which there are many, will start falling out of the closet when it comes to the antics that have taken place behind the scenes over the last 8 years. I'm thinking that many current and former employees might have something to say that takes some of the shine off. We'll see.

County Manager Search and Hiring:

After the resignation of former County Manager Frank Rodriguez last year and the temporary appointment of Leslie Quon, the County's Human Resources Director, to the position as an interim manager which she resigned from in July 2025 followed by the BOCC taking over management for two weeks then hiring of yours truly as the interim manager, public statements were made about the hiring of a new manager that were clear in how the process would go. Nationwide search. Narrowing of candidates. Interviews by the BOCC. A public presentation of the candidates followed by a Question-and-Answer session with the finalists and then the selection of a new manager after reviewing all data gathered through the process.

What happened didn't happen as Ms. Hansen had indicated things would go. 52 applicants, with a process that included nine initial phone interviews, four rounds

MONTROSE COUNTY HAPPENINGS OF LATE *From previous pg*

of commissioner interviews, and a final interview. No public process for the hiring of a permanent manager. Just a consensus vote by the BOCC to hire Joe Kerby. A salary of \$220,000 a year and a one-year golden parachute were a part of the deal that, according to reported comments by Kerby, had been in the works for a year. Interesting.

Public Health Director:

As some reading this know, the County Commissioners wear a few hats that are outside of what one may think of as a traditional Commissioner role. One of those is as the County Board of Health. State statute allows for counties the size of Montrose County to designate the BOCC as the Board of Public Health. Last February, in need of a Public Health Director and after months of recruiting for the position, Mirza Ahmed was hired by the BOCC for the position. There were concerns raised by the public about his background with the World Health Organization and other qualifications due to his nationality and background. Two Commissioners (Mijares and Pond) were accused of trying to fire him. Turns out, the BOCC was not the body to have made the hire. The Board of Health was the responsible body. After heated public meetings where allegations of discrimination, racism and sexism were exchanged, the Board made the position official.

Fast forward to the week before the new County Manager came on board and what happened? Mr. Ahmed was gone. The Montrose Daily Press had the following statement in a June 19, 2026, Staff Report: ***"Montrose County's public health director is no longer working for the county. Mirza Ahmed, hired in 2025, was no longer with the county as of Thursday, Commissioner Sue Hansen said on Friday, declining further comment or information on a personnel matter. Further information is pending."***

Sources have stated that Ms. Hansen has commented in the past that "I think we made a mistake in hiring him." With a new manager coming on board, the last thing Joe Kerby wanted to deal with was firing an employee, so the story goes. I would

agree. That wouldn't look good for him to do. So, Ms. Hansen, with the H.R. Director in tow, did the deed. Further information is still pending over a month later. Interesting.

If you know of anyone qualified for this position, here's the link to the job posting: <https://recruiting2.ultipro.com/MON1022MOTC/JobBoard/6c028da9-43e3-43fb-a842-c05ac9af4e47/OpportunityDetail?opportunityId=1cb93377-1e8a-451d-94b2-023ecdab8aaf>

Event Center Manager:

The Montrose County Event Center is often cited as a drag on the County's finances. Why? After 9 years in operation, you'd think that they'd have turned the facility into a profit center, but no, complaints just roll in from the BOCC about it. Hiring a skilled professional manager to run the place would be a logical thing to do. They "tried" so the story goes but haven't had any success with the dollars that were offered for the job. The staff there is wonderful and loyal, so that's not the issue.

Now we learn that Ms. Hansen, without any record of a position being posted, hired on a contractual basis, Montrose's own Sarah Fishing (former President of the RE-1J Montrose School Board; co-owner and manager of The Association in the Historic Potato Growers building, etc.) to oversee the operations at the Event Center to the tune of \$2,400 per week. Add this to Ms. Fishing's other gigs (running the Montrose University leadership program for the City of Montrose at \$10,000 a year plus expenses as well as the social media program for the City Police Department and parenting her children) and you have one busy lady that I find might have some time struggles on her hands "managing" our County Event Center. I suspect that most of responsibilities fall to the staff. Time will tell if the \$19,200+ that has been paid out to her over the last couple of months will result in a turnaround.

North Campus Project:

Lacking a staff engineer in our Facilities Department, the County has contracted

out much needed engineering and design work to contractors for a price that might stagger most folk's minds. Plans for the North Campus project date back to the time when Jon Waschbusch was the County Manager when it was determined that the South Campus complex was too costly to renovate. Of course, with Commissioner Hansen signing a "First Right of Refusal" agreement with the Arizona developer that purchased the adjacent land from the County where the Les Schwab Tire Center now resides, one has to wonder if there's more to this than we've been told. As the price tag for the project kept climbing, it was decided to pare back the size of the building to save money. That effort has gone by the wayside with the price tag ballooning by the month.

The planned building was downsized by eliminating one wing of the building that was to house the Finance Department and the Human Resources Department along with eliminating most offices on the 3rd floor and replacing them with cubicles (which turned out to cost more than the offices, so the plans were modified to add the offices back into the project). With nowhere to go for either of those departments, space was found in an adjacent building known as the Sheriff's Annex which also houses the District Attorney's Office. Plans were made and tenant finish almost completed to house the Finance Department in offices there when, so I've been told, Commissioner Copeland decided to give the space to the D.A.'s Office! Now, the BOCC has had to once again alter the contract for the new building by converting reserved space on the ground floor of the North Campus building into offices for the Finance folks.

If that wasn't enough, the H.R. Department wants to move into the newly renovated and restored Historic Montrose County Courthouse in downtown Montrose. It appears, with Commissioner Hansen's blessing, that such a move will take place resulting in the need to modify and provide tenant finish that will no doubt come with a substantial cost in the form of engineering and design work plus construction that will change an expensive

MONTROSE COUNTY HAPPENINGS OF LATE *From previous pg*

expensive building into a more expensive building to house government staffers. The previous BOCC should have left things alone to begin with. Now the building will open in early 2027, already antiquated and without room for growth.

There was an opportunity to stop this project before it got off the ground, but the hue and cry from a certain member of the BOCC along with threats from the contractor kept the ball rolling on the building to our detriment. The abandoned medical building in the Colorado Outdoors project would have accommodated every need, but the City Manager squealed about that in that there wouldn't be property taxes paid by Montrose County which would foul up their financial plans. Then he turns around and allows the Rec District to purchase the Secret Creek facility in Colorado Outdoors taking that building off the tax rolls. Go figure!

Road and Bridge Department – Sales Tax Dollars NOT being USED

I'll keep this one short...the County collects two sales taxes - .75% for Public Safety (Sheriff's Office) and 1% for Road and Bridge to make our roads, bridges, culverts, etc. better. Reports are that few if any projects are on the books with Road and Bridge for this year while millions of dollars are piling up in their bank account. What is going on? County Manager Kerby better dig into this before someone like me will.

This concludes my update on these County topics. There's more, but I'll save those for another day.

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 with 2 more on the way & a great grandchild.



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

INVESTIGATION ONGOING IN DELTA SHOOTING INCIDENT

Delta County Sheriff's Office

DELTA - On July 21, 2026 at approximately 12:20 a.m., Delta County Sheriff's Office deputies were dispatched to Delta Health Hospital after receiving a report that a 29-year-old Delta County man had arrived at the emergency department suffering from multiple gunshot wounds sustained during a disturbance at the location of 1604 Highway 348. The victim was later transported to St. Mary's Hospital with serious injuries.

Deputies and investigators responded to the residence, where the investigation determined several individuals were present when a disturbance occurred. Investigators also determined illegal narcotics were being used at the residence at the time of the incident.

Cameron Lee Sanders, 34, allegedly produced a handgun and shot the victim. Sanders was taken into custody without incident and transported to the Delta County Jail, where he was booked on the following charges:

18-3-202(1)(a)(2)(b) – Assault in the First Degree, a class 3 felony
 18-12-106(1)(a) - Prohibited Use of a Weapon, a class 1 misdemeanor
 18-12-108(1)(2) – Possession of a weapon by a previous offender, a class 5 felony
 18-6-803.5(a)(IV)(2)(a) – Violation of a protection order, a class 1 misdemeanor

Sanders is currently being held at the Delta County Jail on a \$150,000 cash-only bond.

This was determined to be an isolated incident; there is no danger to the public.

This investigation remains ongoing, and additional charges may be filed by the District Attorney's Office. No further information is available at this time. All charges are allegations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty in a court of law.

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: COMMENTARY

WHAT ARE THEY AFRAID OF?

by Michael J Badagliacco, "MJB"

Funny how the loudest voices shouting "Democracy!" are the same ones terrified of letting elected officials actually do their jobs, and just as determined to keep the decision away from voters at the ballot box. If Council isn't supposed to lead and the people can't be trusted with the final word, then what's the point of having a City Council or elections in the first place?

The Sequence of Events

Days after I was sworn in late April 2026, I took a list of proposed charter changes (drawn from citizen input throughout the campaign) to the City Attorney. We agreed that the rest of Council should have the opportunity to add any items they wanted examined. During that entire process, no one raised a desire or need for a citizens' commission. That idea first appeared the very day we were scheduled to begin discussing the actual proposals.

What Happened

The full Council was prepared that day to weigh each idea on its merits. Instead, one councilor steered the conversation onto a different subject. The work session was taken over, and the time we could have spent examining the proposals was lost. The 2014 and 2025 charter amendments both moved forward without a citizens' commission. Why call for one now? The proposed commission ultimately did not advance, so here we are today.

Why We Voted Tuesday

We voted Tuesday night to notify the County by the July 23 deadline so that a spot could be reserved on the ballot in the event any of the proposed Charter Amendments were later adopted by Council and placed on the November ballot. That vote was purely procedural. It reserved space if proposals later advanced. It did not approve any amendment. Some items may reach the ballot; some may not. The vote simply kept the door open.

Time for Real Debate

The schedule now posted on the city website allows for focused discussion on each topic. After those meetings and before any final vote, both the public and Council still have time for questions, input, and careful consideration of whether to advance items to the November 3 ballot. If items reach the ballot, the people of Montrose make the final call. The choice belongs to you, the voters, not the Council.

As Mayor I have no power to enact any of these proposals. I am only one of five votes that can place an item on the ballot so you can say yes or no. I hope the Council sees fit to let the voters decide on each proposal presented. That is not my decision alone. It takes a majority of Council to advance any measure so that you can vote on it.

The current list came from elected, accountable council members through suggestions you provided. That is how representative government works. You, the voters, still have the final say on any proposal that makes the ballot.

What Are They Afraid Of?

Why don't they want the voters of Montrose to cast a ballot in November? What are they afraid of? They keep asking, "What is the rush?" I do not believe this is a rush at all. I believe government already works too slowly. I hate that it takes forever to get anything done. Don't you?

I have only one clear opportunity to place these amendments on a ballot with significant turnout before my one-year term as Mayor ends. The November 2026 ballot offers the best chance for the largest possible voice of the people to be heard for the next two years.

Bottom Line

This is about making sure the people of Montrose know what is proposed and can make an informed decision so their voice is heard. Some items are practical updates. Others go to the structure of our government. That is exactly why the final decision belongs to the voters.

You elected us to discuss, deliberate, take public input, and decide what should be presented. It is your responsibility to decide at the ballot box what will be adopted. Whatever the outcome, I will accept it. I promised to listen in order to understand, even when I disagree. Sometimes we will simply agree to disagree. Most of us want the same thing: a better Montrose. We will not always agree on how to get there, but it is still worth looking for common ground.



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

MAO SLAUGHTERED AN ESTIMATED 70 MILLION OF HIS OWN PEOPLE THROUGH FAMINE, LABOR CAMPS, AND EXECUTIONS

Editor:

Last week I wrote about socialism and its dependence on what Lenin described as “useful idiots,” who are enamored by the promise of life with no bills, no mortgage, no landlord, no health insurance premiums, free transportation, etc., but refuse to think about the absurdity of promising unlimited benefits while simultaneously destroying the productive base that “utopia” is dependent upon. I also talked about the immorality of a system based on amplifying people's envy. Thomas Sowell: “Envy was once considered one of the deadly sins before it became one of the most admired virtues under its new name, ‘social justice.’”

Have you ever wondered how South Africa went from one of the best and most affluent countries in Africa to one of the worst in just 20 years? It's not rocket science. South Africa is what happens when a country elects socialists who replace competence and fairness with a system of racial politics based on hate and envy.

Corruption spread through every level of government; public money was diverted to insiders, and institutions meant to stop corruption were deliberately weakened. (Sounds like Minnesota, right?) The economy stalled, unemployment climbed to 35%, youth unemployment passed 60%, and many millions fell into abject poverty. Electricity, water, and rail systems collapsed. Cities are now drowning in trash. South Africa now has one of the highest homicide rates in the world. Crime is so widespread that police don't even bother intervening. Just another real-life example of a socialist utopia.

I've talked about the dupes who have embraced the socialist ideology masterfully taught as fair and virtuous when it is quite the opposite, including two generations of college kids so obviously groomed to hate their country. These are the “useful idiots” that will be the population of paupers and puppets among that small minority of elites living the high life. A more important question is, who are those people today who are advocating for the destruction of this country's representative republic, and who think they will be among the new ruling elite? We're all familiar with Bernie Sanders, who is chauffeured in an SUV to a private jet to give a speech about how evil capitalism and fossil fuels are, before deciding which mil-

lion-dollar home to return to. Then there's ever so thoughtful AOC who is going along with the Democrat Socialist of America's plan to abolish the Senate because “elements of the Senate were founded on Jim Crow.” Never mind that the Senate was founded almost eight decades before the Democrat party's Jim Crow laws. You can pick and choose among the America haters in our illustrious media. Perennial race-monger and “The View's” co-host Sunny Hostin stated this week that: “Many black people don't have cars or driver's licenses because of the lasting effects of slavery.” Both AOC and Hostin are perfect examples of both the ignorance and arrogance of America haters. Many of those who aspire to be among the ruling elites in their communist utopia possess little or no experience in life, other than being coddled rich kids who somehow believe their brand of socialism will work where everyone else's throughout history has failed. Seattle Mayor Katie Wilson fits that mold perfectly – she never moved out of her wealthy parents' home prior to being elected mayor.

As does NYC Mayor Zohran Mamdani who just announced the fulfillment of a socialist dream: a rent freeze across all five boroughs. Pay no attention to the fact that there is no freeze on the expenses involved in owning and operating a rental property. What are rental property owners to do? Mamdani doesn't know, nor does he care. He hasn't even thought that far ahead, secure in the lie that socialism works. The truth is, eventually facing bankruptcy, owners will simply cut their losses by abandoning their properties. That actually occurred in NYC in the South Bronx in the 1970's, and the South Bronx became a global byword for urban decay.

A prime example of the type of people who envision themselves among the future ruling elite is Hasan Piker. More importantly, Piker is convincing evidence of how far democrats have fallen in their efforts to destroy America. Piker is the worst example of an anchor baby. He was born here and then whisked off to Istanbul, Turkey where he was reared to hate America. Then, when he was an adult, he came back to America to work for his millionaire uncle Cenk Uygur, and now spreads hate every day to our college kids. Piker: “Mao Zedong is one of the great leaders of this world.” Reality: Mao slaughtered

an estimated 70 million of his own people through famine, labor camps, and executions. Piker says the fall of the Soviet Union was a tragedy, and calls for the blood of capitalists to run in the streets. He has many times said America deserved 9/11, and now proudly displays a framed picture of the burning towers on his podcast set. Piker: “Billionaires shouldn't exist. We have to abolish the ability to become a billionaire.” Also Piker: Bought a \$2.8 million home in L.A.; his father is a millionaire.

Not surprisingly, the DSA trots him out as a spokesman, and Mamdani, Bernie, and AOC, have all appeared on this maniac's podcast. Even more concerning, he is getting standing ovations as the featured speaker at College Democrats' gatherings.

The New York Times has profiled him, and even turned over their Editorial page several times to him as if he was a legitimate liberal voice. Here's the worst part, folks. Hasan Piker has been normalized in Democrat circles, as has communism in general. Democrat candidates are now campaigning with him. Democrats flocked to him after he declared that America deserved 9/11.

“Moderate Democrats” (oxymoron) not only refuse to condemn him, but openly embrace him and other extremists who cheer on our adversaries. They now love and support Hamas, openly disdain America, and promote political violence. At least they are not supporting child rapists and pedophiles. Oh, wait. Minnesota governor Walz just pardoned an illegal who repeatedly raped a ten-year-old child. Tampon Tim didn't want the pedophile to “be judged by his worst day,” or something.

Closer to home, Melat Kiros, a proud DSA member and the Democrats candidate for Colorado's 1st congressional district had this to say: “America will stop exploiting the world if enough immigrants from the global south get elected into office.” This is an immigrant who escaped from her native Ethiopia, where they just had massacres, ethnic cleansing, and war crimes by all sides. So, Kiros wants immigrants from countries who cannot govern themselves, countries that can best be described as “s**t holes, to immigrate to the United States to help her turn us into the third world nightmare she fled from? Makes a lot of sense to a DSA moron I guess.

Ed Henrie, Montrose

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

THE RISKS OF PREVARICATION AND EVASION

Editor:

Political accountability is becoming obsolete. The public now accedes to politicians who refuse to answer pointed questions regarding their decisions, or who fail to even provide a venue for civil discourse.

We see the US President dismissing reporters as “horrible people” when asked thoughtfully about his actions, local politician Jeff Hurd only answering pre-vetted questions in his town hall meetings, or the inimical Montrose County School District Board President Neisha Balleck, who, at the July 21st MCSD Special Session, dismissed Board Member Hovde’s question regarding why the agenda did not include time for Public Comment with, “I chose not to have public comment tonight.” Adding, “but I do value public comment and think it’s important.” This somehow seemed logical and proper to Balleck, despite 40 attendees waiting to participate in their County School Board’s discussion. Actions over words, President Balleck.

Elected officials are leaders. Some excel; others fail. Unfortunately, too many politicians today choose prevarication over honesty. When asked a “yes” or “no” question, they respond “blue.” This is unacceptable. Citizens should demand that all elected officials are answerable to all constituents, not only those who voted for them. Contrary to some current political ideology, persons elected are expected to represent entire Districts, Counties, States, and Countries, not solely those with whom they agree. Civic engagement and civil discourse are both crucial and fundamental to our government. If someone always believes that they have the best idea, then they are self-limiting and mistaken.

As citizens, we must maintain civility with our elected officials, even when faced with egregious delay tactics, overt self-absorption, or intentional avoidance. If any elected official is unwilling or incapable of listening to respectful queries or concerns and responding thoughtfully and honestly, then they should be removed from office, as they are unfit. Additionally, if any elected official does not provide a space for civil public discourse to frequently occur, then their cowardly actions should be taken as either an inability to justify their conduct, or a false belief that they do not need to justify their decisions. They too should be removed.

We live in a democratic republic, and a failure of any elected official to be regularly available and engaged with all constituents, regardless of party affiliation or socio-economic status, is a failure of our government.

In the absence of accountability, there can be no responsibility.

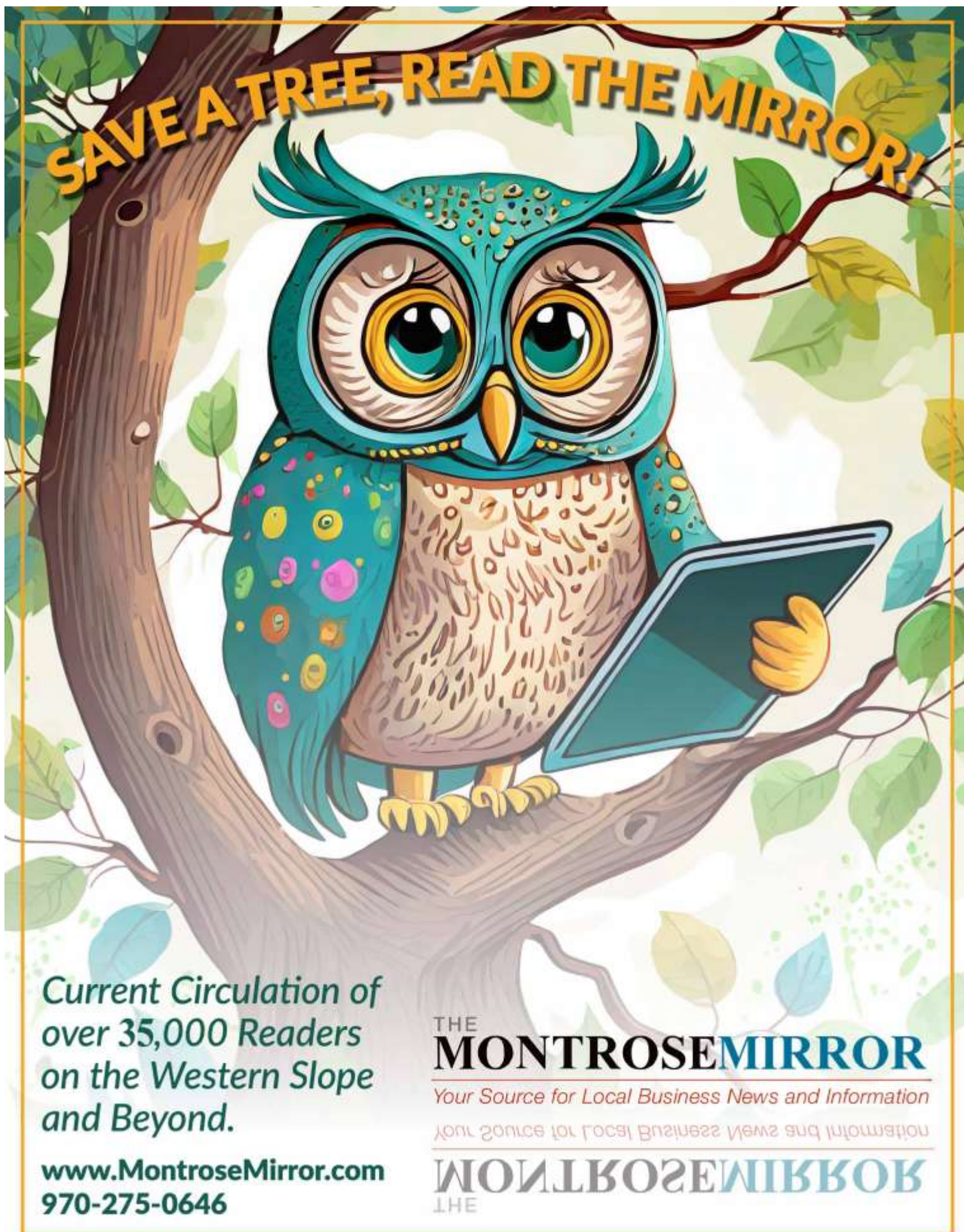
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OPINION/EDITORIAL:COMMENTARY

GUNS...A USE BY RIGHT OR A DANGEROUS FREEDOM?

Colorado Senate Bill 25-003 takes Effect on August 1st –

Do Regulations Choke the 2nd Amendment at a State Level? They sure do!

By David White

If you're a gun owner or just a citizen concerned about the ever-increasing draconian regulations, statutes and overall government interference in our lives, get ready for the latest attack on the freedoms guaranteed to us under the U.S. Constitution as well as the Colorado Constitution set to take effect on August 1, 2026, when Senate Bill 25-003 becomes law. This law, passed in 2025 and signed by Governor Polis on April 10, 2025, is basically a **"license to buy" scheme** drawn up by liberal members of the State Legislature that criminalizes previously legal firearm purchases and imposes significant financial and administrative burdens on responsible gun owners. (<https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb25-003>)

From a conservative's perspective, this bill is viewed as an unconstitutional infringement on our Second Amendment rights and a de facto ban on semi-automatic firearms, despite legislative attempts to frame it as a "permit-to-purchase system." Simply put, the law targets law-abiding citizens by imposing **mandatory 12-hour training courses, permitting and sheriff-issued eligibility cards** for any semi-automatic rifle, shotgun, or handgun with a detachable magazine, **creating a bureaucratic maze designed to restrict ownership.**

In reviewing the law, the key takeaway points are quite clear in that there are several troubling components to the law that we should all be concerned about – regardless if you're a gun owner or not. Here are a few things that came to light when looking at the law from an analytical standpoint:

-Constitutional Violation: The Supreme Court ruled in a 2022 case involving New York State (***New York State Rifle & Pistol Association, Inc. v. Bruen***) that imposing unnecessary burdens on the right to keep and bear arms **is unconstitutional**. This Colorado bill (SB25-003), when viewed carefully, is clearly a "sneak attack" on gun rights rather than a genuine public

safety reform as most on the left would have you believe it is.

-Economic Impact: When you read the bill, you'll see that the bill diverts Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) conservation funds including federal grants in order to administer the new permitting system. Doing so threatens the financial stability of hunting and conservation programs.

-Enforcement and Exemptions: There is significant opposition to the selective exemptions granted to law enforcement and military personnel, while average citizens, veterans, and first responders face fees, background checks, and potential arbitrary denial of permits by local sheriffs.

-Ineffectiveness: It can be logically argued that the bill fails to address the root causes of gun violence. While the proposed regulations involve almost 150 pages of specific firearms, it's quite clear that most gun deaths are suicides or involve firearms not covered by the bill, while mass shootings remain rare events.

-Legal and Political Fallout: The law has sparked **Federal lawsuits** (e.g., *Del Toro v. Polis*) and is expected to face prolonged legal challenges, with some conservatives predicting it will accelerate political shifts in the state by driving conservative residents out of Colorado. Yet another move to marginalize the conservative voices in Colorado.

Locally, many gun owners belong to the Montrose Rod and Gun Club. The leadership team in that organization sent an email to members last week explaining what will soon be required of them if they choose to purchase a now semi-blacklisted type of gun. In summary, following are the steps that you as an individual will have to follow in order to purchase one of these firearms as of August 1st:

Step 1 – Complete the CPW (Colorado Parks & Wildlife) Application

First, head to: <https://cpw.state.co.us/specified-semiautomatic-firearms>

Get your application started. It's not the fun part, but it's the first box you need to check.

Step 2 – Get a Background Check

Next, you'll need a third-party name-based background check. Here are a few options:

TruDiligence – <https://www.trudiligence.com/>

Sterling – <https://www.sterlingcheck.com/>

NationSearch (Colorado company) – <https://www.nationsearch.com/>

Pick one, get it done, and keep a copy of your results.

Step 3 – Visit Your Sheriff's Office

Take your completed application and background check to the Sheriff's Office in the county where you live. **Here is where you will pay \$52 to CPW and whatever fees that the local sheriff will charge.**

For our local members:

Ouray County starts processing applications **August 1**. The fee is **\$48**.

Montrose County also starts **August 1**. As of now, we're told they're **not charging a fee**.

If you live somewhere else, check with your county Sheriff's Office for their process.

Step 4 – Take the Class

Once your Sheriff's Office has done its part, **then** you're eligible to take the required firearms safety class. Already have a **Hunter Education certification**? You're looking at a **4-hour class**. No Hunter Education? Pack a lunch, it's a **12-hour class**.

For the latest up-to-date list of specified semiauto firearms that fall under SB25-003, visit the following site where you'll find a PDF document that runs to **150 pages** with photos of these now semi-banned firearms:

<https://sbg.colorado.gov/sites/sbg/files/documents/>

[Specified Semiautomatic Firearms Guidance 07.01.2026.pdf](https://sbg.colorado.gov/sites/sbg/files/documents/Specified_Semiautomatic_Firearms_Guidance_07.01.2026.pdf)

When looked at objectively, the debate

GUNS...A USE BY RIGHT OR A DANGEROUS FREEDOM? From previous pg

over whether or not you as a private citizen are entitled to own a firearm has become a struggle for power rather than public safety. When looked at through the lens of history, every communist regime has disarmed its population before committing mass atrocities. You only have to look back over the last 100 or so years to see examples such as the Bolsheviks' 1918 firearms confiscation in Russia, Hitler's Nazi Weapons Law enacted in March of 1938, Fidel Castro's use of gun registries in Cuba in the early 1960's, and Venezuela's 2012 firearms ban.

Similar attempts in this country began with the National Firearms Act of 1934 and have continued to include the Brady Bill of 1993 and others that have come into existence since then. All of these laws followed the communist

pattern of disarming citizens under the guise of "public safety." If not for the NRA, Gun Owners of America, the Rocky Mountain Gunowners Association and several others fighting back, gun control would have already been in place and have us go the way of most of Europe, Australia, New Zealand and many other socialist and communist controlled countries.

Like it or not, civilian gun ownership is essential to prevent totalitarian control. Without it, you are powerless against the State as well as anyone wishing to cause you harm. It should remain **YOUR CHOICE** on how you wish to protect your life, liberty and property as guaranteed by our U.S. Constitution. This is NOT A STATE'S RIGHTS QUESTION. Measures such as SB25-003 will do nothing to stop those who wish to cause harm. The Court's will

have the final say on this bill. That day can't come soon enough. Unfortunately, the Colorado Legislature will continue down this path until it's strangled us all with enough regulations that make firearm ownership an impossibility unless we turn things around politically.

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.



COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

GAILARD D. HAUMONT *July 3, 1941- July 19, 2026*

GAILARD D. HAUMONT, 85, of Montrose, passed away on Saturday, July 19, 2026, at Valley Manor Care Center.

Born on July 3, 1941, in Sandpoint, Idaho, to Owen and Lois Haumont, Gailard moved to Montrose as a young boy and became a lifelong resident of the community.

He attended local schools and built a long career in the construction trades. Gailard contributed to numerous building projects across the region over many decades.

Gailard lived a life rooted in the simple rhythms of small-town living—hard work by day and camaraderie by evening playing darts and pool at local gathering spots. He will be remembered for his loyalty to friends, his love of friendly competition, and the way he brightened rooms with his humor and easygoing nature. His generous spirit made him a welcome presence wherever he went, and he formed many lasting bonds with friends who became like family.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Owen and Lois Haumont; his brother, Dwight; and his sister, Karen.

Gailard is survived by his daughter, Tracey; his son, Randy; his sister, Sherry Fresques, and brother-in-law, Nick Fresques.

Friends and family are warmly encouraged to celebrate his life through cherished memories, shared stories, and a raised glass in his honor.



GRACE JEANNE (ETCHEMENDY) JOHNSON *November 1, 1929- July 20, 2026*



GRACE JEANNE (ETCHEMENDY) JOHNSON, 96, passed away in her home Monday, July 20, 2026 surrounded by loving family. Grace was born November 1, 1929 in Montrose, Co to Pierre and Anna Etchemendy.

She graduated from Montrose High School, attended Mesa College and then later married Kenneth Johnson in 1950. They were married 47 years before his passing.

Grace was a lifelong avid bowler and enjoyed several trips traveling abroad after her retirement. Grace truly enjoyed her grandkids, attending games and events every chance she got.

Grace was preceded in death by her parents, Pierre and Anna Etchemendy, her husband Kenneth Johnson, sister Eveleen Maurer, nieces Tammy and Sandie Maurer, and brother and sister-in-law Prosper and Verla Etchemendy.

She is survived by her children Glenn (Dondee) Johnson, Wayne Johnson, and Janet (Bill) Green; her grandchildren Nick Johnson, Chris (Kourtney) Johnson, Haley Johnson, Brittany (Joshua) Maynes, and Jeremy (Sophia) Green; seven great-grandchildren, brother George (Bobetta) Etchemendy, and several nieces and nephews.

Services will be held for Grace at 10 am Friday, July 31st at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Montrose. Viewing will be held Thursday the 30th at 5 PM at Crip-pin funeral home, followed by a Vigil at 6 pm. In lieu of flowers the family requests that donations be made to Hopewest Hospice at 725 South 4th Street Montrose, CO 81401. 970-240-7787.

COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

HAROLD VERNON GLOVER *June 6, 1944 — June 19, 2026*

It is with deep sadness and profound love that we announce the passing of Harold "Vernon" Glover, who peacefully entered eternal rest on June 19, 2026, at Montrose Regional Hospital, at the age of 82.

Vern was born on June 11, 1944, in Delta County, Colorado, to George and Nina Glover. He spent his life deeply rooted in the community he loved, leaving behind a legacy of service, kindness, laughter, and unwavering devotion to his family.

On June 11, 2026, Vern and the love of his life, Erlene Callaway, celebrated 50 wonderful years of marriage. Together they built a life centered on love, family, and caring for others. He was a devoted husband, proud father, cherished grandfather, veteran, and loyal friend whose quiet strength and generous heart touched countless lives.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Erlene; his sons, Chad (Tami) Glover and Cory (Jessi) Glover; and his treasured grandchildren, Sydney, Trinity, Autumn, Tiffani, Alexis, Skye, and Kenzi, who were the light of his life.

Nothing brought Vern greater joy than spending time with his family. He was endlessly proud of each of his grandchildren and celebrated every milestone, big or small. He was preceded in death by his parents George and Nina, his 3 siblings Everette Glover, Joyce Cless, and Theodore "Teddy" Glover.

Vern proudly served his country in the United States Army, carrying the values of honor, dedication, and selflessness throughout his life.

Those same values were reflected in his career, where he faithfully worked alongside his family at Callaway Meat Packing Plant for more than 40 years. His dedication, dependability, and unwavering commitment were a testament to the kind of man he was. Whether in uniform, at work, or with family and friends, Vern believed in hard work, loyalty, and serving others. He continued to give back to his community in countless ways throughout his life.

Known for his quick wit and playful sense of humor, Vern never met a stranger. He loved joking with everyone he met and had a remarkable ability to brighten someone's day with a smile or a laugh. Whether he was calling out numbers during a game of BINGO, lending a helping hand to someone in need, or simply visiting with friends, Vern made people feel welcome and valued.

He was a proud member of the Elks Lodge, a lifetime member of the Cattlemen's Association, and an active member of American Legion Post 24 in Olathe, Colorado. He believed in giving back and quietly helped anyone who needed it, never expecting recognition in return.

Vern also held a deep love for his schools and his community. As a proud graduate

of Olathe schools, he remained passionate about supporting school activities and celebrating the accomplishments of local students.

He believed that strong communities were built by investing in future generations, and he took great pride in cheering on those around him.

Those who knew Vern will remember his kind heart, generous spirit, unwavering willingness to help others, infectious sense of humor, and the unconditional love he had for his family. Above all else, his greatest joy and proudest accomplishment was the family he and Erlene built together.

Though our hearts are broken, we find comfort knowing that Vern is now at peace and reunited with loved ones who have gone before him. His life was a blessing, his memory a treasure, and his love a gift that will never be forgotten.

A memorial service celebrating Vern's life will be held on Saturday, August 8, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. at Circle 3 Church in Montrose, Colorado. Military honors will follow at Grand View Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests that memorial donations be made to Olathe American Legion Post 24 or Montrose Cattlemen's Association scholarship, these two things were close to Vern's heart.

"Make Heaven Full"

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#montrosemirror

ISSUE 584 July 27, 2026

ART & SOL

WORD FROM THE WEST *with Wendy Videlock*

Courtesy photo Wendy Videlock.

David & Goliath in the Wild

*All afternoon
I watched
a hawk atop
a telephone pole
mobbed
harassed,
bullied,
and cursed
by a couple
tiny little birds.*

It gives me great comfort to know the ancient story of David and Goliath plays out every day in forests, deserts, oceans and grasslands. It is a story of hope. It is a story of the small defeating the powerful, not through force but through wit, persistence, speed or precision.

Time and again the underdog survives by exploiting the blind spots of giants, proving that intelligence, flexibility and cooperation can often outweigh brute strength.

A red-tailed hawk possesses talons capable of delivering tremendous force and a hooked beak designed to tear flesh. Everything about the hawk speaks of authority—until a western kingbird, no larger than a human hand, arrives on the scene.

The western kingbird launches upward with fearless precision, diving toward the hawk's back in repeated aerial assaults.

The roadrunner often hunts rattlesnakes. A colony of ants can dismantle an animal hundreds of times larger than any individual worker ant. Chemical trails, or pheromones, organize thousands of tiny deci-

sions into one vast collective intelligence.

When a rattler strikes, the tiny kangaroo rat performs leaps and twists in less than one-tenth of a second. Its tendons function like compressed springs in order to escape the snake's deadly venom.

A single spider quietly removes a thousand mosquitos from a meadow.

A microscopic cell can change the atmosphere of a planet. Tiny organisms known as cyanobacteria served as invisible architects— whose photosynthesis gradually filled Earth's ancient atmosphere with oxygen.

We humans have long admired lions, eagles, whales, elephants — the noble giants who command immediate attention. Yet the fabric of life is woven in quieter ways: bees pollinating, decomposing beetles, nitrogen-balancing bacteria.

*One teeny tiny worm
making the earth
turn.*

Similarly, a river does not smooth a stone with brute force, but through persistence. Wind shapes an arch into stone grain by grain.

These smallest forces, acting over time, alter landscapes once thought eternal. Just think of the Grand Canyon!

Sometimes it seems the wilderness is morally instructive without ever intending to teach. We are reminded that scale is not the same as significance. We are often reminded the necessity of community and working together.

Physical strength is a powerful force, but is only one currency among many in this

Continued next pg

WORD FROM THE WEST *From previous pg*

story of life here on Earth.

Human history often follows much the same idea.

In antiquity, the Hebrew shepherd boy, David approaches the armored giant Goliath with no sword, no shield, no gleaming helmet. Whether we read this story as history, sacred tradition, or metaphor, the story has survived because it relays an eternal truth: brute strength and gold are not everything. Goliath trusted metal and muscle, David trusted accuracy, speed and intelligence.

The British Empire stretched across continents, accumulating wealth and great armies. Against such machinery stood millions of people from India under the peaceful leadership of Mohandas Gandhi, armed only with a determination to govern themselves.

Authoritative regimes rise like rough beasts, terrifying in their time, yet eventually are weathered by countless ordinary lives refusing to disappear beneath them.

The great blindspot of any dictatorship or oligarchy is the power of the human spirit to overcome systems of greed, intimidation and shameless self-interest.

Each singular act of courage by any single individual enlarges the moral imagination and sets aright the moral compass.

Each quiet refusal to bow before injustice becomes part of humanity's legacy. Each song of hope and resilience inspires hope and resilience in others.

Perhaps this is why the victories of ordinary folks move us more deeply than the triumphs of kings on golden thrones.

Wealth can purchase obedience, fear can command silence, armies can conquer cities. Yet only truth and good will, carried faithfully by imperfect individuals, has repeatedly demonstrated the ability to outlive any powerful machine against it.

As I write this, the wildfires surrounding us on nearby Gold Mountain, Glade Park and elsewhere are raging. I can't help but think of these fires as a kind of Goliath, powerful, all consuming, unstoppable.

ble. The air is filled with smoke, pristine forests are destroyed and folks are losing their homes.

Here in the west, whatever one's pain, one never complains about the rain.

What's good for the plains is bad for harvest.

What freezes in spring is sugar-beet borrowed.

The river depletes.

The groves expire.

What blooms in summer is wildfire.

It is difficult to find any good in all of this destruction of the landscape, in this destruction of animal and human habitat. Indeed, it is devastating. Yet all through the night and all through the days, courageous firefighters are working tirelessly against this behemoth force. This is a mark of the human spirit, doing good in the world. Some have lost their lives doing this important and diffi-

cult work. The tragedies go deep.

Yet somewhere beneath the ashes of grief, where the darkness seems most complete, the future is germinating.

It's difficult at this time to remember that once the smoke has cleared, the land remembers how to begin again.

Gradually, the first green shoots will emerge through the charcoal left behind. Fireweed will send blossoms across hillsides that were lifeless only months before. Those we have lost will never be forgotten.

Hope, it turns out, is not merely a human emotion, but also a biological process.

—

Wendy Vidlock lives at the foot of Thunder Mountain in Western Colorado. Her poems and essays appear in O Magazine, Best American Poetry, Poetry Magazine, The New York Times, Hudson Review, Rattle, Hopkins Review and other venues. Her upcoming book, (Able Muse Press) is Speaking Animal in the Southwest, Essays and Poems. Find out more [HERE](#)

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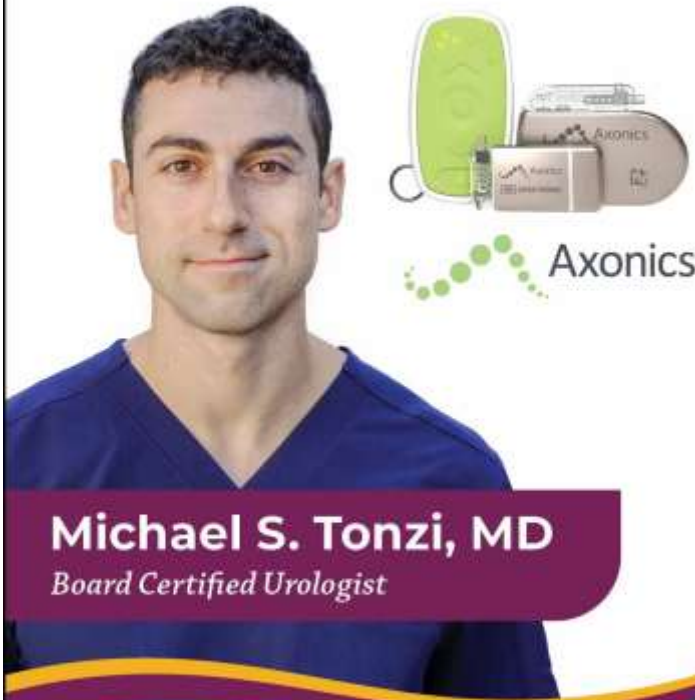
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COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

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INAUGURAL DELTA COUNTY WOMEN'S GIVING CLUB GATHERING WILL BE JULY 27

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE—On Monday, July 27, women from across Delta County will come together at 5:30pm at Devils Thumb Golf Course for a simple but powerful purpose: to learn about local nonprofit organizations, pool our giving, and make a meaningful difference right here at home.

This club is built on the idea that giving does not have to be complicated to be impactful. When women come together, even modest gifts can become something much larger — helping strengthen the organizations that serve our neighbors, families, and communities every day.

Whether you are brand new to charitable giving, already support local causes, or simply want to learn more about the good work happening in Delta County, we hope you'll join us.

Mark your calendar for July 27. Join this movement of motivated, strong, and caring women at this exciting first gathering.

Together, we can learn, give, and make a difference.

Questions/RSVP: Deltagivingclub@gmail.com

How it Works!

- Each member contributes \$100 and nominates a favorite charity
- Three charities are randomly selected
- Members vote for their favorite of the three
- Winning charity takes all!

Cost to Participate

- \$100 donation at each quarterly meeting
- \$20 meeting fee
- Covers food, tea & gratuity

Meets the 4th Monday in Jan, Apr, Jul and Oct @ 5:30pm at the Devil's Thumb Golf Course
To register or for more information email DeltaGivingClub@gmail.com
Cost per meeting: \$100 donation + \$20 meeting fee

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YOUR BRAIN ON NATURE — A SENSE OF PERSPECTIVE



By Dr. Lauren Hall Rud-dell, PhD



Greetings Mirrorites!

July's heat has been really challenging my realistic sense of perspective.

Some days I almost feel like it's a personal insult, one that I don't deserve. Of course that is completely ridiculous, and fortunately, it's fleeting. But it does go to illustrate something I think most people feel when one thing or the other gets to be just too much. When I am finally in my right mind again, I am reminded of The Total Perspective Vortex.

The Total Perspective Vortex is a fictional torture machine from Douglas Adams' *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. It connects the universe's infinite reality to your brain. It then shows you where you fit in. The machine instantly destroys your mind by making you realize how incredibly tiny and unimportant you are. It was invented by a scientist who sometimes had feelings of perspective/persecution that I described. His wife encouraged him to be less grandiose and 'get a sense of perspective'. So he built this machine just to show her his perspective was sane and reasonable. When she used the contraption herself, she instantly lost her mind when faced with the reality of being too small in the universe to matter.

I have written in this column before about how nature encourages a sense of 'small self.' As long as it is not too small, as with that fictional machine, this is a good thing for one's sanity. Unlike the overwhelm of The Total Perspective Vortex, nature fosters a healthy and rewarding sense of spiritual *connection* with something larger than ourselves. But what actually is perspective? Should it be hugely self-centered and almost narcissistic for best mental health, the view from the castle

heights looking down, or should it be viewed from the (reasonably) small self, a happy shepherd on the valley floor (or happy goat-herd)?

Perspective in human thought is a multifaceted phenomenon that serves as the primary lens through which we interpret reality. At its core, perspective is the cognitive framework composed of experiences, values, and biological predispositions. It

dictates how an individual perceives, processes, and assigns meaning to information. It is not merely a "point of view" in a visual sense, but rather a complex filtering system that determines what we notice, what we ignore, and how we emotionalize the world around us.

Human beings do not experience objective reality directly. Instead, we experience a subjective reconstruction of reality. This is often illustrated through a cognitive model where we select specific data from our environment, add personal and cultural meanings, make assumptions, and then draw conclusions.

The formation of perspective begins with our early years. Our upbringing, the language we speak, and the societal norms we are immersed in create the initial "default settings" of our thought processes. For instance, collective cultures often view success and responsibility through the lens of the community, whereas individualistic (Western) cultures prioritize personal achievement. These deeply ingrained perspectives act as a "mental shorthand," allowing us to navigate the world quickly without having to re-evaluate every situation from scratch. Like pretty much everything in life, this efficiency comes at a cost: it can lead to confirmation bias, where we only seek out information that aligns with our existing perspective. In a broader intellectual sense, perspective is the engine of empathy and innovation. The ability to engage in "perspective-taking"—the cognitive act of stepping outside one's own frame of

reference to imagine the world from another's POV is what allows for social cohesion and conflict resolution. Walking a mile (mentally) in someone else's Wellies instead of your own Jimmy Choo's.

There's always going to be times when perspective is out of whack and when folks like me 'lose it' and have a pity-party. This seems to arise from a sense of injustice that such a magnificent being as one's self should be subject to environmental, or other, insults. The gap between expectations and reality can make for some serious cranky pants.

That's where time in restorative environments that include some element of the sublime can help to rein us in, just enough. The sublime in nature is considered scenery that is humbling to humans due to scale, actions, or proximity. Distant volcanos or storms at sea, or just viewing the spindrift swirling from the peaks of the San Juans can instill that little bit of ego shrinkage that all of us need periodically. These experiences foster *transcendent emotions*, a change in perspective that instills gratitude and personal meaning, among other benefits as described in an excellent article in [The Journal of Positive Psychology](#).

There are aspects of the natural world that even cause us to relate to time and space differently. Psychologist [Richardo Correia](#) at the University of Turku in Finland, found that being in nature may change how we experience time.

Correia examined research which compared people's experiences of time when they performed different types of tasks in urban and natural environments. These studies consistently showed that people report a sense of expanded time when they were in nature compared to when they were in an urban environment. For example, people are more likely to perceive a walk in the countryside as longer than a walk of the same length in the city. Similarly, people report perceiving time as passing more slowly while performing tasks in natural green environments than in urban environments. Well gosh, I could have told ya that!

Stay calm, stay cool, and get humble while gazing at our stunning scenery whenever the wildfire smoke permits, *The Mindful Naturalist*

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MORE INFO



MIRROR CHURCH DIRECTORY

ALL SAINTS ANGLICAN CHURCH

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

Office Hours: By appointment.

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

Worship Service Times: Sundays 9AM,

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

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

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

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

BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH

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

Olathe, Co 81425

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

Sunday School 9:15 a.m.

Sunday 10:30 a.m.

Sunday 6 p.m.

Wednesday Bible Study/Prayer 7 p.m.

CEDAR CREEK CHURCH

affiliation: Evangelical Free

Address: 222 South Townsend Montrose, CO 81401

Office Hours: 10am-2pm Tuesday- Friday

Contact: 970-252-1163

ccc@cccmontrose.org

Pastor: Curt Mudgett

Sunday worship:

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

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

Wednesday Prayer: 5:30-6:15pm

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

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

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

Please make plans to come check us out soon!

CELEBRATION CHURCH

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

Address: 2900 Sunnyside Road, Montrose, CO 81401

Office Hours: By appointment

Phone: (970) 497-4925

Email: celebrationmontrose@gmail.com

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

celebrationmontrose.org/

Worship Service Times: 9am and 10:45am

Senior Pastor:

Pastor Brandon Mathis

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

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

Demographics: Multi-generational

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

Student (middle & high school) at 9am.

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

CHRIST'S CHURCH OF THE VALLEY

Name of Church: Christ's Church of the Valley

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

Address: 10 Hillcrest Plaza Way. Montrose, CO 81401

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

Contact information:

Phone: 970-249-0530

Email: CCVMontroseCO10@gmail.com

Website: ccvmontrose.org

Name of current Senior Pastor: Ken Lawrence

Worship service times: 10:30 a.m.

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

in our Lord Jesus Christ to the glory of God.

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

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

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Denomination: Christ Lutheran Montrose
Affiliation: Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

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

Contact: 970-633-0226

Website: www.montroselutheran.org

Email: montroselutheran@gmail.com

Pastor: Tim Onnen

Worship: Sundays at 9 AM

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

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

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

MIRROR CHURCH DIRECTORY From previous pg

COMMUNITY SPIRIT 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, info@fpcmontrose.com,
www.fpcmontrose.com
Pastor: Rev. Dr. Jesse G. Mabanglo
Worship Service times: 9:30AM,
We strive to encourage, challenge and

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

HILLCREST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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

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

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

MONTROSE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

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

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

ROSEMONT BAPTIST CHURCH

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

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970-249-8990

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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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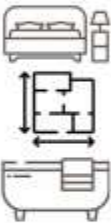


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COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

KIRBIE BENNETT OF DURANGO FEATURED AT BARDIC TRAILS ON AUG. 4

Special to the Mirror

TELLURIDE- Indigenous poet, essayist and audio producer Kirbie Bennett of Durango will be the featured guest for the Talking Gourds first Tuesday Bardic Trails virtual reading series Aug. 4th at 7 pm MDT.

"I got to hear Kirbie read at Maria's Bookstore in Durango as part of the recent Four Corners Poetry Festival last month," said Art Goodtimes, Talking Gourds director. "He did a great job and

I've invited him to come perform for us online at Bardic Trails."

Kirbie's print and audio work has appeared in *High Country News*, *KSUT Public Radio*, *68-to-oh5*, *Last Real Indians* and *Four Corners Voices: Stories, Poetry, Essays*. He is also part of the creative

team behind *The Magic City of the Southwest*, a regional history podcast. Bennett is a member of the Navajo Nation and Durango, Colorado is another place he calls home.

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

The Telluride Institute's Talking Gourds Poetry Program hosts the free Bardic Trails virtual zoom series on the first Tuesday of each month. The Wilkinson Public Library continues as our collaboration partner, with town support from Commission for Community Assistance, Arts & Special Events. Featured reader for August 4th will be Diné poet/performer Kirbie Bennett of Durango.

Participants are encouraged to visit <<https://www.tellurideinstitute.org/western-slope-calendar>> to get the zoom link each month, if they aren't already on our mailing list. Or email Art Goodtimes directly.

Thanks to the Cantor Family, the Guttman Family Foundation, CCAASE and our Fischer and Cantor contest participants for supporting our program and projects.

Feel free to post the attached flyers on social media.



Kirbie Bennett. Courtesy photo.



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CIMARRON CREEK
Welcome Home

MIRROR IMAGES: LOCAL AUTHOR SIGNS BOOK



At left and above, local Business Owner and Author David Padilla signed copies of his new book at the Mexican American Development Association (MADA) on Thursday, July 23. The event held by San Juan Publishing was very successful, with at least 50 copies sold.

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

UNDER CONSTRUCTION IN BROWN RANCH

3819 Chestnut Dr.

Offered at \$610,000 MLS # 836814

Delightful sunny, new home, completion expected by Aug. 15, 2026. 3 bed, 2 bath, 2 car garage, tile, laminate, quartz, large back yard ,
*covered porch faces East,
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COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

MAGIC CIRCLE PLAYERS: FOUR ONE ACT PLAYS

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-Have we got a treat for you! Four brand new directors with four fantastic scripts, and a summer night of LIVE THEATRE MAGIC. Four talented, dedicated volunteers have completed a Director Training Workshop, and in collaboration with supportive mentors and talented cast members, they are ready to showcase their One Act productions.

COME PLAY WITH US

Friday, July 31 @ 7:30pm

Saturday, August 1 @ 7:30pm

Sunday, August 2 @ 2pm

TICKETS ONLY \$10

The Last Act is a Solo by Robert Anderson

Laura Cunningham, once a star, lives amid costumes, props, and memories of her career. Too frail to act, she remains fiercely independent and resists her nephew's attempts to move her to the country where she can be cared for. In fact, she has an interview that very afternoon with a director. Directed by Janel Culver. Janel Culver has acted, directed, and currently serves on the Board of Governors

The Actor's Nightmare by Christopher Durang

An accountant wanders onto a stage, is mistaken for the understudy and forced to perform in a play, without knowing any of the lines or even which play he is in. Directed by Jonathan Heath. Jonathan is a singer and actor, who has also served on the Board of Governors.

A Date with Death by Steven Hayet

Dating is hell, rather than the awkwardness of turning someone down, Angela prefers murder. However this time her "baggage" doesn't go unnoticed. Directed by Nichole Kurtz. Nichole Kurtz jumped in with two feet last year when her son was cast in *Matilda the Musical*, and she directed elementary Drama Camp this summer.

A Jewel and a Fool by M.A. Smith

How do two lifelong friends say goodbye when one is staring in the face of his mortality? Brutally honest, tender and gutsy; all is stripped away, leaving only the shared memories and the love of a best friend. Directed by Everett Gregory. Everett Gregory has acted, and been both a music director and assistant director.

Tickets are just \$10, with three performances, July 31 and August 1 at 7:30 p.m. and August 2 at 2 p.m. Visit www.magiccircleplayers.com for more information or to purchase tickets, or call the box office at 970-249-7838.

COME PLAY WITH US

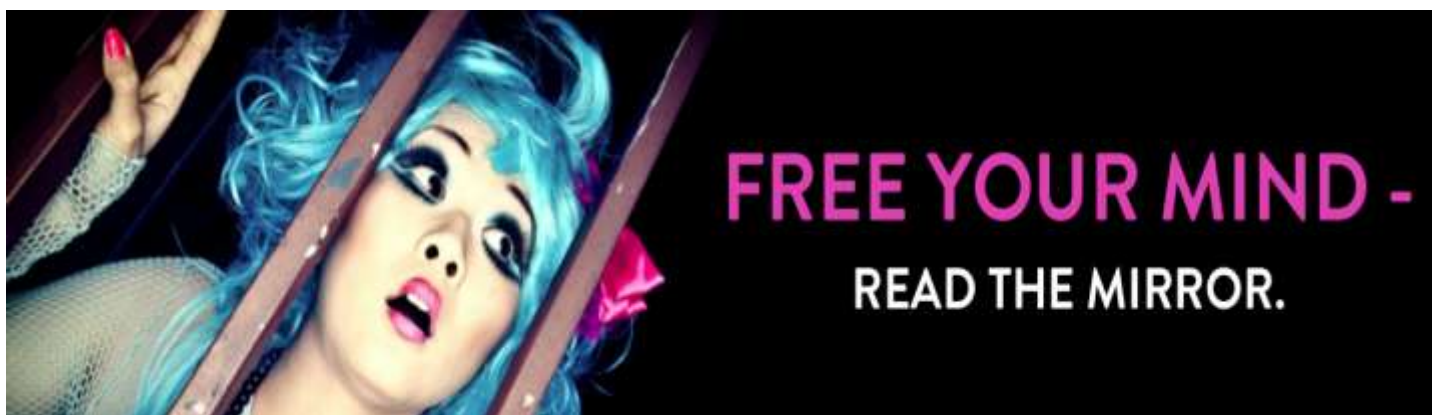
Friday, July 31 @ 7:30pm

Saturday, August 1 @ 7:30pm

Sunday, August 2 @ 2pm



Left, *A Date with Death*. Right, *the Actor's Nightmare*. Courtesy photos.



COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

DELTA COUNTY BABY WELLNESS & RESOURCE EXPO

Special to the Mirror

DELTA-Families across Delta and Montrose counties are invited to a free Baby Wellness & Resource Expo on Saturday, August 22, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Montrose Event Center.

Whether you are expecting, a new parent, grandparent, caregiver, or raising a little one, this event is designed to make life a little easier by bringing helpful resources, trusted experts, and family support together in one place.

Attendees can stop by for:

- Free wellness screenings
- Car seat safety checks
- Breastfeeding support and consultation
- Safe sleep education
- Diaper drive resources
- Door prizes
- Local family services and community resources

This is a great opportunity to ask questions, get connected with local programs, learn about support available in your area, and leave with helpful information for your family's health and wellness.

August is National Breastfeeding Month, and the West Central Breastfeeding Coalition is proud to celebrate by supporting families across Delta and Montrose counties. The Coalition's mission is to celebrate, protect, and support breastfeeding families while helping parents and caregivers access trusted guidance, clinical support, and community connections.

The Baby Wellness & Resource Expo is open to the community and free to attend.

Event Details:

Baby Wellness & Resource Expo

Saturday, August 22, 2026

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Montrose Event Center

For more information, contact info@breastfeedingcoalition.co.

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Details <https://sanjuanpub.com/2026-montrose-book-fair/>



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 Baldrige Hall, Montrose United Methodist Church, 647 South 1st Street. All are welcome and there is no charge. These meetings are also available via Zoom. For information about the speaker and topic presented each month go to the 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.

CRAFTERNOON AT THE LIBRARY-The Crafternoon group meets weekly, on Thursdays from 11 AM-1 PM, to knit or crochet

items for charity and this is the 2nd year that they have "yarn stormed" the library. This year, it was done in spirit of the 250/150 celebration. Our lobby, courtyard, and front entrance areas have all been decorated in red, white, and blue.

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

Aug. 1-9 am Columbine Quilters will meet at Welcome Home Alliance Warrior Resource **4 Hillcrest Plaza**

Way, Montrose. Social time is at 9:00, Business Meeting at 9:30, followed by Show-and-tell, refreshments and a program. For more information: Paula millsappscoui@gmail.com or Cheryl 970-462-3849 Visitors are always welcome.

Aug. 4-Tuesday Aug. 4 at 5pm at Hispanic Project 504 N st Montrose, Citizens' Climate Lobby meets to promote Local solutions to pollution, environmental, Nonpartisan All Welcome info 970-765-9095.

Aug. 13-The Women's Giving Club 3rd quarter meeting will be held on Thursday, Aug. 13, 5:30 pm at the Bridges Golf and Country Club. This invitation is given to all women who support local nonprofits, or might be new to town, or want to meet new friends, and/or just want to be a part of an organization that is making a positive impact in our community. Bring a friend! Call 970-209-9598 or email at givingclubofmontrose@gmail.com

READER PHOTO SPOTLIGHT: B. SWITZER



*Left, Photo by B. Switzer
MONTROSE-Muddy waters
of the Uncompahgre River
at the West Main Bridge.
Above, photo of B. Switzer
with Flock Camera in the
background.
Mirror Staff photo.*

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