



ONLINE NEWS
ASSOCIATION



FRESH NEWS FOR BUSY PEOPLE!

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the Montrose Mirror

AMAZON CUTS RIBBON ON NEW DELIVERY STATION



By Gail Marvel

MONTROSE-On Aug. 10, Amazon held a ribbon cutting and tour event for its new Montrose Delivery Station. The 12,000-square-foot delivery station, adjacent to Montrose Regional Airport, is a last-mile facility that brings faster delivery to customers in the Montrose area and beyond. A \$25 million investment, the site currently has more than 50 full and part-time employees.

Safety is foremost in the mind of Amazon, and prior to the tour participants were given safety vests and rubber slippers to cover

Continued pg 11

Above, On Aug. 10, Amazon held a ribbon-cutting event for its new Montrose Delivery Station. (L to R) Ribbon-cutting participants: Back Area Manager Luke Williams, Site Manager Logan Lawler, Governor's Office of Economic Development & International Trade (OEDIT) Executive Director Eve Lieberman, Montrose Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) Executive Director Sandy Head, Montrose County Commissioner Kristin Copeland, and Amazon Senior Manager Economic Development Policy Sam Bailey. The facility began processing operations in the latter part of 2025. Bailey quipped, "We launched the building, then do the ribbon-cutting!"

BOARD OF EDUCATION EXTENDS SUPERINTENDENT PAID LEAVE

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE-On the eve of the 2026-2027 school year, with an overflow crowd and a heavy agenda, the Montrose County School District RE-1J Board of Education convened for a regular meeting on Tuesday, Aug. 11.

The Board of Education 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.

President Balleck called the meeting to order and led in saying the Pledge of Allegiance.

All directors were present as was Interim Superintendent Jessica Kalb.

Balleck called the meeting to order, and all joined in saying the Pledge of Allegiance and sharing a Moment of Silence. The meeting agenda was approved.

With 26 individuals signed up to speak, the Board agreed to allow everyone to speak for the full three minutes during the Community Input Portion of the meeting.



As school district directors grapple with the results of a third party investigation into a situation at Olathe Elementary School and the ongoing paid leave of the Superintendent, kids head back to the classroom this week. Photo of Oak Grove School is by Harry Switzer.

Continued pg 27

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A well-deserved salute to this week's featured homeowners for creating a rich, colorful tapestry that enriches our entire neighborhood.



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This Week's Featured Presentation:

Michael Regan - 62139 Oleander Circle

A stunning landscape of vibrant deep red rose borders along a custom stone driveway, rings of bright gold and purple blooms, and meticulous rock beds filled with dwarf evergreens and white flowering shrubs make for a head turning display.

We select a new local winner every two weeks. Send your neighborhood nominations, photos, and addresses to marae@marmontrose.com

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 Misc household, boxes and bins, wood furniture
 For information 970.250.9981

REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

MONTROSE-THE EARLY YEARS

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-On Aug. 21-Montrose Republican Women invite you to join us for our 90th Anniversary and our celebration of Colorado 150 with a historical presentation from Carolyn Bellavance of the Museum of the Mountain West. She will share stories of "Montrose-the Early Years". Raffle drawing will be held for prizes: 1) Trip to Las Vegas 2) Handmade King-sized Quilt. Proceeds go to our Scholarship Fund. Program is Noon-130p at Hampton Inn Montrose. Doors open at 1130a. Brown bag lunch. Contact Kerri for information 970-209-5170.

the Montrose Mirror

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TAKE A LOOK AT THESE PROPERTIES!



MLS #837122 | 2017 Tree Line Lane | BRITANY BUTLER

This beautiful ranch style home is very spacious featuring two private primary suites. The open floor plan has newly refinished hardwood floors throughout, and a stunning stone fireplace that sits as a main centerpiece. The expansive floor plan also includes a versatile bonus room, perfect for a home office, media room, play area, or fitness space that sits above an extra deep 3 car garage. Outside you'll enjoy a maturely landscaped private backyard with a covered patio, water feature, and jetted hot tub.



MLS #837503 | 310 S Townsend Avenue | DAVID KIENHOLZ

Many possible uses for this high exposure location, plenty of room for off-street parking for the many uses that are allowed for this location. Building is solid and can be remodeled for allowed uses. 3 overhead doors that could become windows. This property has been released from any further environmental clean-up and the Broker will place documentation affirming that in Associated Docs. This property was priced allowing for remodeling and upgrading of the lot and the structure.



MLS #837973 | 68001 Tumbleweed Road | AARON TOBLER

Discover exceptional craftsmanship and timeless high-end style in this meticulously designed custom home, built in 2019 and offering 3,392 square feet of beautifully finished living space on an irrigated 1.24-acre parcel. From the moment you enter, the quality of construction, thoughtful design, and attention to detail are unmistakable. This is a home that feels both refined and comfortable, with a timeless aesthetic that will remain relevant for years to come. The spacious ranch-style floor plan offers an ideal split-bedroom configuration.



MLS #832835 | 266 Crossroads Circle | DEE HOLMAN

Charming townhome in Crossroads Park Subdivision. Nestled in the quiet neighborhood of Crossroads Park Subdivision in Montrose, Colorado, this two-bedroom, two-bathroom townhome represents the pinnacle of comfortable living. With its meticulously maintained condition and thoughtful upgrades, this residence offers a welcoming and vibrant environment for its occupants. Features include an open floor plan that seamlessly connects living spaces, creating an inviting atmosphere suitable for year-round enjoyment.



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

IT IS TIME TO BRING DR. STEPHENSON BACK

Dear Editor:

When the Montrose County School District Board placed Superintendent Dr. Carrie Stephenson on non-punitive, paid leave in June while concerns involving Olathe Elementary were investigated, allowing those concerns to be independently examined was a reasonable and responsible step.

That investigation has now concluded. It is time to move forward and return Dr. Stephenson to the leadership role she has earned.

Dr. Stephenson's record deserves to be part of this conversation. Under her leadership, MCSD has significantly expanded opportunities for students through its Career Pathways program, which now includes 16 pathways and 24 industry certifications. That work earned MCSD the Colorado Association of School Boards' 2024 Student Achievement High School Award. The district also offers more than 130 Advanced Placement and concurrent-enrollment courses, providing Montrose students opportunities that are remarkable for a rural school district.

The district recently secured nearly \$6.2 million in state BEST grant funding toward a new Early Childhood Center—part of a roughly \$12.6 million investment in early childhood education that Dr. Stephenson has described as years in the making.

Perhaps most relevant today is the district's new five-year strategic plan. Dr. Stephenson helped lead a process involving staff and community input to establish

a long-term direction for our schools. This Board recently approved that plan. There is something fundamentally inconsistent about approving a superintendent's vision for the district's next five years while leaving unresolved whether she will be allowed to lead it.

The Board was right to take concerns seriously. Doing so did not prejudice Dr. Stephenson, and returning her to her position now does not require the Board to say that investigating those concerns was a mistake. It simply recognizes that the process was allowed to work.

Dr. Stephenson has earned the respect of teachers, staff, parents and members of

this community. Her record demonstrates a commitment to expanding opportunities for students and planning for the district's future.

At some point, continued uncertainty becomes more damaging than the issue it was intended to resolve. It creates division, disrupts leadership and erodes public confidence.

The Board has an opportunity to bring this chapter to a responsible conclusion: return Dr. Stephenson to her position, support the strategic direction it recently approved, and allow our schools and our community to move forward together.

Linda Gann, Montrose

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OPINION/EDITORIAL:COMMENTARY

FULLY STAFFED AND DELIVERING *Montrose PD's Steady Results Amid Real Challenges*

By Mayor Michael Badagliacco

Chief Hall and I recently sat down to talk about how the community views the Montrose Police Department and how we can better share the real work happening every day. Residents want to feel safe, and they deserve clear information about what their officers are accomplishing. Recent department presentations offered a data-backed look at staffing, crime trends, drug interdiction, and leadership. Those results deserve recognition.

Challenges Facing Montrose

Montrose continues to grow, and with growth comes more calls for service. Overall incidents rose about 33.5% from 2016 to 2025. Our location also places us along routes that drug traffickers use to move product across the Southwestern US. State legislative changes have reduced local tools for drug possession, bail, and sentencing. Officers face those pressures daily while still answering every call and protecting neighborhoods.

Full Staffing and Operational Readiness

Despite those headwinds, the department is performing at a high level. Every authorized position is filled. The department fields 40 patrol officers with 30 operational, including School Resource Officers and Community Operations. Cadets are already in the academy pipeline, and more qualified applicants are waiting. In an era when many agencies struggle with vacancies, full staffing is a genuine strength.

Positive Trends in Key Crime Categories

Key crime categories show encouraging movement. Residential and commercial burglaries have dropped from earlier peaks and remain relatively low. Theft and

criminal mischief have trended downward in recent years. Domestic violence and assaults fluctuate but do not show uncontrolled escalation. These trends reflect consistent, proactive work rather than luck.

Sustained Drug Enforcement Results

Drug enforcement continues to produce some of the department's strongest results. **Multi-agency partnerships spanning local, state, and federal levels have disrupted supply lines for years.** Recent work includes nuisance property actions that closed chronic problem houses tied to violence, overdoses, weapons, and exploitation. **A major regional wiretap investigation produced more than 20 arrests, 62.6 pounds of methamphetamine, over 10,000 counterfeit fentanyl pills, significant cocaine seizures, cash, vehicles, and weapons.** Large quantities are being stopped before they fully enter the community. Those interdictions save lives and prevent overdoses. Clearance rates on drug cases remain exceptionally high, near 99 percent, which is outstanding. The department averages roughly one drug arrest per day.

Leadership Recognition

Leadership quality matches the operational results. These are not routine achievements. They reflect a department that invests in professional growth and holds itself to high standards.

-Chief Hall and Professional Development Manager Mike Steffes are recognized for wellness and leadership work.

-Deputy Chief Tim Cox has been selected for the FBI National Academy.

-Deputy Chief Larry Witte finished at the

top of his class at Northwestern's Police Staff and Command program.

-Sergeant Michelle Berry was chosen for DEA Drug Commander School.

-Chief Hall was appointed to the Colorado POST Board.

Community Appreciation and Confidence

The officers and staff of the Montrose Police Department do difficult work under real constraints. They respond to every call, pursue every viable lead, and adapt to rules set far from Main Street. The community benefits from that consistency. Full staffing, measurable reductions in several crime categories, major drug pipeline disruptions, and recognized leadership all point to a department that is performing well.

Appreciation for that performance is earned. Residents see officers in their neighborhoods, at schools, and on the streets.

They notice when problem properties are addressed and when large drug loads never reach local streets. The challenges of growth and trafficking routes will not disappear overnight. What matters is that Montrose has a capable, fully staffed department led by professionals who keep adapting and delivering results. That is worth recognizing, supporting, and communicating clearly.

Make an effort to recognize our full staff at the Montrose Police Department.

When you are out and about, thank them for their service and for putting it on the line day in and day out.

Thank you Chief and all of you at the Department. We appreciate what you do every day!

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

SOMEBODY HAS TO ACTUALLY GOVERN THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Dear Editor,

I have spent considerable time going through Montrose County School District agendas, votes, policies and reporting surrounding Dr. Carrie Stephenson, and reading everything chronologically produces a rather remarkable question: How did the people elected to bring accountability and stability to the district manage to create this much chaos this quickly?

The conflict did not begin with Olathe Elementary in May. There were already disputes between Board President Neisha Balleck and Stephenson over administrative authority, changes involving legal counsel, a fight over administrative surveys followed by increased Board control over surveys, questions surrounding Stephenson's evaluation, and growing tension over where the authority of individual Board members ended. By April, the Board was already considering putting Stephenson on leave. That effort failed,

but apparently the idea had excellent staying power.

After the May Olathe meeting, suspension returned and passed 4 to 3. Shane Daly asked whether the independent investigator had recommended removing Stephenson, and the discussion indicated the decision came from the Board. Jody Hovde also questioned why some Board members appeared to know things about the investigation that others did not. Nothing inspires confidence in collective governance quite like members of the governing body wondering what their colleagues know.

Stephenson then filed a grievance alleging retaliation and individual Board members exceeding their authority. The public record does not prove retaliation, but enough of the sequence she described exists publicly that her allegations deserve genuinely independent scrutiny. Instead, on August 11, the Board rejected the

grievance concerning its own leadership and extended Stephenson's paid leave again. Investigating the superintendent apparently takes months. Investigating yourselves seems considerably more straightforward.

Meanwhile, this conservative majority that campaigned on fiscal responsibility has taxpayers paying Stephenson while preventing her from working, paying temporary leadership to fill the vacancy they created, and paying legal expenses while the whole production continues.

At some point, somebody has to actually govern the school district.

If Stephenson committed serious misconduct, establish it through a fair process and act. If she did not, return her to work. The Board spent plenty of time demanding accountability before taking office. It shouldn't be terribly surprising that the public remembered.

Ryan Hyle, Montrose

STATE SENATOR MARC BEASLEY FOR US SENATE

Editor:

In the realm of politics you can tell as much about an elected official by what is not said as opposed to what is actually voiced. One of the most important decisions facing Colorado in November involves the election for US Senate. John Hickenlooper has held one of Colorado's two US Senate seats since 2021. For all of those years he has been what is commonly referred to as a "weak, sister" or a "back bencher," derogatory terms for elected officials who have proven to be incompetent in representing their constituents.

****Hickenlooper has made it plain for all to see that he cares more for illegal aliens than he does for American citizens. He firmly supported the influx of millions of illegals into this country as well as the expenditure of tax dollars to support those here illegally. Additionally, he has

voted repeatedly to support non-citizens being able to vote in our elections.. And he supported illegal aliens in Colorado being able to receive in-state tuition.

Additionally, he voted against lower taxes, no tax on tips no tax on Social Security and no tax on overtime.

***For his entire term to date, he has failed to speak out against the Democrat leadership that is intent on destroying this country. He has supported defunding the police and laws assailing the Second Amendment. He has had no problem with the influx of fentanyl and child trafficking into our country or males in girls' sports. After the start of the Iran conflict, he failed on multiple occasions to fund the Department of Homeland Security, there by placing this entire country at risk. And he joined the Democrats routing for Iran over American forces.

You could write a book about his five years of failing to represent the interest of Colorado or the welfare of the United States.

Considering the fact that the Democrat party has been completely taken over by the socialist/communist wing of that party, and in view of Hickenlooper's failure to speak out against that, it certainly seems that the time has come for Colorado to see stronger representation in the US Senate.

State Senator Marc Beasley, with seven years of legislative experience in the Colorado legislature, represents the best opportunity for Colorado to have at least one member of the US Senate with an abundance of common sense, who will put the welfare of Colorado and the entire country at the fore front of his decisions.

Dee Laird, Montrose

AMAZON CUTS RIBBON ON NEW DELIVERY STATION From pg 1

their shoes, and hair longer than shoulder length was required to be tied up. During the hour-long tour, participants could observe the process; however, to protect employees' privacy, photos and video of the actual process were not allowed.

The facility is located at 496 County Road and was built on an eight-acre plot previously owned by Montrose Economic Development Corporation (MEDC). MEDC Executive Director Sandi Head said, "We've had the property since the 1990's."

Sam Bailey, Amazon's senior manager for economic development in Colorado, and keynote speaker at the 2026 MEDC Annual meeting, praised the efforts of MEDC and all the partnerships that were formed to bring the project to fruition.

Bailey said, "Our goal was to deliver packages in seven to 10 days, but we brought that down to three days. By the time most packages get here, they have gone through three buildings, the Fulfillment Center in Denver, a Source Center in Colorado Springs, and the Final Stop, the Delivery Station. Every day we get packages from Colorado Springs via truck, and we sort in this building. We'll ramp up to 28,000 packages a week. This site can handle growth."

A member of the media asked, "What about drones?"

Bailey said, "The airport would have something to say. Drones would conflict with the Montrose Airport. We [Amazon] have 12 other sites across the US [for drones], but not here."

Amazon purports that more than 60 percent of sales in Amazon's stores come from independent sellers — and the majority are small and medium-sized businesses. In Colorado, independent sellers sold more than 62 million+ items through Amazon's store in 2025, with average sales of \$275,000 per seller. This includes sellers from Colorado like Jon Kornbluh, owner of Bluecorn Beeswax.

In Colorado, the Amazon footprint is a \$20 billion investment and produces 20,000 direct jobs.



Join Us in Celebrating

Commissioner Sue Hansen

Retirement Reception

-  Thursday, August 20
-  5:00–7:00 p.m.
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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

PROPOSED DATA CENTER REGULATIONS

Editor:

As residents of Montrose and Delta Counties we need fiscal responsibility, stabilized electric rates, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, reduced air, noise and heat pollution, conservation of our stressed water resources in regards to data center operations and transparency in agreements (no non-disclosure agreements) between the DC and governmental representatives.

Montrose and Delta County have passed moratoriums on data center development to give us time to develop proper regulations that will ensure we as citizens are not burdened with infrastructure we didn't want and have to pay for, environmental degradation from overuse of our limited water, noise, heat and forever chemicals dumped into our water. So now the real work starts.

The County Planning Commissions will hold meetings to elicit input on data center regulation. It is important that we attend and voice our opinion. This is how public participation works. If you want to affect your government you have to be part of the process- much like [CCLMontrose.Org](https://www.cclmontrose.org) participated for 4 years when commenting on solar power generation regulations.

We have done our research and we propose important considerations for regulation of data centers (DC):

1. Water usage. We recommend a direct-to-chip non PFAS closed loop system as a requirement for any data center that only uses, after filling their system, as much water as a small family home per day.

2. Energy usage. We recommend the data center (DC) be required to use renewable energy for 100% of all their estimated energy use with storage on site. It would be preferred that the DC have the energy generation on site, but using a REC (renewable energy credit) is also accepta-

ble. DC must procure or build their own renewable energy and either retire credits from those projects to meet their obligations, or sell credits to the utility.

The DC also is required to have a power purchase agreement for 15 years with their power provider if they do not supply their own renewable power.

Require the utility to establish a rate class tariff for the DC.

Doing so enables regulators to understand both the costs and revenues attributable to large customers, appropriately assess cost causation, and ensure that incumbent customers are not cross subsidizing large customers and data centers

DC will assume all direct assignment of known costs (such as interconnection, transmission, new generation, fuel cost, capacity costs, and any ancillary service costs) or through the use of detailed cost-of-service studies that assess, in depth, the cost causality of data centers. Back-up power generation from generators can be used, but only in emergencies that are documented by their local utility. In addition testing of the back-up generators is limited to no more than 50 hours per year.

3. Energy and Water Use Verification. The DC will provide to Montrose County its estimated annual energy and water use, and provide the annual used energy and water after a one year, and every year after, to validate their claims.

Reporting the actual electricity consumption and peak usage of the large load customer class both establishes the cost causality of the large load customers, and maintains core transparency for ratepayer protection.

4. Noise Limitations. The DC noise generation will not exceed 50 decibels except for short term construction or maintenance (no more than 8 hours during the day

5. Heat Limitations. The DC will not vent generated heat from DC operations into the surrounding atmosphere. The DC is strongly encouraged to utilize the heat in power generation on site or using the extra heat to power a thermal energy network providing heat to municipal systems.

6. Reclamation Bond. The DC will be required to post a bond of 100% of cost estimated to reclaim the site to its original condition prior to development.

7. DCs pay an up-front termination liability payment, and a decommissioning bond to protect citizens from financial exposure should DCs become stranded investments.

8. Infrastructure Development Any and all infrastructure development for the DC will be paid for - up front- before any construction begins.

9. DC definition. A facility will be classified as a DC if their power use is 1 MW or more at the start of the project or any time thereafter whether it be a single DC or multiple site DC.

10. Require all electric power supplied to comply with the greenhouse gas emission reduction standards. Similar requirements should be placed on any third-party power providers and on-site behind-the-meter power generators.

11. Prohibit DC from any non-disclosure agreements with local decision makers in regards to DC plans, construction, operations and maintenance. All operations of the DC will be transparent to the County and its residents.

We look forward to discussing these regulations and hope we can all agree the strongest regulations will provide adequate protection from DCs that have been known to not be transparent and work ONLY in their best interest.

Submitted by Tony Hoag [CCLMontrose.Org](https://www.cclmontrose.org)

**5 BEDROOM****2 BATH****3-CAR GARAGE****THIS HOME IS 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 which heats the whole home. The main bedroom is large with walk-in closets, and the bath has a large soaker tub. This location is about as good as it gets, close to schools and shopping. The backyard is very private for get-togethers and bar-be-ques.

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

A CONCERN WITH MOST RECENT PUBLICATION

Editor:

Thank you for managing the Mirror. I want to point out one concern I have with the most recent publication.

Your third rule for publishing states that, "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."

David White's most recent piece is titled, "CITY CLERK ADMITS TO BREACH OF CONTRACT." While Mr. White cites several sources when discussing the City Clerk's actions during the 2026 elections, I did not see a citation or quoted statement establishing that the City Clerk admitted to a breach of contract. That is a serious factual claim, and it requires direct support.

In my view, the headline appears to make a factual claim that the article itself does not substantiate. Because many readers see a headline before reading the full article, unsupported wording can leave a misleading impression. In this case, the headline is the source of the potential harm.

To illustrate the concern, a writer could publish a headline saying, "John Doe admits to peeing in the pool," then quote John Doe only as saying, "I was in the pool and I no longer have to pee." The headline would convey an allegation that the quotation does not establish. Readers may remember the headline while never seeing—or accepting—the unsupported leap behind it.

I respectfully ask that the Mirror apply its submission rules consistently, particularly when an article or headline makes a claim that can harm a person's reputation without support in the cited record. If Mr. White believes the City Clerk admitted to a breach of contract, he should identify the precise statement that supports the claim. Otherwise, the headline should be corrected or clarified.

Thank you,

Greg Cairns, Montrose

SHOULDN'T WE KNOW THE RESULT?

Editor:

I remember reading a campaign sign for a current School Board member that said, "no more secrets". I'm hoping that's true. What was the result of the independent investigation of Dr. Stephenson? Is it a secret? We the taxpayers paid for it. Shouldn't we know the result?

At the last school board meeting I heard several references to "change". What exactly is the change the current board wants to accomplish?

Jo Clugg, Montrose





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DURANGO VS. MONTROSE
MONTROSE HIGH SCHOOL



FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 7 PM
PAGOSA SPRINGS VS. DELTA
DELTA HIGH SCHOOL



FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 7 PM
NORTH FORK VS. CEDAREDDGE
CEDAREDDGE HIGH SCHOOL



FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16, 7 PM
CEDAREDDGE VS. OLATHE
OLATHE HIGH SCHOOL

REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

MONTROSE REGIONAL HEALTH CEO JEFF MENGENHAUSEN HONORED WITH QUILT OF VALOR

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE – Montrose Regional Health (MRH) CEO Jeff Mengenhausen has been honored with a Quilt of Valor in recognition of his 10 years of service in the U.S. Navy, including deployments in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The Quilts of Valor Foundation is a national nonprofit organization founded in 2003 to honor service members and veterans touched by war. Today, more than 11,000 volunteers across the country create and award quilts as tangible expressions of gratitude for their service and sacrifice.

Mengenhausen served in the U.S. Navy from 2001 to 2011, including as a Navy SEAL. He was awarded the Purple Heart after being wounded in combat.

The quilt was presented by Quilts of Valor Foundation members Betsy Krager and Joann Thornburg.

"Our quilters know that freedom is not free," Krager and Thornburg shared during the presentation. "This quilt is meant to say thank you for your service and to remind you that your family, friends and a large quilting community will always hold you in our thoughts and hearts."

"It is truly an honor to receive a Quilt of Valor," Mengenhausen said. "This recognition is a powerful reminder that military service is something you carry with you long after your time in uniform. I've been fortunate to continue serving in a different way through healthcare, where the mission is also centered on caring for others. I'm deeply grateful to the Quilts of Valor Foundation and the volunteers whose craftsmanship and kindness create such a meaningful tribute to veterans."

To learn more about the Quilts of Valor Foundation, visit govf.org.



Quilt of Valor recognition honors Mengenhausen's military service and sacrifice. Courtesy photo.



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

CONFIRMATION BIAS: WHEN FACTS TAKE A BACK SEAT

by Michael J Badagliacco, "MJB"

Confirmation bias is the quiet habit of favoring information that supports what we already believe while setting aside or explaining away anything that challenges it. The premise is straightforward and often uncomfortable. When a belief serves us, whether by protecting identity, social standing, emotional comfort, or group belonging, we will disregard facts to keep that belief intact. The process rarely feels like deliberate refusal of truth. It feels like clear judgment. Over time the supporting evidence piles up on one side and the contradictory evidence is filtered out.

The Everyday Mechanism

The pattern shows up in ordinary choices. People notice the story that matches their view and share it. They skim past the one that does not. They remember the example that fits and forget the counterexample. A preferred parenting approach, a favored brand, or a political identity all receive the same treatment. The belief grows stronger not because reality has confirmed it, but because the mind has selectively collected support. The payoff is coherence and reduced mental tension. Adjusting a deeply held view requires effort and sometimes humility. Protecting it requires far less.

Why We Protect Preferred Beliefs

The mind prefers a stable story. Contradictory information creates discomfort. Resolving that discomfort by revising the belief is harder than reinterpreting the new information or questioning its source. When the belief is tied to identity or group membership, the cost rises further. Challenging the idea can feel like challenging the self or risking exclusion. Accuracy becomes secondary to belonging and certainty. This is not limited to any one political side or personality type. It is a universal feature of how people process limited information under social pressure.

The Broader Harm to Society

Scaled up, confirmation bias becomes completely damaging to society. Entire communities can settle into parallel realities, each filtering the same events through different lenses. Public conversation shifts from problem solving to mutual accusation. Trust in institutions, neighbors, and even the basic process of voting erodes. Complex

local issues that require careful tradeoffs receive simplified narratives designed to protect a preferred side rather than improve outcomes. Decision making slows. Opportunities for practical improvement are lost because the source of a proposal triggers automatic rejection.

The pattern is thoroughly counterproductive. It prioritizes tribal loyalty over results. It treats the democratic process itself as suspect when the "wrong" person initiates it. Instead of testing ideas against evidence and letting voters decide, communities spend energy defending positions and attacking motives. The cumulative effect is weaker self-government, deeper division, and a reduced capacity to address shared problems with clarity.

A Clear Local Example in Montrose

Consider the current conversations in Montrose, Colorado about four potential charter amendments. The City Council is working to place these items on the November ballot so the people of Montrose can vote to accept or reject them. In a system built on local self-government, offering voters a direct say should be welcomed as an invitation to participate. The final decision rests with the electorate, not with the Council or any single officeholder.

Yet portions of the discussion have taken a different shape. Because many residents believe, through confirmation bias, that nothing the Mayor puts forth is good for the people, they conclude that these proposals must therefore be bad. The content of the amendments and the simple fact that voters will have the last word become secondary. The source itself is treated as sufficient reason for opposition. This is a classic example of the bias at work. A prior assumption about the Mayor overrides examination of the actual process or the substance of what is being proposed. The approach damages the community. It short circuits the mechanism designed to resolve disagreement: an open vote by the people. It discourages careful review of the proposals on their merits. It signals that good faith efforts to seek public input can be dismissed on the basis of personality rather than evidence. Over time such habits weaken the civic practices that make local government function.

It is also completely counterproductive. Even if some or all of the amendments ultimately prove unpopular, the cleanest way to settle the question is to let voters decide. Poisoning the process in advance based on who initiated it prevents the community from practicing the accountability it claims to value. Energy that could go toward evaluating tradeoffs and consequences is instead spent reinforcing preexisting distrust.

Interrupting the Cycle

Awareness creates the first opening. Noticing the relief that comes when information confirms a preferred view, or the irritation that arises when it does not, allows a brief pause. In that pause a person can ask what evidence would count against the belief and then look for it. Stating the strongest version of the opposing case before responding forces engagement with the best counter arguments rather than the weakest. Reading primary material, tracking predictions against later results, and maintaining relationships with thoughtful people who disagree all raise the cost of unchecked bias.

None of these practices eliminate the tendency. They make it harder to indulge without reflection. Intellectual honesty does not require abandoning strong convictions. It requires keeping those convictions open to revision when the facts change. A belief that cannot survive contact with inconvenient information is not a conviction. It is a preference protected by selective attention.

Closing Thought

Confirmation bias is not a flaw limited to the uninformed or the partisan. It is a universal feature of minds navigating limited information, social pressure, and the need for coherent identity.

When a belief serves us, we will disregard facts to keep it intact. The practical question is whether we notice the transaction and decide, at least in matters that affect the whole community, that accuracy and open process are worth the higher price. In personal life the choice is private. In civic life the cumulative effect of those private choices shapes the quality of public judgment and the health of local self-government.

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: COMMENTARY

STOCKS VS. GOLD AND SILVER?

By Don Stott

Ever wonder which is the smartest way to save your surplus dollars? Owning stocks, or gold and silver? The following, is straight from the internet, and not any made-up figures. Due to the erratic behavior of Dow-Jones stocks, which are 30 of the most popular and common stock trades, I am giving the yearly dividends, percentage wise, for each stock, based on their selling price when I wrote this.

The late Richard Russell wrote his famous "Dow Theory Letter," for 57 years. It has always been thought of as the 'Bible' of the stock market. In one 1980 issue, he recommended Colorado Gold as the best source of honest dealings in metals. I had an interesting conversation with him a couple of times. A brilliant guy! Russell said that a good stock should have a P.E. ratio of not more than ten to twelve. "P.E.," is the ratio between the price of a stock and its earnings, but not its dividends. As I write this, the P.E. ratio of Dow stocks is 23.6, meaning that stocks are overpriced.

In the current year of 2026, the average yearly, taxable dividends of the 30 Dow stocks, is 2.30% of their selling price. Here a few of the dividends for some stocks on the Dow. Amazon and Boeing pay no dividends. Microsoft pays .088% per share per year. Nvidia pays .023%, Caterpillar pays .079%, as does Visa. Walmart pays .075%, and Apple .038%. Ford pays .060%, American Express pays .097%, and General Motors pays .072%. The previous eleven, all pay far less than one per cent of their share selling price, per year, in dividends. What brings it up to 2.30%, probably are the lesser known shares on the Dow, which pay more and may be of a greater risk. Union Pacific, with a share price of

\$292.25 pays \$5.68 per share, per year in dividends, which is 2%. Since the average taxable dividend for the Dow is 2.30% per share per year, even with no taxes, owning stocks, is no protection against inflation.

Next, I quote the average per year increase in dollar prices, over the last 75 years, of gold and silver. Over the last 75 years, the tax-free dollar price per ounce of gold, has gone up 6.3% per year, and the average price of silver, has gone up 5.8% per year. In plain terms, stocks are over-priced, and they pay less than the inflation rate of 3.5% in government figures, if you believe government figures, with gas prices in my small town of \$4.37 per gallon.

"Politics is the only profession where you can lie, cheat and steal and still be respected." - Mark Twain.

Or as Will Rogers observed in relationship to government being honest and truthful: "I don't make jokes, I just report facts."

Most today, believe the inflation rate is more than twice what is said by government, but falsely, they do believe that inflation is caused by the interest rate, rather than the actual truth. That fiction is believed, because of constant media linking inflation to the interest rate, as government says it endlessly.

The dictionary says: "Inflation, is caused by an increase in the currency supply," So the Federal Reserve dollar presses continue to roll, to pay for government costs for welfare, war, corruption, and utter waste, as is typical of all governments everywhere, which adds to the currency supplies. Inflating currency supplies, have destroyed all governments and nations throughout history, and ours has gone from "White Tower" nickel hamburgers, Cokes and Hershey bars, to you know

what now. I do remember White Tower nickel hamburgers! They were tiny, but delicious!

That is not all, by any means. You have to buy stock through a stock broker, who makes his living by managing your entire net worth, for probably 1% a year and maybe a \$50 per stock trade, which you cannot do yourself, unless you are licensed. You must give your Social Security number to buy any stock, and pay taxes on your profits, if there are any. If your stocks are to be placed in an ERA, can you leave your ERA to your kids, tax free? Sorry, the entire stock market 'ins' and 'outs,' escapes me, and if I have made an error, please excuse it.

Gold has gone up 6.3% tax free per year over the last 75 years, and silver has gone up 5.8% tax free, every year for the last 75 years.

Had you died, your kids would have the gold and silver left to them, tax free. No one knows you have it, because we don't care less what your Social Security numbers are. You would have paid us 1% of our wholesale price including delivery, when you bought them, and that would be it. They just sit there, their prices going up as the dollars go down!

There is just something really nice and comforting, when you hold beautiful, physical gold and silver in your hands or in your safe. They're not dependent on bureaucracy, politics, or the inflation rate, either actual or lied about by government. As the dollar shrinks and buys ever less, your gold and silver prices automatically go up as the dollar decays, and it is automatic, without you doing anything. We have been here for 48 years and have always had a Better Business Bureau rating of A+, and never had a single complaint.



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: COMMENTARY



WHAT IS ON THE AGENDA?

City Council public schedule for the week of Aug. 17, 2026

***Monday's Work Session (10 AM)** discussion items:

- Comprehensive Plan Technical Update Overview
- Vehicle Purchase Recommendation
- The Hub at Montrose Crossing Economic Impact Report and Potential Development Support
- 2026 Montrose Permanent Fund Contribution To Colorado Mesa University Foundation With Scholarships Contributions
- North Park Ave Division of Property Official Act of the City
- IGA for November 3, 2026, Coordinated Election

***Tuesday Council Meeting (6 PM)**

- LIQUOR LICENSE APPLICATION: Pruf
- LIQUOR LICENSE APPLICATION: Claudia's Kitchen
- FIRE SUPPRESSION SYSTEM PROJECT
- FIRST READING Vacate portion of a drainage easement.
- FIRST READING Vacate portion of right of way.
- NORTH PARK AVE RECONSTRUCTION DESIGN CONTRACT
- SECOND READING – E-Bikes
- IGA FOR NOVEMBER 3, 2026 ELECTION
- FIRST READING – Moving Elections from Apr-Nov
- FIRST READING – City Council Term Limits
- FIRST READING – to allow for the City Council to approve the City Manager's decision to appoint or discharge the Police Chief
- FIRST READING to allow for the City Council to approve the City Manager's decision to appoint or discharge the City Clerk

*Please keep all dialogue respectful, civil, and on topic.

Your participation is vital to making Montrose its best.

Please refrain from personal attacks and disagreements, personnel and employment matters, the use of profanity or ethnic, racial, or gender-oriented slurs.

Work sessions and City Council meetings are held in the City Council Chambers on the second floor of the BPOE civic building at 107 S. Cascade.

We value your opinions. While agreement is not always possible on every subject, respect for each other is. As a community we can find common ground to make Montrose the best it can be.

Thank you,

Michael J. Badagliacco, "MJB"

Mayor, Montrose, CO



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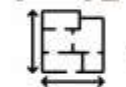


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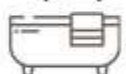
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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

WE ARE BETTER THAN THAT

Editor:

There has been a great deal of criticism and personal attacks surrounding one of our local officials, Mayor Micheal Badagliacco, and I believe it is time to take a step back from the noise and look at the facts.

This is a man who has dedicated much of his life to serving others. He entered the military directly from high school and carried the responsibilities and experiences of that throughout his life. Today, he also cares for his elderly mother, who lives with him in his home. These are not things that should be twisted into ammunition for personal attacks. Yet, we have seen his character, personal life and even military service dragged into public criticism. Trying to put a negative narrative out there does nothing to address the real issues our community actually needs to resolve.

One thing about our Mayor is he has maintained an open-door policy. If someone has a concern, a disagreement, or a question about any of his decisions, there is a straightforward & respectful way to address it: call, make an appointment and have a conversation with him directly. He is willing to listen & discuss any issue at hand.

Our community deserves better than personal attacks, exaggerated narratives and the kind of slanderous political climate we have witnessed across our country in the past years. People can disagree without trying to destroy someone's character.

Yes, facts matter, Yes, character matters and Yes, the way we treat one another matters.

Let focus on the facts, the issues, and the future of our wonderful community.

Teri L. Bullington, Montrose



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BOARD OF EDUCATION EXTENDS SUPERINTENDENT PAID LEAVE *From pg 1*

RECOGNITION

Public Information Officer Mikayla Unruh recognized the following-

Donations:

DMEA has donated \$14,000 from the Capital Credit Community Fund to Northside Elementary School for placement of a digital school sign.

Support for MCSD employee wellness:

-Montrose Recreation District donated \$2,832 in annual memberships and punch passes.

-Fox Movie Theater donated 25 movie tickets, valued at \$275.

-Soak Day Spa donated \$700 in wellness services.

-Scott Miller and Tim Wenger of Millennium Financial Group have donated \$500 to be designated for MCSD Wellness Challenge prizes.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Balleck read aloud the Board's Mission.

The Board heard from members of the District Advisory Committees.

District E Director Tiffany Vincent gave an update on the District Accountability Committee (DAC). President Balleck discussed having the DAC Committee align with Board of Education policy. District F Director Jody Hovde and District G Director Shane Daly spoke about the ongoing work of the Facilities Committee.

Balleck said that the President's Report would now include a category for District Wide Events.

Director Hovde said that she has had a lot of phone calls, a lot of emails, and a lot of contact with the public.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Interim Superintendent Jassica Kalb introduced Facilities Director Matt Smith, who gave an update on the state of the District's current Pre-K Facilities.

Kalb discussed the launch of the District's next Strategic Plan. The plan is the result of a year of work with community members and local schools. "...We are calling this plan 'A Steady Path Forward,' because we are not really changing much of what we've done, we've seen a lot of great success with the past strategic plan, and we are going to continue forward with a lot of those initiatives," Kalb said.

The full Strategic Plan is available in the Board Meeting packet.

COMMUNITY INPUT

There were 26 individuals signed up to speak. Some spoke in support of the current Board, others spoke in support of the Superintendent, some expressed opposition or offered advice. Among the speakers who took to the dais was former Board President Phoebe Benziger. "You've heard from many people this evening," Benziger said. "Asking, some urging, you to remove Dr. Stephenson and others asking you to retain her. That reflects a community that cares deeply about its schools.

"At your very first meeting as elected board members, I spoke during public comment," she said. "And shared one simple thought as a former school board director. I encouraged you to enjoy the journey. To visit the schools, to get to know the teachers, the students, the staff, and recognize that serving on this board can be one of the most rewarding experiences of your life if you let it.

"Tonight I can't help but wonder how you're feeling about this journey so far. I know that soon you will enter into Executive Session to decide Dr. Stephenson's future. During my own time on this board, we also faced the painful decision of whether to terminate a Superintendent. It was the hardest vote I ever cast, and I was the lone vote against termination."

Benziger said, "I understand the weight of what you're asked to do. What concerns me the most is the financial stewardship surrounding this decision. At a time when this district is considering closing an elementary school because of declining enrollment, I struggle to understand the lack of diligence being shown with District resources. If Dr. Stephenson is terminated under the terms of her contract, the cost to taxpayers could approach half a million dollars. In addition, the district has retained a new law firm that has already billed our district \$35,000 since being hired. The current budget allocates \$25,000 for legal services for the entire 2026-2027 fiscal year. Yet in July alone, \$8,700 was billed in an invoice. If that pace continues, legal fees could exceed...\$100,000 this year. And that does

not include the possibility of litigation or other associated costs. I have not included the additional expense of paying both an interim and a Dr. Stephenson who's being paid on leave, nor the cost of a recent investigation.

"Meanwhile, parents, teachers, and students at two elementary schools are fighting to keep their schools open because we're told there's not enough money.

"As you enter into Executive Session, I ask only one thing. Make the decision that you know is right. It's not the easiest decision and it's not the expected decision, and it's not a political decision; don't make it that way. Make a decision that you can defend to every student, every teacher, every parent, every taxpayer in this district.

"Tomorrow morning each one of you will wake up knowing you've made a choice. Make sure that it's one you can live with. One that reflects your oath to serve this district and one that truly places students first. Thank you," Benziger said.

OLD BUSINESS

After some discussion, the Board voted unanimously to pass New Board Policy FCB, School Closure/Consolidation and revised Board Policy DID, Inventories on Second Reading.

CONSENT AGENDA

A number of Consent Agenda items were pulled for further discussion. The Board voted to remove Consent Agenda Items 3,5,6,7,8, 9,10,11 and 12 to New Business for further discussion. The remaining items, including Personnel Report, were approved.

NEW BUSINESS

The items removed from the Consent Agenda were discussed individually and then passed one at a time.

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

At the end of the business portion of the meeting, the Board entered into two Executive Sessions, for the purpose of "possible action on matters discussed in executive session pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(b & f); possible action on matters discussed in executive session pursuant to C.R.S 24-6-402 (b, e, & f); and for negotiations and advice to negotiators regarding

BOARD OF EDUCATION EXTENDS SUPERINTENDENT PAID LEAVE *From previous pg*

acting superintendent duties and compensation."

Following the Executive Session, the Board returned to regular session to conduct New Business, "Possible action on matters discussed in Executive Session pursuant to C.R.S 24-6-402 (e & f)."

Regarding the first Executive Session, the board voted in a five to two vote to deny the Grievance lodged by Superintendent Carrie Stephenson and the requested relief, except for the prospective governance commitments expressly stated in the Board's Response, which will be published forthwith.

"...This report constitutes the Board's final response to the Grievance and closes the grievance process," Board Vice President Ted Valerio said. "It does not resolve the separate Olathe investigation or restrict the board or Dr. Stephenson's right under the employment agreement or applicable law."

Directors West and Hovde voted to deny the denial of the grievance.

The Board then considered possible action on matters discussed in Executive Session pursuant to C.R.S 24-6-402 (b, e, & f).

District F Director Jody Hovde moved to extend Superintendent Stephenson's administrative leave pending further review of performance matters and to direct legal counsel to pursue options as discussed in Executive Session.

Board President Neisha Balleck seconded the motion.

Director Hovde said, "...I feel like this decision is in the best interest moving forward of the kickoff of school tomorrow and students returning next week."

The motion was unanimously approved.

Rather than enter a second Executive Session, President Balleck moved to be allowed to sign Interim Superintendent Jessica Kalb's licensure authorization.

The Board of Education voted unanimously to allow Balleck to sign the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) licensure authorization for Dr. Jessica Kalb.

The authorization is for one year, with the possibility of a year's extension.

Board President Neisha Balleck acknowledged Olathe, and "the uneasiness that's going on right now."

"...the Board is very well aware of just how difficult this has been, and our hearts really are for the Olathe staff, especially because that whistleblower report was just released...and because we all had concerns and we all wanted things to be redacted from that but it's not allowed by the CORA laws...that's been really difficult...we want the staff to know that we're here for them and that we care about them and that we wish it didn't have to be this way...we know that this has been really, really hard..."

Olathe Elementary School Principal Jamie Simo said, "...it's very unsettling, the juxtaposition of something that staff thought ended in May, where they thought they had the summer to kind of recoup and be ready for the year, is now still very much here, so that makes it really hard for them for tomorrow, but we're doing our best, we're going to be excited, and we're going to start the year, because come Monday, it's about the kids, and that's what they're there for."

President Balleck thanked Simo and her staff for focusing on the students, "We are here for you."

FUTURE AGENDA PLANNING

Balleck discussed changing the upcoming meeting from Aug. 25 to Aug. 24 at 7pm, a special meeting/work session to discuss further matters that were not resolved at this meeting. The regular meeting was adjourned.

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

REJECT THIS POORLY PREPARED SET OF AMENDMENTS

Editor:

It seems three city council members (out of five) at our city council that are trying to get a charter amendment package on the November ballot. Two of the three, Adam Wooden and Michael Badagliaocco, have never held a public position and the other, Ed Ulibarri, just doesn't seem to be paying attention during the meeting. To put it bluntly, between the three of them, there isn't enough knowledge to put together a package of charter amendments, and should seek Legal Counsel to do so.

The first amendment discussed was to change the date for city council elections from April to November so it could coincide with the November election. This appears to be nothing more than an attempt to change the city council into a partisan contest. A non-partisan government does a much better job than a partisan government. It was clear that these three cared nothing about citizen input or about getting the language for the amendment clear and unambiguous.

The second item on the agenda was about establishing different term limits for the council members. It is a solution for a problem that doesn't exist. The charter is clear now on term limits and there is no reason to change them. The compensation our town council get is close to nothing, therefore and no one should care to making this a career.

Being completely honest, the three in favor of these amendments are not qualified to write them, as it should be put to a vote for the registered voters of Montrose after an Attorney, who ultimately represents the best interest of these voters, signs off on it. The informed voters who are being kept in the dark, should probably just reject this poorly prepared set of amendments. We don't need new guys trying to fix something that has worked fine for many years. They seem to ignore who they are representing while they focus on damaging our city. What we do need is to get these three guys off our city council before they needlessly start playing politics, as they more than likely have no idea of the repercussions that they might bring forth due to their stupidity.

Thanks,

Jody Mack, Aspen

PAY ATTENTION TO PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENTS

Editor:

Update on the discussions of the proposed amendments to the Montrose City Charter ongoing now for the third month at Montrose City Council sessions:

Despite repeated statements made by Montrose City Councilors David Reed & Dave Frank and by constituents during public comments requesting that proposed amendments to the City Charter be removed from consideration (since it is unclear what problems the proposed amendments are attempting to fix), the City Council, on a 3-2 vote decided to continue the 'rushed' process of preparing proposed amendments to the City Charter (without the guidance of a citizen-led Charter Review Commission).

The original 9 amendments proposed on June 01st, whittled to 7 proposed amendments by July 29th stood at only 4 by the end of the August 04th City Council meeting.

The four proposed amendments remaining on the Montrose City Council agenda scheduled for two readings are as follows:

1. Shifting municipal elections from April to November
2. Instituting 8 year term limits for city council members
3. Shifting the Police Chief to a Manager-Council system
4. Shifting the City Clerk to a Manager-Council system

Attendance by residents in the City of Montrose is strongly recommended during the 1st reading of the proposed amendments to the City Charter on August 18th and during the 2nd reading on September 01st.

It will be very important to pay attention to the wording in the proposed amendments and to provide public comment to the councilors.

Let's not get fooled!

Neonila Martyniuk, Montrose

REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

PUBLIC SAFETY REMINDER: KEEP POWER POLES CLEAR

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-Delta-Montrose Electric Association (DMEA) is reminding residents, businesses, and contractors that attaching nails, tacks, staples, signs, posters, decorations, fencing materials, or any other objects to power poles is strictly prohibited.

Power poles are essential components of the electric distribution system and must remain free of unauthorized attachments to ensure safe and reliable service.

These items create serious safety risks for DMEA linemen, who climb poles to perform maintenance, inspections, and repairs. Hidden nails or staples may cause injuries or interfere with climbing gear and safety equipment. Over time, repeated punctures may also weaken the structural integrity of poles, increasing the likelihood of damage and reducing their service life.

In addition to safety and infrastructure concerns, unauthorized attachments violate the National Electrical Safety Code and other applicable regulations and may result in fines or enforcement actions. They can also obstruct routine maintenance and slow emergency repairs during outages, potentially delaying service restoration for entire neighborhoods. The public is asked to keep all materials off utility poles. Community cooperation helps protect DMEA linemen, improve system reliability, and reduce unnecessary maintenance costs.

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



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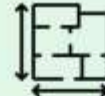
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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO CALL IT THE WAY IT IS

Editor:

It's that time of year again. In every election cycle, just after the primaries and going into the general election, every Democrat politician makes a miraculous transition into a "moderate." They instantly set aside every radical position they just advocated for during their primary election. If they are an incumbent, they suddenly don't remember all the extreme anti-American idiocy they just proposed and supported in their current term. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez just kicked off Democrats' journey to absurdity with her miraculous political rebranding as a "moderate" because she has aspirations beyond NYC. Rebranding AOC as a moderate is like rebranding Fidel Castro as a capitalist.

No one is buying it, of course, but get ready for the media barrage reinventing her as a moderate – just like they did with Kamala, Biden, Hillary, etc. Nothing about her has changed – they are just trying to slap a new label on an existing product and hope voters will fall for it. Nothing is more moderate than abolishing our very system of government, ending the police and prisons, dissolving our borders, bankrupting the rich, and abolishing ICE, right? Democrats to voters: "You didn't hear what you heard or see what you saw. Trust us."

The Media will spend the next three months pretending that Democrat socialists are sweet and pure as they continue to attack Republicans. They will try to convince voters that their ideas aren't all that radical. In fact, their ideas would require a tremendous expansion of government and loss of freedoms, but they will only talk about the promised "utopia" and ignore the costs. Their goal is to end the existing capitalist system – a system that has generated enormous prosperity and helped produce a historic decline in poverty around the world. They want government ownership of corporations and industries. They want to abolish the Electoral College, the Senate and the Supreme Court with an executive and judicial branch chosen by and subordinate to the House of Representatives. Democrats/the media will try to tell us there's a difference between Democrats and the Democrat Socialists,

but that is increasingly hard to believe. A couple of House Democrats just circulated a "Promise to America," which declares that "We are capitalist, not socialist." Only ten Democrats out of 202 in the House were willing to sign it. Almost all House Democrats just declined an opportunity to say plainly, "We are capitalist, not socialist." If Democrats walk like socialists and talk like socialists, then they must be socialists.

Our illustrious Democrat party has built its political power on promises – promises they never keep. Even worse, they promise big government solutions to problems their own policies often perpetrate. They never get to the cause of the problem, or ask if decades of government intervention have made those problems worse. Instead, they automatically demand more spending, more programs, and more centralized control. The only people benefiting are the politicians and NGOs supposedly administering the programs. Employees of those government agencies and NGOs earn real money, receive fat pensions, and have no trouble paying their bills. (Remember the USDA paid Michelle Obama \$11.6 million in 2024 for "expert" consulting on school lunch programs.) The result is a self-perpetrating system in which the failures become the justification for more intervention. Perpetual problems and the Democrat party – you can't have one without the other. There's a reason why all the cities controlled by Democrat politicians for decades are still chronically dysfunctional.

Democrats' social policies are even more crazy and disturbing than their economic policies. Imagine being the party that accuses the other party of hating women, and then voting against women. In a House vote on the Protection of Women and Girls In Sports Act, Republicans voted 216 "Yeas" and zero "Nays," while Democrats voted 206 "Nays" and only 2 "Yeas." Islamic Afghanistan just banned all women from attending schools, but not one liberal "women's rights" organization condemned them. Dead silence. Those are the same organizations that are out on the streets in support of countries that would stone their daughters for showing their hair. As I

read about the Women's National Basketball Association this week, I had to wonder about the absence of intelligent life in some circles. The WNBA commissioner created a task force of team presidents to figure out what the "W" stands for. Sorry, but if you have to have a meeting to figure out what a woman is, you're not fit to run an organization, even if that organization generally loses about \$50 million a year. So, let me get this straight. A group of women running a women's-only sports league has to hold a meeting with other women to decide what a woman is so they can determine if fake women are allowed to compete against women in a league created specifically for women? We have to keep in mind that this is the same WNBA that gave awards to two boys who stole fifteen high school state titles from girls in Connecticut.

Even liberal sports commentator Stephen A. Smith had to speak out against the insanity, telling trans athletes that nobody is against them and everyone wants them living their best life, but not at the cost of girls who were born female. Also, tennis great (and lesbian) Martina Navratilova: "How is including males on women's teams inclusive for the female athlete who lost that spot to the male? The ignorance is astounding."

According to Democrat logic, if a blind person identifies as a sighted person, who are we to say that person shouldn't be allowed to be an air traffic controller?

The most unsettling thing I saw this week was the ceremony showing Democrat Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey signing a bill making abortion legal at any point during pregnancy. She was surrounded by a group of smiling liberal women who cheered and applauded when the paper was signed. Democrats gather to celebrate the signing of policies that put the most vulnerable at risk and advance agendas that devalue life itself.

Democrats have come a long way from justifying abortion as a last resort for extreme circumstances and it being "safe, legal, and rare." I hesitate to use the word "evil" in these letters, but sometimes you have to call it the way it is – pure evil.

Ed Henrie, Montrose

OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

ACCOUNTABILITY WITHIN THE DAC BOARD WOULD BE SUPER HELPFUL

Editor:

Who attended the last DAC meeting? Better question...who knows what DAC is? DAC stands for District Accountability Committee, for the Montrose County School District. Ohhh, we all say in unison. I was made aware of the DAC board, after attending numerous school board meetings and hearing DAC brought up time after time. I looked into it and decide to attend.

But just to set the tone for understanding; DAC is not a governing body over the school board or its individual members. DAC serves to advise and make recommendations to the school board, however the school board retains its statutory governance and decision-making authority apart from DAC.

So here's where my concern is raised for this special DAC meeting that was called. This meeting felt like a reprimanding of Mrs. Balleck and Mrs. Vincent, as you'll read further.

Casey Reichmann, who sits as the chair or president of our local DAC has the FIRST responsibility to set a precedence for the district as a whole.

I'm not sure if Ms. Reichmann has attended any of the school board meetings or watched online, but either way I feel there's a short coming in her role. If she has not attended any of the School Board meetings, that should be a major concern, raised by district staff, and parents. And if she has attended the School Board meetings, then she has failed our newly elected School Board members, for the fact that these new School Board members have been repeatedly attacked and given no leeway or grace for their new position. However, at the last DAC meeting, Ms. Reichmann was the first to announce that nearly every member of the DAC were new and pleaded for grace and patience with the new board members as they are all striving to know and understand their roles. Well there's a concept to consider! Maybe the chair/president of the DAC should be stressing

for the community to do the same for the newly elected School Board members! Let's set the bar shall we?

Next, Mrs. Besler, who is a DAC member, presented her moment of "grandstanding" at the meeting. This, of course was directed toward the two attending school board members, Neisha Balleck and Tiffany Vincent. I'll throw this out there...Mrs. Besler lost to Mrs. Vincent in the school board election. Is this some sort of factor...I don't know, but it certainly sits idle in my mind, during meetings like this. Anywho, Mrs. Besler pointedly states this very concerning notion (directed at Mrs. Balleck and Mrs. Vincent), "We've let our children down, we've forgotten that this is all about the children", primarily referring to the tension that has unnecessarily been stirred up in our community regarding this new school board. Mrs. Besler's statement was very accurate, I would agree. Mrs. Balleck then replies with a question, "can you clarify who 'we' is?" That most certainly caught Mrs. Besler off guard. "Umm, everyone, the community", Mrs. Besler replied. Interesting I think to myself....the community? You mean the community as in the Superintendent, who's been "leading" the charge of our children's education, non-sense curriculum, and failing test scores for the past however many years? Or the community as in voters, who decided to make a change for the children by turning the school board around and placing people in those seats who will make HARD decisions and NOT conform to an agenda? Which community members did you mean Mrs. Besler? Please be more clear? Was it the 1,000 plus concerned citizens who signed a vote off no confidence petition for Dr. Stephenson years ago? Or perhaps had it been the teachers, parents and students who have brought concerns in regards to Dr. Stephenson's methods, programs and inappropriate surveys? Please clarify how the "community" as a whole has forgotten about our children. Or simply, truthfully,

were you trying to throw the blame onto Mrs. Balleck and Mrs. Vincent, because YOU have not chosen to stand up, ask questions and push for answers from Dr. Stephenson and the previous board? Just a thought, as you sit on the "accountability" committee. Just a couple more observations, I feel should be addressed.

Ms. Reichmann called the special DAC meeting in order to address 2 absences of Mrs. Balleck. Eeek, someone didn't show up with her ducks in a row. Mrs. Balleck had to point out in the DAC policy, that School Board members are not DAC members, so the attendance policy doesn't apply to them. School board members are actually free to attend as they wish. Whoops.

However I did notice 4 DAC name plates were not collected by board members, as attending that meeting...I sure hope Ms. Reichmann made note of that on her attendance sheet. DAC members are only allowed 3 total absences, even in the case of family affairs.

Quick question, was this special DAC meeting a set-up, focused on trying to incriminate Mrs. Balleck, to further play into this destructive narrative Dr. Stephenson laid out in her personal grievance, she publicly announced during the June School Board meeting? I'm just feeling like there's some dots starting to connect...

Good thing the school board just voted on the grievance response to Dr. Stephenson, determining no retaliation or wrongdoing was done by the board.

Next, Ms. Reichmann insisted that Mrs. Balleck submit an agenda draft for school board meetings to DAC members no later than Friday before the school board meeting. I can see how that would benefit both DAC and the school board, however this raises red flags all over the place, for the fact that one of the DAC members is an active participant in the Montrose/Ouray Indivisible group, that has been targeting, bullying and slandering this new

ACCOUNTABILITY WITHIN THE DAC BOARD WOULD BE SUPER HELPFUL

From previous pg

school board. Mrs. Balleck in particular. An agenda draft for upcoming school board meetings, has the very high likelihood of confidential information being leaked to “rabble rousers”. DAC is in place to keep district leaders accountable to their contracts and hold the school board accountable to the decisions voted upon during work sessions and community meetings. The voters of Montrose made their voices heard when they chose to vote new people to represent our district. It would be great to see some of those voters on the DAC board. Accountability should come from the people who elected them.

A final observation I had of the meeting, was when Ms. Reichmann posed a rather pompous question (in my opinion). The question was directed toward Mrs. Balleck in reference to all the negative press that has come against the school board and district, “How do you feel about that? Does that bother you?” I wanted to slap my forehead, jump up and shout ‘of course not, ALL the new school board members love how the liberal crazies have slandered them, bullied them and made threats to ‘resign or face a recall!’ Good gracious, get some clarity. Come on!

If the DAC is truly concerned of how our district is being represented, maybe they should look within their own DAC members. Alice Murphy, who sits on the board as the “community representative”, does not in fact represent ALL the community. She serves to represent the Montrose/Ouray Indivisible group. Clearly NOT the part of the community that elected these new school board members. ACCOUNTABILITY within the DAC board would be super helpful!

Lacy Sanchez, Montrose

PLEASE REINSTATE DR. STEPHENSON

Dear Editor,

It feels fair to say that if the investigation into Dr. Stephenson had produced clear and compelling grounds for termination, the Board would have terminated her last week. The fact that you have not done so raises serious questions about the basis and purpose of the continued controversy.

I am increasingly concerned about the influence Brad Miller may be having on Board President Neisha Balleck. This concern is heightened by the similarities between Ms. Balleck’s actions involving Montrose Classical Academy and the actions of former Pueblo School Board President Anne Oches involving Riverstone Academy. The parallels deserve serious public scrutiny.

My concern increased further when I learned that Brad Miller was with Neisha Balleck on July 2, 2026, yet apparently did not invoice MCSD for that time. If he was providing advice or consulting related to district matters, the community deserves to know what that involvement consisted of and why there was no invoice.

These circumstances create an appearance of influence and a lack of transparency that should not be dismissed.

I respectfully ask the Board to reinstate Dr. Stephenson so the district can begin moving forward. Please put this controversy—and the mounting fiscal and legal costs associated with it—behind us.

Find a way to restore respectful communication, rebuild trust, and focus the Board’s attention where it belongs: **student outcomes, educators, and the responsible stewardship of public resources.**

Our students and community deserve nothing less.

Sincerely,

Ellen Angeles, Montrose



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

TWO CATLIN LAWS TAKE EFFECT, PROTECTING VULNERABLE ADULTS AGAINST FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION, AND COLORADO AGRICULTURE

Special to the Mirror

DENVER - Two bipartisan laws sponsored by Colorado State Senator Marc Catlin (R-SD5) took effect this week, bringing new protections against the financial exploitation of vulnerable adults and safeguards for agricultural products marketed as Colorado-grown.

House Bill 26-1110, Vulnerable Adult Financial Exploitation Banking, creates the Adults' Security and Safeguards from Exploitation in Transactions Act, or ASSET Act, giving Colorado banks and credit unions additional tools to identify and respond to suspected financial exploitation of vulnerable adults.

Under the new law, when qualified employees of banks and credit unions reasonably and in good faith suspect that a vulnerable adult is being financially exploited, the law directs them to notify local law enforcement or the county agency responsible for adult protective services. Financial institutions may also notify certain third parties associated with the vulnerable adult and, when the requirements of the law are met, temporarily delay a suspicious disbursement while the possible exploitation is reviewed.

"Financial exploitation can happen quickly, and once someone's life savings are gone, getting that money back can be incredibly difficult," said Senator Marc Catlin. "The people working at our local banks and credit unions are often in a position to recognize when something does not look right. The ASSET Act gives them a responsible way to raise the alarm and, when necessary, provide time for law enforcement and adult protective services to determine what is happening."

The law also provides protections for financial institutions and qualified employees who act in good faith and exercise reasonable care when responding to suspected exploitation.

"We all know someone who has received that phone call saying a family member is in trouble and needs money right away, or a scam designed to prey on our fears and pressure us into acting before we have time to think," Catlin said. "For the person on the other end of that call, it may be the first time they have ever faced something like it. However, the community members working at our banks and credit unions are in a position to recognize warning signs and patterns that may not be obvious in the moment. This law gives them the tools to act on those warning signs before a scam causes a life-altering loss."

HB26-1110 was sponsored by Senators Marc Catlin and Jessie Danielson and Representatives Sean Camacho and Jamie Jackson. The legislation passed the Colorado Senate 34-0 and was signed into law by Governor Jared Polis on May 26, 2026.

A second Catlin-sponsored law taking effect this week, House Bill 26-1031, Protections for Agricultural Products Grown in Colorado, protects the integrity of Colorado-grown agricultural products and the Colorado Proud designation.

LAKE CITY UNCORKED

Special to the Mirror

LAKE CITY--Lake City Uncorked Wine & Music Festival - third Saturday in September. This year Sept. 19, 2026. Gates open at 10 am; music starts at 11 am; wine flows at noon. Food vendors, unique arts and handcrafted items, 7 bands, wines for tasting, beer booth. lakecitydirt.org/uncorked

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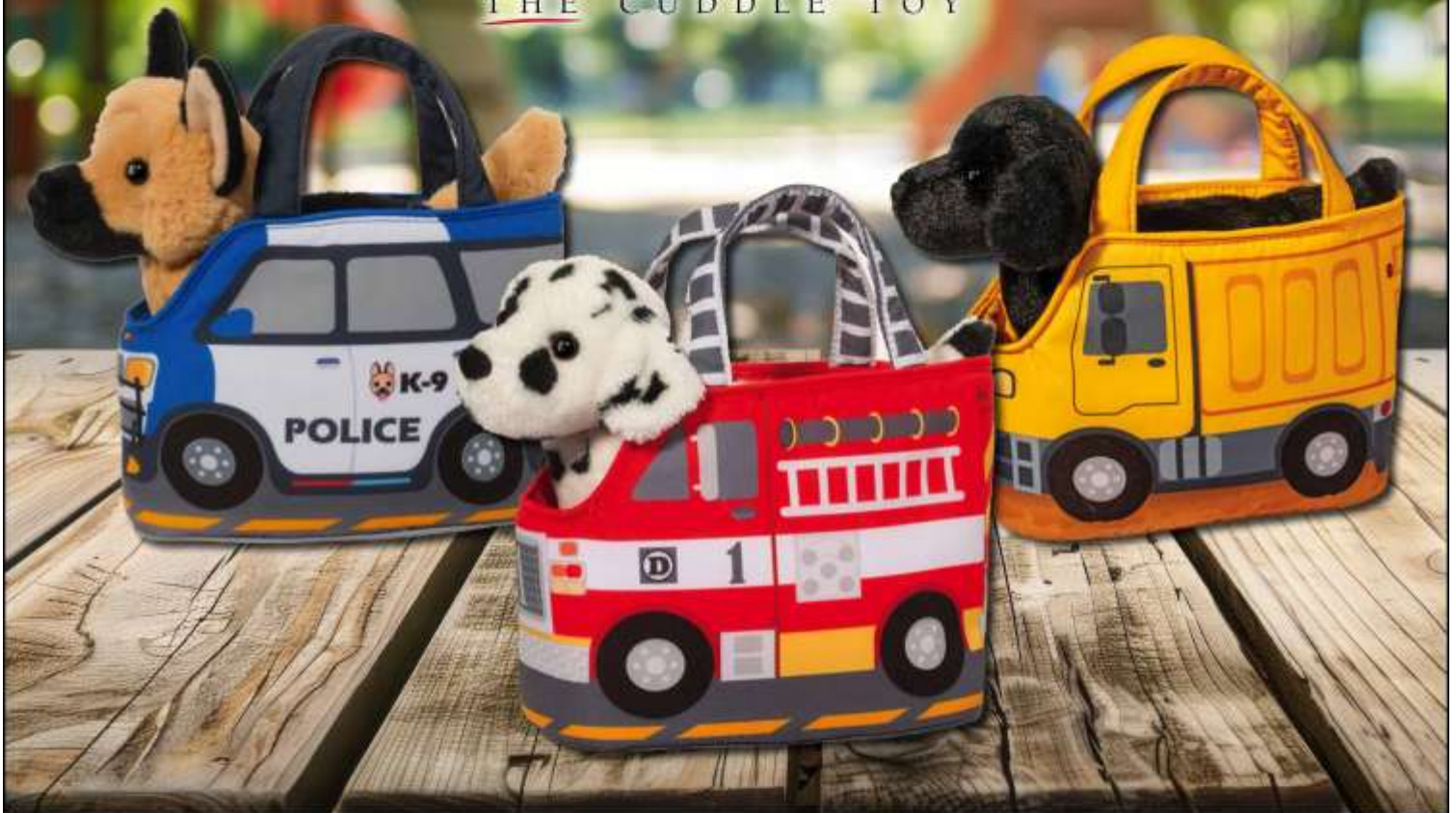
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SPECIAL REPORT: CITY OF MONTROSE

Election Integrity – City of Montrose Staff Circles the Wagons – Part 2 *Facts vs. Lies and Propaganda – They Can't Handle the Truth*

By David White

In looking over the April 7, 2026 City of Montrose municipal election, one is reminded of a phrase sometimes attributed to Russian Dictator Josef Stalin in 1923 and iterations of it by others dating back to 1871 which states that: ***"I consider it completely unimportant who in the party will vote, or how; but what is extraordinarily important is this—who will count the votes, and how."*** One is inclined to give credence to this quote as it seems to describe what has been happening in local municipal elections in Montrose for a number of years. Pay particular attention to the operative words in this statement which are ***"but what is extraordinarily important is this—who will count the votes, and how."***

In the Monday, August 10th edition of *The Montrose Mirror*, the article that was published regarding concerns over the integrity of the ballot counting process in the last City municipal election on April 7th was brought to light over the City of Montrose's **REFUSAL** to provide the Montrose County Clerk and her Elections Department with what are claimed, by the City Clerk, to be 83 ballots that should have been tabulated on the County's electronic tabulating equipment as had the 5,350 ballots received and delivered to the County Clerk's office up until 7PM on election day.

As a side note, following is an excerpt from the article that was the impetus to start a discussion on what happened in this last municipal election:

"DelPiccolo, in response to the question posed by Councilor Wooden replied with an answer that was both baffling and alarming...**"The reason why those last remaining ballots were not taken to the County was because there were questions about the County elections office, certain staff members there being impartial and I knew there was a very tight race...the what 26** (she may have been

referring to the vote spread in the District 1 race the evening of the election but the recording is a bit garbled at this point) **and to ensure the integrity of the election that I was designated election officer over, I decided to count those myself. So, I stand behind what I did 100%.**" (see the following YouTube video of the meeting at the 1:42:43 through to the 1:44:53-minute mark here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TFxfMMzvHAM>)"

Additionally, concerns about the 16 election judges were raised as 15 of them are current City employees and one is the Town Clerk for the Town of Mt. Crested Butte, which is legitimately questionable by the public and, in many respects, unethical. All have a vested interest in the outcome of a City election and the choosing of these individuals, while perhaps legal, was highly suspicious to say the least especially since they were on the City's payroll while serving as election judges and brought their own biases to the table. Why take a chance on doing such a thing, City officials?

Since the release of the August 10th article, more questions have arisen as the Colorado Open Records (CORA) request of the City of Montrose by me was responded to on the afternoon of the 10th with information supplied that is quite incriminating and which shows a pattern of abuse of the election process for well over a decade.

Calls and emails received by me from members of the public already show that the public is angry that the City Clerk, with the blessing of "senior leadership," withheld voter ballots from the County Clerk's Office and **DID NOT** tabulate them electronically per contract, and as it turns out, per Colorado state law found in state statute too, but instead "hand counted" them at City Hall in violation of not only state law, but also the City's Charter and City ordinance. Further adding to the public's

mistrust of the process is the stated fact (see above) that the City Clerk and City Management will not release those 83 ballots to the County Clerk nor will they accurately account for them to the public.

As a part of my open records request of the City as to how the hand counting was done (among other questions), I included a question asking if election judges were present during the hand counting of ballots and if video footage was available to confirm the counting. I also asked for a copy of the logbook showing the chain of custody of these ballots.

Instead of receiving a reply from the City Clerk regarding these and other things noted in my CORA request as has been the case for many years when I've requested information of the City through the City Clerk, City Attorney Chris Dowsey replied to my request for information on Monday, August 10th at 3:52PM. All but three items were denied me – a copy of the contract between the City and County to conduct the election, a list of election judges and an abstract of the number of votes cast were the only items provided out of a total of 14 items in the CORA request.

For the public's information, the following is a list of denials:

-When asked to provide and confirm the composition of 83 ballots the City claims to have "hand counted", **they refused** (Certified ballots, provisional ballots, UOCAVA ballots, etc.) to provide the count by category. Does this mean that there were 83 ballots counted? Or were there more? Apparently, we'll never know.

-When asked to provide and confirm a logbook to show the chain of custody of the "83" ballots, the reply was that "There is no record conforming to your request. On that basis, this **request is denied.**"

-When asked to provide videotape surveillance footage of the hand counting of the "83" ballots, the reply was "There is no

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record conforming to your request. On that basis, this ***request is denied.***

-When asked to provide a list of those who witnessed the hand counting of the “83” ballots, the reply was “There is no record conforming to your request. On that basis, this ***request is denied.***”

-When asked if the City Clerk verified the validity/identity of the voters who voted with a “Provisional Ballot” with the County Clerk’s office, the reply was “This is a question that does not request any public records. On that basis, this ***request is denied.***”

-When asked why there was a difference between the electronically tabulated ballots generated by the County Clerk and the City’s count of votes, the reply was “This is a question that does not request any public records. On that basis, this ***request is denied.***”

-When asked if it is the intention of the City to withhold from the County Elections Department the “83” ballots and not allow them to be electronically tabulated per the contract with the County Elections Department, the answer was “This is a question that does not request any public records. On that basis, this ***request is denied.***”

-When asked how long the City would retain the ballots from this election, the reply was “This is a question that does not request any public records. On that basis, this ***request is denied.***”

Why are they denying that these requested records exist? According to their contract with the County, the following requirements are in place by the contractual agreement between the City and County:

12. MAIL BALLOT VOTING:

All mail ballots received by 7:00 p.m. Election Day will be processed daily and then turned over to the County Clerk no later than April 7, 2026, for counting.

15. TABULATION OF MAIL BALLOTS:

All mail ballots returned to the City by 7:00 p.m. Election Day, concerning the election of City Council members and any ballot questions, shall be counted on the electronic tabulation equipment provided by the County Clerk. All processes relating to the tabulation of ballots shall be the responsibility of the County Clerk. The Election Officer, or designee, shall serve as the

Designated Election Official for the City on Election Day and at the Tabulation Center any time ballots are counted or tabulated. An “Unofficial” Abstract of Votes cast will be provided to the City immediately after ballot tabulation.

Nowhere is it stated in the agreement that the City Clerk or Election Judge may “hand count” ballots in the privacy of an office in City Hall. Furthermore, there are two different Colorado statutes governing elections – Title 1 in Colorado law generally pertains to the election procedures and governance of local governments, while Title 31 focuses on the governance of municipalities and their powers. Each title addresses different aspects of state law and governance. Since the election in April was a municipal election, Title 31 applies to much of it.

Some of the requirements under Title 31 law include:

Section 31-10-605 - Judge to keep poll-book

A Judge of an election shall keep a poll-book, which shall contain one column headed “names of voters” and one column headed “number on ballot.” The name and number on the ballot of each registered elector voting shall be entered in regular succession under the headings in the poll-book.

Apparently, there wasn’t one kept for this election according to the City Attorney in reply to my CORA request. And there’s more. I expect more dancing around the truth of why the municipal elections in Montrose have been so loosely and poorly conducted on the City’s side of the equation.

Section 31-10-811 - Electronic vote counting

(Paragraph 4)

If for any reason it becomes impracticable to count all or a part of the ballots with electronic vote tabulating equipment, the clerk may direct that they be counted manually, following as far as practicable the provisions governing the counting of paper ballots.

As one can see, the hand counting of ballots is allowed ***ONLY*** if electronic tabulation is impracticable. According to the American Heritage Dictionary, impracticable means ***“Impossible to do or carry out”***;

“Unfit for passage” or “Unmanageable; intractable.”

According to City Clerk Lisa DelPiccolo, her reason for hand counting ballots was based upon her feeling that the County Clerk’s staff were “being impartial” (I think she meant to say “partial” or really was implying that the County Clerk’s Office was biased). Regardless, her reason for taking ballots from the County to her office was a blatant violation of statute as she was splitting the counting of ballots between the electronic tabulation equipment and the hand counting method. But why? What’s the real reason?

Concerned that the tainted municipal election and the apparent illegalities surrounding would have a negative impact on Montrose County and the Montrose County Clerk’s Office, County Attorney Julie Andress wrote a letter to City Attorney Chris Dowsey on April 29, 2026, asking for the City to turn over the 83 ballots they claimed to have hand counted to be electronically tabulated in keeping with state statute and the contract with the County to handle the April 7th election:

On Wed, Apr 29, 2026 at 11:44 AM Julie Andress <jandress@montrosecounty.net> wrote:

Dear Lisa and Chris,

I am reaching out in order to finalize Montrose County’s obligation regarding the 2026 Municipal Election.

It is my understanding that the Montrose County Clerk electronically tabulated 5,350 ballots. However, there are still 83 outstanding ballots which the City hand counted, including 42 that were held from the originally-received ballots, and 41 others that the City possesses which were delayed for other reasons (signature discrepancies, verification of confidential voters, provisional ballots, and one UOCAVA ballot). Pursuant to our Agreement, attached, the County Clerk is required to electronically tabulate all mail ballots received by 7:00 p.m. on election day (see paragraph 15). It appears that all of the outstanding ballots fall into this category.

Additionally, the “conduct of municipal elections when electronic voting systems are used shall follow, as nearly as practicable, the conduct of general and primary elections when such systems are

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used.” C.R.S. § 31-10-811(5). In general and primary elections, the County Clerk counts all votes electronically, and does not split the counting method.

As you know, there is often public scrutiny surrounding voting procedures, and that scrutiny can last for months and even years. The County wants to ensure that the process is completed as agreed upon, so we can confidently respond to any future public inquiries. It is particularly important to us, as the County Clerk is tasked with conducting many elections, and has spent many years building public trust and assuring transparency surrounding elections.

Please accept this email as a formal request that the additional 83 ballots (or more, if there are any) which were not electronically tabulated be brought immediately to the County Clerk’s office, so they may be electronically tabulated and the County may fulfill its obligations under our Agreement.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if there is anything further that requires consideration. Otherwise, we look forward to concluding this matter as expediently as possible.

Sincerely,

Julie R. Andress

Montrose County Attorney

As you can see, Ms. Andress made it clear that, statutorily, you cannot split how you count ballots. She formally asked for the City to turn over the ballots. However, that didn’t happen as you’ll read in City Attorney Dowsey’s reply to this notice from Montrose County 2 days later on May 1, 2026:

From: Chris Dowsey

cdowsey@cityofmontrose.org

Sent: Friday, May 1, 2026 3:02 PM

To: Julie Andress jan-

dress@montrosecounty.net

Cc: Lisa DelPiccolo

<ldelpiccolo@cityofmontrose.org>; Chris

Dowsey <cdowsey@cityofmontrose.org>;

Tressa Guynes

tguynes@montrosecounty.net

Subject: Re: 2026 Municipal Election

Hi Julie,

The City is confused about why the County is pushing for this on this election, as it has not done so in the past. The City has followed its past pattern and practice since, at a minimum, 2012 when Lisa began overseeing the City’s elections. The City does not understand why the County is again trying to deviate from how the City’s elections have been run in the past in this election. I have reviewed the 2024 Agreement and it is substantially similar to the 2026 Agreement.

In past procedure, once the County has tabulated the votes the City has never returned to the County to process ballots. All remaining ballots are then hand counted by the City’s election judges and they provide the numbers to the County. The City’s election judges continued this practice as it has since the 2012 municipal election.

While the remaining batch is larger than it has been in the past due to the County’s request that batches of 50 be run at once instead of 25 for efficiency of the County, the City sees no reason to deviate from past practice. In my research, this does not violate the law.

During this Election the County has had several missteps and attempts at deviations from procedure of prior elections, including giving the City an incorrect number of eligible voters, which is statutorily required of the County, and a voter list which included minors who are obviously ineligible to vote. This is evidenced in the 2026 Agreement that states the “estimated number of eligible electors is 17,216,” when the number of ballots mailed, to the City’s knowledge, was 15,302. The City does not understand why the County has treated this election any differently than any prior election. The City respectfully requests that we continue with pattern and practice of the previous 7 municipal elections, and the County accept the City’s hand counts for the remaining ballots.

If you would like to discuss this further, please reach out.

Thanks,

Chris

WOW!!! The City, without the County Clerk’s knowledge, has been **HAND**

COUNTING some number of ballots since 2012! Seven (7) municipal elections that saw the County Clerk’s Office electronically tabulating ballots and the City Clerk coming up with ballots that were excluded from the electronic counting of them. Splitting the way ballots are counted and by whom they are counted brings nothing to the conversation but allegations of election fraud, election tampering, violation of the structural integrity of the process and much more.

Four (4) days later on May 5, 2026, County Attorney Andress replies to Mr. Dowsey’s refusal to hand over the supposed 83 ballots to be electronically tabulated with the following letter demanding that the 83 ballots be brought to the County for tabulation:

From: "Julie Andress Atty" jan-

dress@montrosecounty.net

To: "Chris Dowsey"

<cdowsey@cityofmontrose.org

Cc: "Lisa DelPiccolo"

<ldelpiccolo@cityofmontrose.org>, "Tressa Guynes"

tguynes@montrosecounty.net

Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 5:59:24 PM

Subject: RE: 2026 Municipal Election

Dear Chris,

Thank you for the response.

The County was unaware that in prior municipal elections the City received and hand counted additional ballots. I cannot say what action, if any, the County would have taken if it had known at that time.

The County disagrees with your characterization that it has made “missteps” during this election cycle. Our Clerk and elections officials are unaware of any time that the City was given a list of voters which included minors.

The number given to the City in the January agreement was, as stated, an estimated number of eligible voters and was accurate at that time. That number included both active and inactive voters. Inactive voters are eligible to vote but do not have ballots sent to them automatically—they must vote in person or update their information in order to be sent a ballot. I apologize for any confusion on this issue—we didn’t realize the City was unaware of that information.

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The County Clerk would have been happy to clarify what the numbers meant at any time.

In any case, while I am sorry if these issues have impacted the relationship between our entities, my email was not about those issues, but about the 83 ballots that were not tabulated as contemplated by the agreement. I understand your response to mean that the City does not intend to bring those ballots for tabulation, because it has “not done so in the past.”

I do not believe that the County will require that the City adhere to the agreement—certainly there’s no real provision for breach. However, as I noted in my last email, the County believes that in the interest of transparency, all of the ballots must be counted in the same fashion. As you know, the margin in one of the races was less than the outstanding ballots. The County would like to ensure that there are no lingering questions in the future. We remain concerned about public perceptions if any questions arise and want to be able to assure the community that there were no irregularities. Accordingly, I am renewing my request that the outstanding ballots be brought to the Clerk for tabulation.

Sincerely,

Julie R. Andress

Montrose County Attorney

I would disagree with Ms. Andress on the subject of the City breaching the contract to conduct the election and note that the City has raised serious concerns about how their elections over the last 14 years have been conducted. Who, if anyone, may have put their “thumb on the scale,” as the old saying goes, to influence the outcome of a City election over the years? Have ballots been tossed? Have ballots with unmarked votes in the oval for candidates or referendums been mysteriously filled in creating a vote through the hand counting process? The appearance of impropriety is everywhere folks.

As an example, let’s think back to the close call that was the “win” by the Rec District to build the Rec Center in the April 1, 2014, City election. Rec District supporters had denied district members/

property tax payers the right to vote in the election if they lived outside of City limits. The measure barely passed by an alleged 1.5%. What if the City threw the election? Could that have happened? You bet it could have. Will we ever know? Nope. Records don’t exist now and probably didn’t even then. They wanted what they wanted and the rest of us could be damned as they didn’t care what we thought.

City Manager Bell, at the time, stated that “getting the Rec Center tax passed was a sign of a progressive community ready to compete in the current economy.” (Montrose Daily Press story, April 2, 2014) That’s been his theme from the beginning in 2011. We need to be progressive. We need to tax the citizenry to death to do it too is seemingly the way things have gone with multiple increases in taxes that have benefited a few local political subdivisions.

In an April 1, 2014 article in the *Montrose Daily Press*, City Clerk DelPiccolo said of the 2014 election process the following: **The city of Montrose mailed out 10,277 ballots to registered voters in the city the week of March 10. Those ballots are due to be returned to the city clerk by 7 p.m. today. The ballots will be processed in the Montrose County election office and unofficial results will be posted at city hall and online.**

City Clerk Lisa DelPiccolo stressed ballots must be in the city’s possession by 7 p.m. today, not postmarked by the deadline. Ballots may be physically returned via drop boxes at city hall and the Montrose County election office. Both offices will remain open past regular hours to accommodate the election.

“At 7 o’clock, everything stops,” Del-Piccolo said. “Everything that we have by that time is what we count.”

The city has been processing ballots in batches as they were received. Many ballots have already been time stamped and scanned into the tabulation machinery. Contested ballots, which have confusing or illegible responses, have been reviewed by the election committee ahead of time to expedite the post-deadline work — but no tabulation of

votes has yet taken place.

Once the final batch of ballots is received and the city begins its final vote-counting process, DelPiccolo said it is “amazing how fast it goes.” (https://www.montrosepress.com/news/city-set-for-election-results/article_3d8d5906-b955-11e3-aa4f-0019bb2963f4.html)

Interesting public statements made on election day in 2014 but which don’t line up with what the City Attorney has admitted to as a behind the scenes separate ballot counting process. Again, WOW! Without rules and anyone checking what was going on behind the curtain, elections were being decided in a now questionable fashion.

Conspiratorial? Maybe, but this new information that was released via my open records request from Montrose County and from the City Attorney that I received shows that the City has bifurcated the counting of their ballots for the last 14 years! They’ve damaged the integrity and congruity of the election process casting doubt on the entire process. Tina Peters went to prison for fewer reasons!

So, what has been the reply to these disclosures of obvious improprieties by the City of Montrose? Well, the only one we’ve heard from is City Manager Bill Bell. Rather than answer the questions raised of his organization, he chose to email the following to the publisher of *The Montrose Mirror* (Caitlin Switzer) the following: **On Mon, Aug 10, 2026 at 2:12 PM William Bell <wbell@cityofmontrose.org> wrote:**

Ms. Switzer... As I have requested many times before. Please stop printing lies and misinformation designed to harm my reputation and the reputation of my city employees through your partnership with writer David White. It is your professional responsibility to make sure what you are printing is accurate, and once again, you have failed to do so and you are causing harm to others.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

William E Bell, MPA

City Manager

Montrose, Colorado

Really? All that this man can think of is

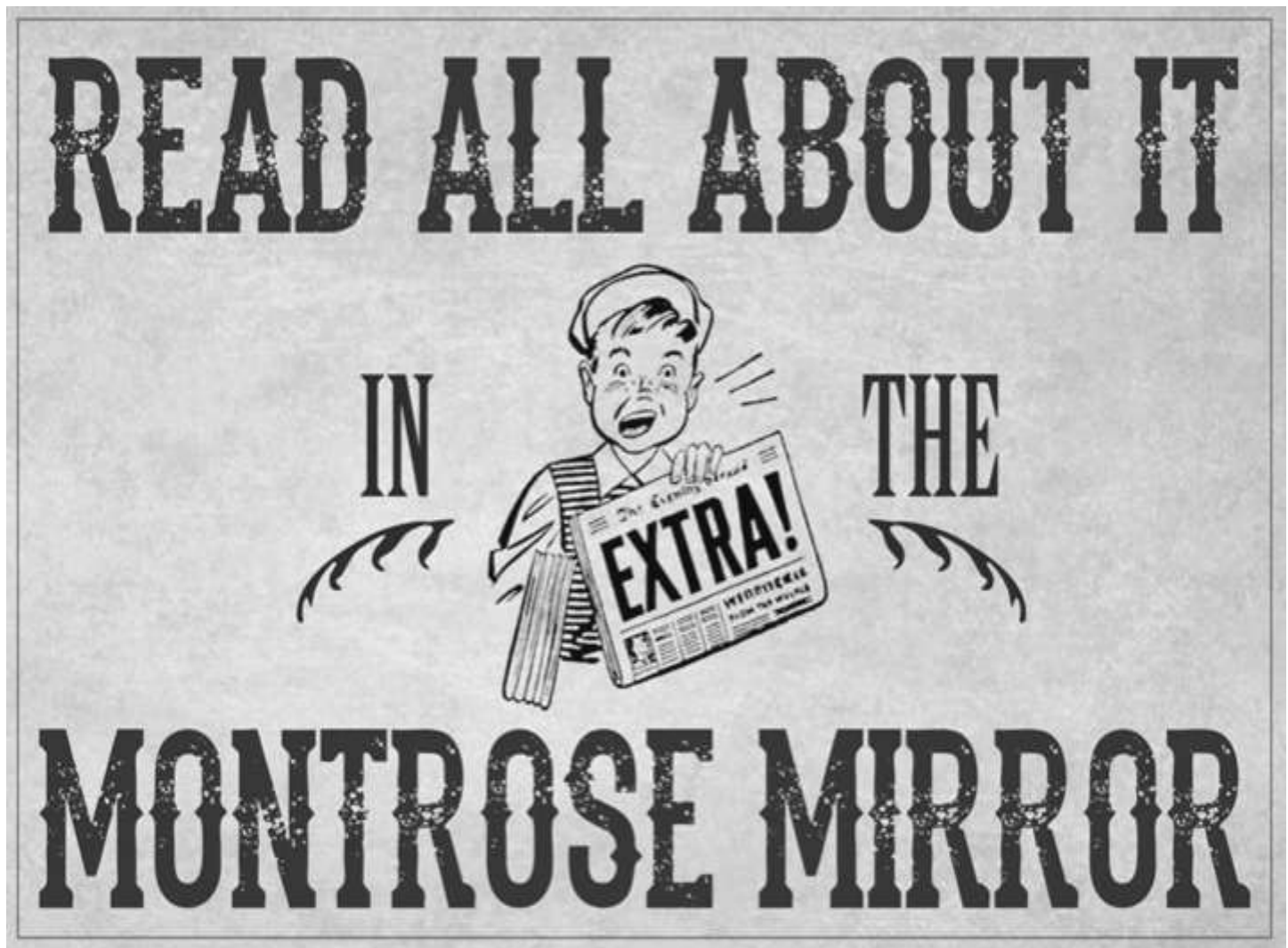
Election Integrity – City of Montrose Staff Circles the Wagons From previous pg

himself and infringing on the free-speech rights of Ms. Switzer and myself by trying to shut us down and calling us liars and spreaders of misinformation? Facts are facts Mr. Bell. Trying to throw your weight around by trying to control the media might work with other outlets but that isn't going to fly with me. This is why we call it a free press.

At this point it has become abundantly clear that the City has been conducting elections under very loose rules and now that we know about some of their "past patterns and practices," very questionable outcomes associated with perhaps one or more of the past seven elections may have occurred. The disclosures that have been made, in this writer's opinion, require the immediate suspension of the City Manager, the City Clerk and possibly others in leadership at the City until a full-blown investigation is made into these practices. Election interference is a real crime, folks.

Without Ms. DePiccolo's disclosure that she withheld ballots from the County Clerk due to **HER** and "**Senior Leadership**" perceived bias on the part of the County Clerk and her office, we might never have learned of the very questionable election processes that have taken place at the City of Montrose for the last 14 years. It's time to **clean house and get answers. This isn't over. Stay tuned. Part 3 of this investigation is coming.**

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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COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

COLORADO MINIMUM WAGE WILL INCREASE TO \$15.71/HOUR IN 2027

Special to the Mirror

DENVER — The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE)'s Division of Labor Standards and Statistics (DLSS) announced today that Colorado's minimum wage will increase to \$15.71 per hour in 2027, and \$12.69 for tipped workers. \$15.71 per hour is a 3.6% increase from the current minimum wage of \$15.16 and a 41.5% increase from the 2019 minimum wage of \$11.10.

Per the State's constitution, Colorado's minimum wage is adjusted for inflation every year using the Consumer Price Index (CPI) from the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics. Colorado uses the CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) to measure inflation, while the City and County of Denver uses the CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W). While CPI-U tracks inflation based on the spending habits of almost all urban consumers and is based on a sample that represents more than 90% of the U.S. population, CPI-W focuses specifically on urban households whose main income comes from hourly wages or clerical work and is based on a sample that represents roughly 30% of the population. CPI-W takes a narrower look at the cost-of-living directly affecting working-class earners.

Denver recently announced its 2027 local minimum wage will be \$19.84. Other localities' minimum wages are set by their local ordinance. State and local minimum wages with tip credits are published at cdle.colorado.gov/dlss. DLSS will update its website as localities with higher minimum wages announce 2027 rates.



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

COLORADO & INTERNATIONAL LEADERS CONNECT WITH THE PEOPLE BEHIND PALISADE AGRICULTURE

Special to the Mirror

PALISADE-The Palisade Chamber of Commerce welcomed Colorado officials and international dignitaries to the Grand Valley Saturday for an agricultural education tour designed to demonstrate a larger economic story: when agriculture thrives, its impact extends far beyond the farm, supporting tourism, hospitality, transportation, retail, workforce and entrepreneurship throughout the region.

The high-level delegation included Colorado Lt. Gov. Dianne Primavera; State Representatives Jennifer Bacon (D-Denver), Anthony Hartsook (R-Parker), Cecilia Espenosa (D-Denver) and Lori Garcia Sander (R-Eaton); the Consul General of Canada in Denver, Sarah Quigley; Debby Huang, Director General of Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Denver; and executive leadership from the Colorado Department of Agriculture and Colorado Tourism Office. Western Colorado leaders, including Senator Janice Rich, Representatives Rick Taggart and Matthew Soper, and Mesa County Commissioner JJ Fletcher, helped share the region's agriculture and water story, while Congressman Jeff Hurd welcomed guests to Palisade.

As Colorado celebrates 150 years of statehood, guests experienced a region with more than 143 years of peach-growing history and unique growing conditions that support specialty crops including peaches and other stone fruits and wine grapes. Those crops have helped build an agritourism economy that draws visitors to orchards, vineyards, wineries, farm stands, restaurants and agricultural events, generating economic activity well beyond the farm gate.

"This is an opportunity to move conversations about agriculture and rural economies out of meeting rooms and into the places where the work is actually happening," said Jessica Burford, President & CEO of the Palisade Chamber of Commerce. "We want our guests to see how remarkably innovative these operations are and understand the broader scope of what it means to protect Colorado agriculture."

The tour was coordinated with State Representative Matthew Soper (R-Mesa & Delta Counties), who guided guests throughout the day. Soper and the Chamber also worked together during the 2026 legislative session to advance HB26-1031, addressing the misrepresentation of produce grown outside Colorado as locally grown. The new Counterfeit Produce law took effect this week, adding a timely example of how public policy can protect the authenticity and economic value of Colorado-grown products.

"For communities like Palisade, the place where something is grown matters," Burford said. "Our growers have spent generations building the Palisade name into something consumers recognize and seek out. Protecting that identity protects not only individual producers, but the value of Colorado agriculture and the trust consumers place in locally grown products."

A farm-to-table lunch at Peachfork Orchards & Vineyards brought approximately 35 guests together to broaden the conversation beyond agriculture and examine the industries that have evolved alongside it. Throughout the day, leaders visited working operations, met directly with producers and discussed water, workforce, changing markets, innovation, agritourism and the effects of public policy on rural businesses.

The experience was ultimately designed to move policy conversations from the Capitol to the farm, giving leaders a firsthand understanding that policies affecting agriculture also affect the businesses, workers and communities whose economic success is connected to it.



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

THRIVE COMMUNITY HEALTH NETWORK ANNOUNCES "NOCHE DE LUZ": A Fundraising Event in Telluride to Benefit Multicultural Advocacy Programs

Special to the Mirror

TELLURIDE— Thrive Community Health Network is proud to announce its upcoming annual fundraising event, **Noche De Luz** (Night of Light), presented by Community Banks of Colorado. The celebration will take place on Friday, Aug. 21 at 6:30 PM at the Telluride Innovation Center.

Noche De Luz is designed as an immersive celebration of our region's diversity. Attendees will enjoy tapas and dessert provided by locally owned restaurants and catering companies with global roots. Alongside these culinary offerings, the evening will feature custom-crafted cocktails and mocktails, and visual artist demonstrations and displays. Local DJ Beats by LART (Luis Tavares) will open the night, followed by a performance from Denver's Los Mochetes, a 5-piece self-described "Chicano Funk" band.

Beyond providing an energetic platform for diverse local businesses and artists, the event serves a vital local purpose. All proceeds from Noche De Luz will support the work of Thrive's Multicultural Advocacy Programs, guided by and offered in partnership with the community group, Raíces sin Fronteras. The initiatives to be supported include the Driver's License Academy, Semana de Bienestar (Wellness Week), and Immigration Legal Services. More information on these programs is available on Thrive's website.

The event theme is "Comunidad en Flor" (Community in Bloom) and aims to celebrate the vibrant, diverse community that is blooming in the Telluride area and beyond.

"Noche De Luz is more than a fundraiser; it is a reflection of the brightness and resilience that culturally diverse families bring to our region," said Melanie Montoya Wasserman, Co-Executive Director of Advocacy & Inclusion. "As we transition into our new chapter as Thrive Community Health Network, our commitment to inclusive health equity and multicultural advocacy is stronger than ever. We look forward to gathering with our neighbors to celebrate, support, and invest in our community's shared future."

The event is made possible by Presenting Sponsor, Community Banks of Colorado. "Community Banks of Colorado is excited to be partnering with Thrive to be the presenting sponsor of Noche de Luz," said Tricia Maxon, Market President. "As a Colorado based community bank, we believe in giving back and supporting our local communities."

A limited number of tickets are available now. The ticketing link can be found on the Thrive website at tchnetwork.org or at the Noche de Luz event page on Facebook.

Event Details: Noche De Luz: Comunidad en Flor

Date: Friday, August 21st, 2026

Time: 6:30 PM

Location: Telluride Science and Innovation Center, Telluride, CO

Highlights: Diverse locally owned restaurants and caterers, specialty cocktails & mocktails, silent auction, live music, and live artist showcases.

Tickets & Support: A limited number of tickets are available now for \$100. Advanced purchase is highly recommended. Information can be found at tchnetwork.org

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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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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

MONTROSE'S CORNERSTONE CLUB ANNOUNCES EXPANSION AND GOLF COURSE RENOVATION PLANS

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-Cornerstone Club, a 4,800-acre, four-season private club community in Montrose, Colorado, today announced a major expansion led by Reef Capital Partners designed to elevate the resident and member experience. The plans include golf course renovations, expanded amenities, new overnight accommodations, enhanced wellness offerings, and exclusive ski access in Telluride.

"Reef Capital Partners is honored to guide Cornerstone Club into its next chapter," says OD Vincent, VP of Golf Operations at Reef Capital Partners. "Our vision is to preserve everything our members love about this special community, while making thoughtful investments that enhance the experience for generations to come and strengthen its legacy as a truly year-round destination."

At the heart of the expansion is the renovation of the club's acclaimed Matt Dusenberry-designed golf course, scheduled to be completed in summer 2027. Members will enjoy upgraded turfgrass, refined fairways, revitalized bunkers and improved cart paths throughout the course, along with the transformations of two signature holes. Hole 12 will become a dramatic short par-4 that rewards strategic play, while Hole 18 will be reimagined as a memorable par -5 finishing hole.

Adjacent to the 18th green, Cornerstone will unveil a new bar and grill overlooking an expansive putting course, creating a gathering place where members can connect, relax, and celebrate the golf experience after the round. Complementing Cornerstone's culinary offerings, this new venue will join the Cap Rock restaurant in the clubhouse and the Elk Shack on the golf course. The clubhouse campus will also grow to include a resort-style pool and hot tub, an event lawn for family gatherings and club events, and new locker rooms serving golf and pool guests.

In addition to golf and poolside recreation, programming will also broaden, and members can enjoy hiking, horseback riding, pickleball, and tennis during the warmer months, along with indoor golf simulators, wellness experiences, and seasonal events throughout fall and winter. Beginning in Winter 2026, Cornerstone Club real estate members will also gain exclusive access to Crest Club Telluride, a private alpine retreat located within the Madeline Hotel & Residences, Auberge Resorts Collection. The partnership allows members to seamlessly transition from summer mountain living to winter skiing in Telluride.

For more information on Cornerstone Club, please visit <https://cornerstoneclub.com/>.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

EXPANDED RECYCLING CENTER HOURS IN AUSTIN

Special to the Mirror

DELTA— In a continued effort to increase local waste diversion, preserve landfill capacity, and improve recycling access for residents, hours have officially been expanded at the Bruin Waste / Double J Recycling Center, located at 21538 Austin Road in Austin. Through a partnership with Delta County, the facility has added all-day Monday operations and extended closing times to 6 p.m. on Mondays and Fridays, giving residents more opportunities to use the County-supported recycling program.

A significant amount of material entering the Adobe Buttes Landfill each year could potentially be diverted through recycling, composting, and other waste-reduction efforts. The expanded schedule is intended to reduce previous barriers to access and make free residential drop-off recycling more convenient for working families.

Delta County offsets the cost of the recycling program, allowing Delta County residents to drop off accepted household recyclables at the Austin facility free of charge. *Some specialty materials and services may be subject to fees or may not be accepted.*

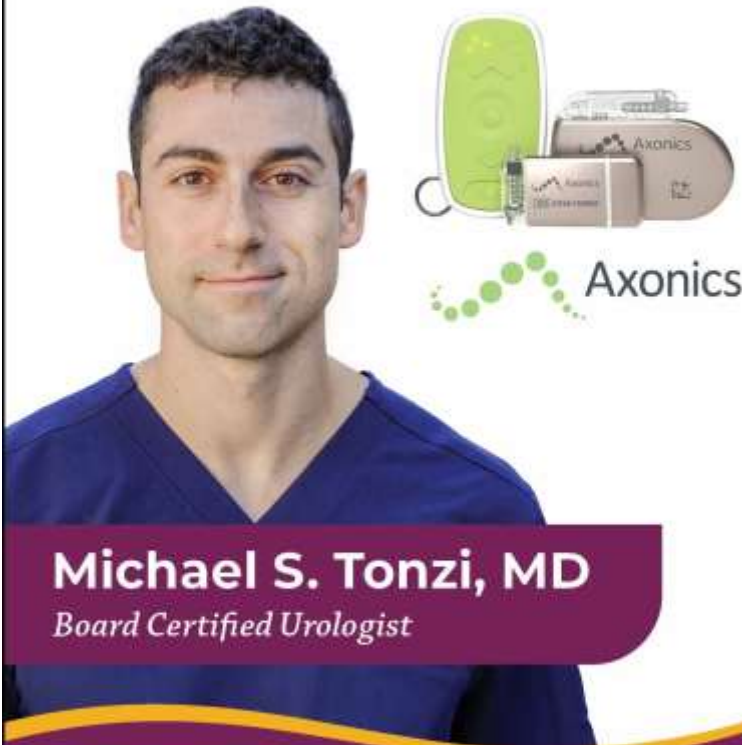
Residents outside the current curbside service area may contact Bruin Waste to be added to its recycling interest list as routes expand.

Residents interested in signing up for paid curbside service, learning more about pickup schedules, purchasing bins, confirming accepted materials, or using free drop-off recycling can call 970-835-8886 or visit www.DeltaCountyCO.gov/1309/Curbside-Recycling-Service

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

CHANGE GIVES MONTROSE VOTERS A GREATER VOICE

Editor:

Have you ever wondered why so many people are against change?

I'm old enough to admit that some changes are hard for me. Other changes, however, make life easier. And some change is necessary. Without it, life becomes stagnant.

Last April, we—the people of Montrose—voted for change. Now we are seeing that change take shape, and the new City Council is giving us an opportunity to decide what changes we want for our community.

One of the most important changes being considered is when we hold our city elections.

As long as I have lived here, Montrose has held its municipal elections in April. Voter turnout has traditionally been much lower in spring elections than in November. That means that, for years, a relatively small number of Montrose voters have determined who represents all of us on the City Council.

Why shouldn't we consider a fall election?

A November election could bring significantly more voters into the process. More

voters means more citizens having a voice in choosing the people who will guide our city for the next two years. Isn't that something we should welcome?

Yet there has been an extraordinary amount of opposition to even considering this change. Some longtime council members say they prefer things the way they are. I understand that. I'm old, too, and I sometimes prefer the familiar. But being comfortable with the way things have always been doesn't necessarily mean it is the best way forward.

A fall election could make city government more visible to more citizens. It could encourage people who have never considered running for office to step forward with new ideas and new perspectives.

Most importantly, it could give more Montrose residents a meaningful opportunity to participate in the decisions that affect our community.

What concerns me most is the use of threats and recall efforts to pressure elected officials into abandoning a discussion about change. We should be able to disagree without trying to silence those who were elected to represent us.

If you oppose moving city elections to the fall, tell us why. Make the case. Offer alternatives. But let's have that discussion openly and respectfully.

Change is necessary for a community to grow. It is necessary to compete in today's economy, attract new people and businesses, and bring new ideas into local government.

Montrose cannot remain exactly the same forever.

We are no longer simply a sleepy mountain and farming town. Our community is growing and changing, and our local government needs to be willing to change with it.

As much as I sometimes balk at change, I know it is inevitable. The question isn't whether Montrose will change. The question is whether we, the people, will have a greater voice in deciding how that change happens.

Let's stop trying to control the City Council through threats and start participating in the process. If you don't like the proposed changes, bring forward better solutions.

But let the people decide.

John Brown, Montrose



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Sidelines Sports Bar
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Delta: Pour Ernie's
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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

DMEA & ELEVATE GEAR UP FOR FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE—Delta-Montrose Electric Association (DMEA) and Elevate are excited to announce the third year of Friday Night Lights, a community tradition that gives local families and football fans the chance to enjoy select high school football games free of charge while cheering on local student-athletes.

As part of Friday Night Lights, DMEA and Elevate will sponsor four local high school football games, covering admission for fans and offering giveaways and activities throughout the evening. It's a chance for DMEA members and Elevate customers to enjoy a night under the lights while supporting local schools, student-athletes, coaches, families, and fans.

"Friday Night Lights is about more than football—it's about bringing people together," said DMEA Chief Executive Officer Jack Johnston. "We're proud to support our local schools and student-athletes and create an opportunity for our members, customers, and communities to come together and enjoy a night of hometown pride."

From the opening kickoff to the final whistle, DMEA and Elevate are ready to show up, cheer loudly, and celebrate what Friday nights are about: community, connection, and hometown pride.

Mark your calendars for these Friday Night Lights matchups:

Durango at Montrose

Friday, August 21 | 7 p.m. | Montrose High School

Pagosa Springs at Delta

Friday, September 18 | 7 p.m. | Delta High School

North Fork at Cedaredge

Friday, September 25 | 7 p.m. | Cedaredge High School

Cedaredge at Olathe

Friday, October 16 | 7 p.m. | Olathe High School

Bring your family, wear your school colors, and join us under the lights for a night of football, fun, and community pride.

For more information, visit dmea.com.



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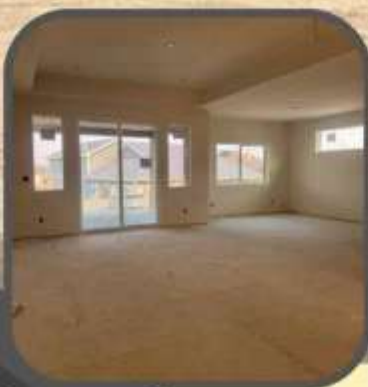
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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

IT'S TIME FOR CITY TERM LIMITS

Editor:

Why are there so many naysayers opposing term limits? I mean real term limits, not just consecutive terms.

We have term limits on how many terms our president can serve. We limit the number of terms our governor can serve. We even limit the number of terms school board members and county commissioners can serve. Our elected state officials—including our state senators and representatives—are also subject to term limits.

So, what is wrong with asking for term limits for our city elected officials?

As we can easily see, elected offices from the federal level down to the local level are subject to term limits—with one notable exception: our city council.

I have never heard anyone seriously argue that we should abolish term limits. On the contrary, I have heard many people say that term limits help bring new citizens, new perspectives, and new ideas into government.

Are the few who are so vehemently opposed to city term limits so committed to recycling past city councilors that they have lost sight of the changes happening right here in Montrose?

Change is not something to fear. Sometimes change is exactly what keeps a community moving forward.

It's time to invoke term limits and give those who want to bring new ideas and new energy to our city a chance to serve as city councilors.

Let the people have that choice.

WE THE PEOPLE

John Brown, Montrose

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CELEBRATION OF LIFE

RIC SIMON CELEBRATION OF LIFE AUG. 22

ERIC M. "RIC" SIMON, 78, of Montrose, Colorado, peacefully passed away on March 17, 2026.

Ric was born on April 1, 1947, in Littleton, Colorado, to Walter and Mary Simon. In 1957, he moved with his parents and five siblings to Cedaredge, Colorado, where he grew up raising animals, playing sports, working in the orchards, and cultivating his love for life.

Ric graduated from Cedaredge High School in 1965 and went on to serve his country in the National Guard. After his service, he settled in Montrose, Colorado, where he welcomed his son, Zach, in 1969. In 1989, Ric met the love of his life, Jodie. They were married and spent the rest of his years sharing countless adventures together—river rafting through Utah and Colorado, hot air ballooning around the world, and cheering on their daughter, Mandie, in soccer.

Ric was deeply involved in his community. He was a member of the Kiwanis Club, the Elks Lodge, and the Chamber of Commerce, where he was honored as Member of the Year in 1990. He also served as president of the Chamber of Commerce Red Coats, helping bring the National Chamber Ambassadors Convention to Montrose. Alongside his longtime friend Dennis Devore, Ric co-founded the Downtown Business Association.

A passionate supporter of youth sports, Ric was a longtime member of the Montrose Soccer Club, where he coached, refereed, and even helped build goals. He also served on the committee that launched the Lighter Than Air Balloon Affair and later founded the Black Canyon Balloon Classic held Thanksgiving weekend, which ran successfully for 10 years.

Ric had a remarkable gift for making friends wherever he went and turning every moment into an adventure. He was affectionately known as "the fun merchant."

He is survived by his beloved wife, Jodie of Montrose, Colorado; his son Zach (Rika) Simon of Clinton, Utah; his daughter, Mandie (Rick) Sanchez of San Antonio, Texas; and his cherished grandchildren, Daphne, Tanner, and Angelina. He is also survived by his sisters, Maribeth (Steve) Clark and Ebbie Sanchez; and his brothers, Barry (Kari) Simon and Roger (Jeanette) Simon.

Ric was preceded in death by his parents, Walter and Mary Simon; his brother, Garrett Simon; and his brother-in-law, David Sanchez.

He will be deeply missed by all who knew and loved him.

A celebration of Ric's life will be held on August 22, 2026, at 2 PM at the Elks Lodge, 801 S. Hillcrest Dr., Montrose, CO 81401.



Now more than ever...

Thank you for reading

THE MONTROSE MIRROR

COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

JAMES F. HUGHES

JAMES F. HUGHES of Ridgway, CO passed away at home on Sunday, August 9, 2026, at the age of 80 after a brief battle with cancer.

Family and friends knew Jimmy by many nicknames: Jim, Jimmy, Jake, Jake the Snake, Snowplow Jimmy, Cowboy Jimmy, and The Ranch Manager.

Jimmy was a third-generation native of Tarrytown, NY and attended the Tarrytown school system. Industrious from a young age, he was very proud of the jobs he did as a boy. He mowed lawns and shoveled for neighbors, and had a paper route in the Crest. Later, he worked as a dishwasher at Marymount College and delivered false teeth for Drs. Stoner & Freer.

In 1963, he became a Certified Chassis Service Technician at General Motors Training Center in North Tarrytown. He then worked on the GM (Fisher Body) Car Bodies Line in 1964/65.

In 1965, Jimmy became an Authorized Triumph Motorcycle Mechanic, working at House of Triumph Bronx, NY and Petri Motors Sales in Connecticut. Over the years, he worked in the service departments at various motorcycle shops.

During the 1970's & 80's, Jimmy worked for the Westchester County Maintenance Department; the Grasslands complex. Later, he transitioned to the role of Steam Plant Operator for New York Medical College.

Jimmy also worked on occasions with tree service and deck building companies. He could repair anything with his hands; he had his own garage in North Tarrytown where he did private motorcycle repairs and restored classic Triumph Motorcycles.

From 1988-1991, he lived in Cornwall-On-Hudson, NY.

In 1991, he moved to Avon, CO where he started his own landscaping business and came to be known as Snowplow Jimmy.

In 2008, he moved to Ridgway, CO with Judy Darwick ("The Little Woman"), and he became "The Ranch Manager" of her



12-acre ranch known as "The Diamond J." Jimmy loved to sit on the porch with a smoke, a cup of coffee, and his pets admiring the beautiful view of Mount Sneffels.

Throughout his entire life, Jimmy enjoyed an active lifestyle filled with sports and activities. He took part in hockey on the Tarrytown Lakes, was a team member on the French Club Team, the Shorty's Bar Team, as well as playing at The Harvey School Rink and on Nottingham Lake. He had an avid passion for riding, racing, repairing and restoring Triumph motorcycles and a variety of dirt bikes. He frequently boated and water skied on the Hudson River. Jimmy enjoyed camping in the Catskills along with bicycling, and tennis.

Later, the snow sports drew him to the Colorado mountains. Jimmy loved skiing at Vail and Telluride, as well as a few backcountry spots like Camp Hale near Leadville. He enjoyed snowmobiling and continued playing hockey. His passion for motorcycles was preserved through dirt bike rides on the Bureau of Land Management trails.

When Jimmy moved to the "Diamond J Ranch" he had the opportunity to become

the cowboy he always wanted to be. He enjoyed the horses, dogs, cats and wildlife that accompany the lifestyle. Together with Judy he owned, rode, and cared for several horses. Often Jimmy helped rancher friends with "Cowboy Sundays," man-aging cattle and baling hay. He discovered his artistic side through "barn art," engraving and burning art into barn wood and turning used horseshoes and metal scraps into beautiful creations.

Jimmy lived a rich life doing the things he loved with family and many good friends by his side. There is no shortage of stories being told and enjoyed about his experiences.

Jimmy is survived by his sister, Maureen B. Neilson of Bradenton, FL; his daughter, Heather L. Valdez (Jim) of Wappingers Falls, NY; his grandson, Justin J. Valdez of Wappingers Falls, NY; his longtime companion Judy Darwick of Ridgway, CO; and his beloved pets; Blue 2, Sister Kitty, Elvis and Sassy.

He was predeceased by his mother, Ruth C. Hughes of Bradenton, FL, Cornwall-on-Hudson and Tarrytown, NY.

A celebration of Jimmy's life will be scheduled at a future date in Colorado and New York.

COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

JAMES F. KNIGHT, FAIA, PROFESSOR EMERITUS, ARCHITECT

JAMES F. KNIGHT, 88 of Montrose, Colorado passed away peacefully at home after an illness, on July 23, 2026. The family would like to thank Hope West for the gentle care and guidance.

Born in Denver, Colorado, the son of the Charles and Millicent (Savage) Knight. Jim graduated from Denver South High School; earned his Bachelor's degree in Architecture from Oklahoma State University (OSU); then a Master's degree in Architecture from the University of Illinois, Champaign.

Jim's professional life centered around teaching architecture. In his younger life he won two traveling fellowships allowing him to travel and study throughout Europe. He and his family traveled in a van as he sketched and studied the great European architecture.

Jim raised his family and taught at the University of Illinois, Champaign. In the late 1970's he returned to his beloved OSU to teach and eventually became the Head of the School of Architecture. Before retiring he was inducted as a Fellow in American Institute of Architecture. In retirement he designed the family gathering place, known as Thendara, outside Sappinero Colorado near Blue Mesa Reservoir. In 2007 he and Pam moved to Montrose. In the Cobble Creek community, he used his talents volunteering on the Design Review Committee and designed the entrance to the Links at Cobble Creek. His design ideas and expertise were generously shared with friends and family. His hobbies included watercolor painting, remote control sail boat and airplanes, and was an avid golfer. Jim enjoyed socializing with his friends and family.

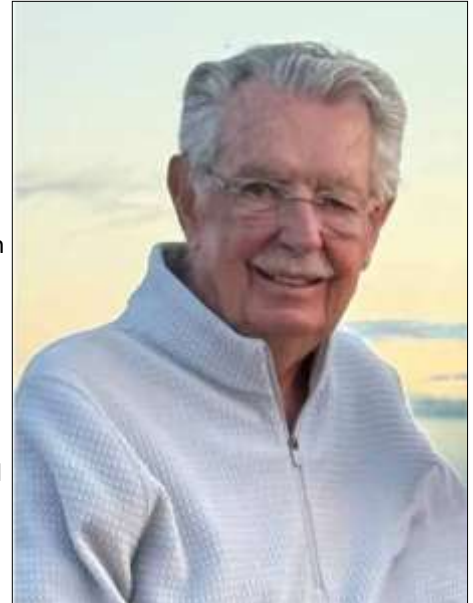
Jim was preceded in death by his young son Robert (Bobby) L. Knight, parents, sister Sharron Baldwin, and stepdaughter Kristin Kovacs.

Jim is survived by his wife Pam of Montrose, CO; son Chuck Knight and wife Patty of Lake Elmo MN, daughter Tonja Yackley and husband Bill of Phoenix AZ, and step-daughter Leslie Roberts and husband Barry of Edmond, OK. Grandchildren; Rachel (Ben) Uzlik, Becca (Kyle) Leonard, Patrick (Kayla) Knight, Christopher (Kate) Knight, Bryan (Taylor) Pankau, Austin Scaturro, and Nico Scaturro. Step-Grandchildren; Hailey Bell, Mason (Brooke) Roberts, Casey (Katie) Roberts, Corben Kovacs, Alyssa (Stephen) Jones, and 11 Great-Grandchildren. Sandra Knight, sister and sister-in-law Linda French; David Baldwin, brother-in-law.

In Lieu of Flowers, donations may be made to Hope West Hospice
725 S. 4th St.

Montrose, CO 81401

hopewestco.org



Thank you for reading
THE MONTROSE MIRROR

COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

CHRISTINA BASS

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Christina Bass, 52, on August 8, 2026, after a long journey with multiple health battles.

Christina was born in Orange County, California, and grew up along the coast, graduating from Tustin High School in 1992.

She loved the warm California weather, the beach, and the carefree feeling of growing up near the ocean. Those early years shaped her love for the outdoors and her adventurous spirit. After moving to Montrose, she continued to enjoy getting outside, exploring, trying new hobbies, and making memories with the people she loved.

Christina was one of the strongest and most resilient women you could ever know. She faced more challenges than most, yet no matter what life put in front of her, she met each one with courage and strength. She always found a way to smile, laugh, and keep going. Christina

had a beautiful ability to find joy in the simplest things in life and to make the most of every moment.

One of Christina's greatest joys in recent years was becoming a grandma. She absolutely adored her grandchildren and they adored their grandma just as much. She loved watching them grow and spending time with them, and the bond they shared was truly special.

Christina will be deeply missed by the family she loved so dearly, including her daughter, Hannah Kaylor (Bass), and her husband, Benjamin Kaylor; her grandchildren, Liam and Natalie Kaylor; her mother, Diane Bass; and her brother, Cliff Bass. She was preceded in death by her father, James Bass.

Christina will be remembered for her strength, her spirited personality, her sense of adventure, and the way she could bring laughter and life into the moments she shared with others. She leaves behind a lifetime of memories that her



family will hold close.

No formal services are scheduled at this time. The family is incredibly grateful for the love, kindness, and support shown to them during this difficult time.

JARRETTE ALLEN BECK JR. *August 16, 1943- June 30, 2026*



It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Jarrette Allen Beck Jr. ("Doc"), who passed on June 30, 2026, at St. Mary's Hospital in Grand Junction, Colorado, at the age of 82, surrounded by family.

Allen was born in Milledgeville, Georgia, to J.A. "Jack" Beck Sr. and Agnes Beck, on August 16, 1943, during World War II. As a small child, he lived all over the East Coast as his father served as a Pilot/Navigator in the Army/Air Corps. Eventually the family settled in the Augusta area after the war.

Allen met his future wife, Linda Russell, at Augusta College, where they were freshmen together. They were married in 1965. He then attended the Medical College of Georgia and became a doctor in 1969. In 1970, he joined the Air Force and later went on to be Chief of Emergency Medicine at Anderson Memorial Hospital in Anderson, South Carolina.

Throughout his life, Allen was deeply involved in music and the arts. He played in the local symphony and was involved with theater, while also writing poetry and storytelling. He published books of poetry, cookbooks, plays, and a book of anecdotes from his life. For nearly two decades, he wrote a regular article for the Crested Butte Chronicle/Pilot. After the passing of his

wife, Linda, he retired to Montrose, Colorado, to be close to his two sons, daughter-in-law and grandson.

Allen was preceded in death by his wife, Linda. He is survived by his sons, Michael and Eric; his daughter-in-law, Trisha; and his grandson, Gavin. A celebration of life will be held later this year in Crested Butte, Colorado.

In lieu of flowers, please consider signing up for the Donor Alliance Organ and Tissue Donation, and getting involved in your local music and arts community.

ISSUE 587 Aug. 17, 2026

ART & SOL

CREATING MOMENTS OF WONDER AND AWE WITH YOUR CHILD



into a beautiful green frog. It never ceased to fill us with wonder.

I'm sure your childhood was filled with moments like these, too.

Although we live in a different world today, our need to experience wonder hasn't changed. Richard Louv, author of *Last Child in the Woods* and, more recently, *Children and Nature: Making Connections*, reminds us that children have an innate need to connect with the natural world. His work explores practical ways to help young people experience the awe and curiosity that are increasingly being crowded out by our dependence on screens and digital devices.

If you're not comfortable letting your child wander the neighborhood as many of us once did, there are still endless opportunities—often right in your own backyard. Hand your child a shovel and let them discover what's beneath the soil. Help them build miniature irrigation canals and see whether the water reaches the other end. Build a fort from sticks, plant a flower garden, search for worms after a summer rain, or simply run through the sprinkler together. Wonder doesn't require a national park—it simply requires curiosity.

Another author worth exploring is Dacher Keltner, whose book *Awe: The New Science of Everyday Wonder and How It Can Transform Your Life* examines awe as one of our most powerful—and often overlooked—human emotions. He describes eight sources of awe, including nature, music, art, spirituality, moral beauty,

Go outside. Slow down. Ask questions. Wonder together. FOYAN Courtesy photo.

By Anita Evans, Friends of Youth and Nature

REGIONAL-If you close your eyes and think back on your childhood, what moments stand out the most?

My most treasured childhood memories were made in the woods at the end of the block where I lived. I wandered there all summer long—sometimes by myself, sometimes with a friend or two. I marveled whenever I found a red-bellied salamander beneath a rotting log. Wild grapevines twisted around the tree trunks, invit-

ing us to swing from vine to vine until our arms were too tired to hold on.

One summer, my best friend and I discovered half of an old wooden barrel. We rolled it nearly half a mile back to my house, where it first became our backyard amusement park as we tumbled downhill inside it. Later, we transformed it into an algae-filled mini pond that became a nursery for the tadpoles we had caught. Every day we watched in amazement as tiny legs appeared, tails slowly disappeared, and each tadpole transformed

Continued next pg

CREATING MOMENTS OF WONDER AND AWE WITH YOUR CHILD

shared experiences, life and death, and moments of sudden insight that change the way we see the world. Nature often becomes the perfect place where many of these experiences come together.

Here on Colorado's Western Slope, opportunities for wonder surround us. Wander through our soul-filling red rock canyons. Sit quietly beneath a ponderosa pine, smell its fragrant bark, and let its needles slip through your fingers. Discover treasures along the trail—a feather, a snail shell, an oddly shaped rock, or the perfectly round holes left by a woodpecker in a dead tree.

Ask questions together.

What bird left this feather behind? How did a snail shell end up in the middle of a

forest trail? What stories could this old tree snag tell? Who made those holes in its bark? Why is that beetle lying in the driveway?

Does moss really grow only on the north side of trees? How do tadpoles know when it's time to grow legs?

Children don't need us to have all the answers. They simply need adults who are willing to wonder alongside them.

Before school begins again, I challenge you to spend just one day outside with your child searching for moments of wonder and awe. Those simple experiences may seem ordinary today, but years from now they may become the memories your children treasure most—just as my afternoons in the woods have become some of

the greatest gifts of my own childhood.

Go outside. Slow down. Ask questions. Wonder together.

Those moments may last only an afternoon, but the memories—and the love of nature they inspire—can last a lifetime.

Friends of Youth and Nature (FOYAN) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to removing barriers so that all youth in Western Colorado can experience the outdoors. We believe that time in nature builds resilience, confidence, health, and a lifelong commitment to caring for the natural world. For outdoor safety tips, trail games, hiking ideas, family activities, or to support our mission, visit www.foyan.org.



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MIRROR CHURCH DIRECTORY

ALL SAINTS ANGLICAN CHURCH

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

Office Hours: By appointment.

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

Worship Service Times: Sundays 9AM,

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

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

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

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

BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH

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

Olathe, Co 81425

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

Sunday School 9:15 a.m.

Sunday 10:30 a.m.

Sunday 6 p.m.

Wednesday Bible Study/Prayer 7 p.m.

CEDAR CREEK CHURCH

affiliation: Evangelical Free

Address: 222 South Townsend Montrose, CO 81401

Office Hours: 10am-2pm Tuesday- Friday

Contact: 970-252-1163

ccc@cccmontrose.org

Pastor: Curt Mudgett

Sunday worship:

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

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

Wednesday Prayer: 5:30-6:15pm

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

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

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

Please make plans to come check us out soon!

CELEBRATION CHURCH

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

Address: 2900 Sunnyside Road, Montrose, CO 81401

Office Hours: By appointment

Phone: (970) 497-4925

Email: celebrationmontrose@gmail.com

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

celebrationmontrose.org/

Worship Service Times: 9am and 10:45am

Senior Pastor:

Pastor Brandon Mathis

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

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

Demographics: Multi-generational

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

Student (middle & high school) at 9am.

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

CHRIST'S CHURCH OF THE VALLEY

Name of Church: Christ's Church of the Valley

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

Address: 10 Hillcrest Plaza Way. Montrose, CO 81401

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

Contact information:

Phone: 970-249-0530

Email: CCVMontroseCO10@gmail.com

Website: ccvmontrose.org

Name of current Senior Pastor: Ken Lawrence

Worship service times: 10:30 a.m.

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

in our Lord Jesus Christ to the glory of God.

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

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

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Denomination: Christ Lutheran Montrose
Affiliation: Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

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

Contact: 970-633-0226

Website: www.montroselutheran.org

Email: montroselutheran@gmail.com

Pastor: Tim Onnen

Worship: Sundays at 9 AM

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

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

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

MIRROR CHURCH DIRECTORY From previous pg

COMMUNITY SPIRIT 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)

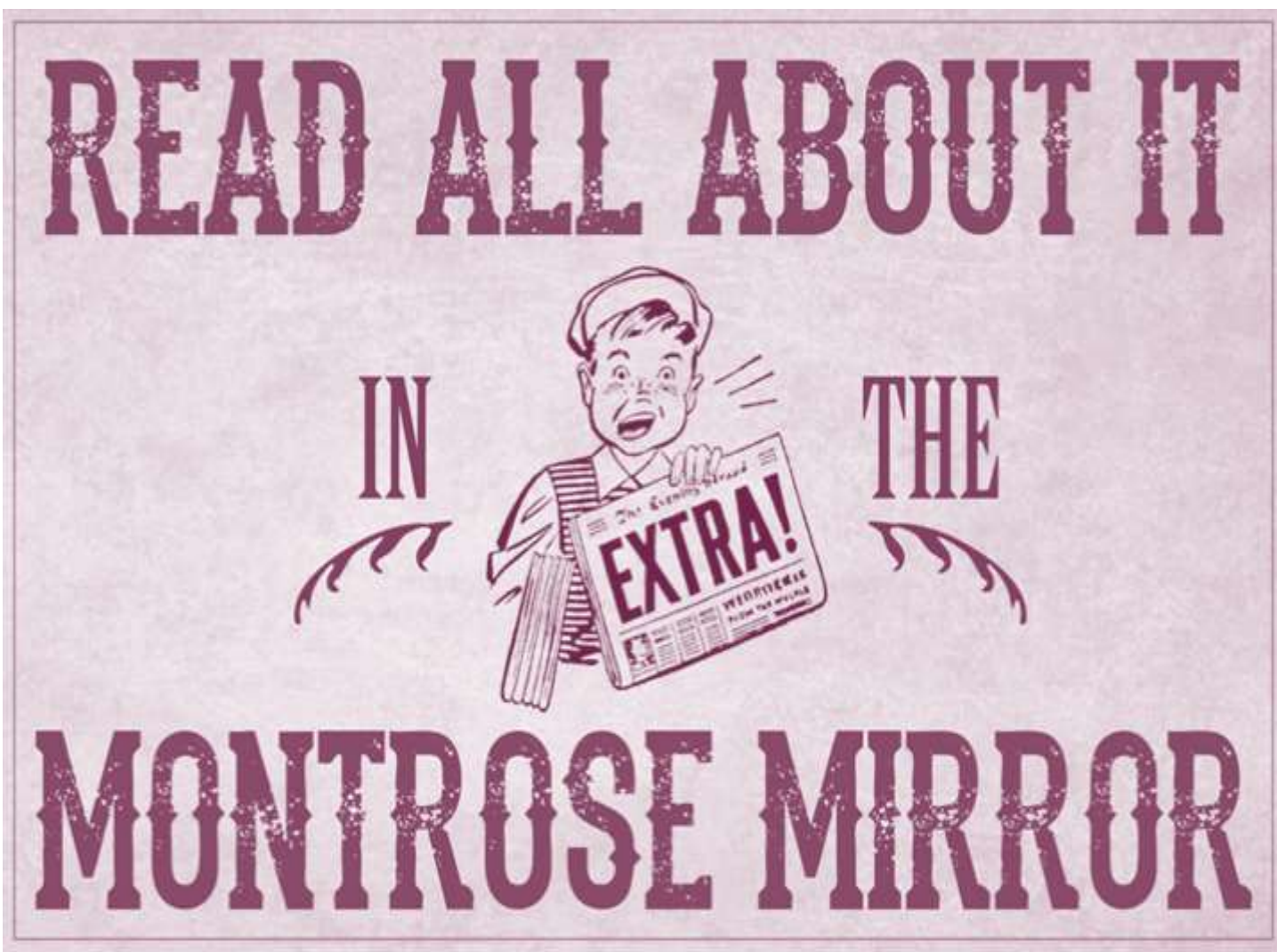
Name of current Senior Pastor

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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COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

TAI CHI CLASSES HELP LOCAL SENIORS BUILD BALANCE, CONFIDENCE, AND COMMUNITY

Special to the Mirror

DELTA— A six-week Tai Chi program sponsored by Delta County Public Health in partnership with the Delta County Library recently wrapped up after an enthusiastic response from local seniors.

The program was offered as part of Delta County Public Health's Chronic Disease grant, which supports opportunities that help community members stay active and build healthy habits. The classes were provided at no cost to participants, helping remove a financial barrier that can make ongoing fitness programs difficult for some older adults to access.

"We wanted to offer something that people could use beyond the six weeks of class," said Jacqueline Davis, Delta County Public Health Director. "Tai Chi is something participants can continue at home to support balance, mobility, and healthy aging, and offering the program at no cost removes one more barrier to staying active."

The program included 12 classes, held twice a week for six weeks in the Delta County Library community room. Classes focused on Tai Chi for balance and arthritis, using slow, controlled movements that could be adapted to participants' varying abilities and experience levels.

Participants particularly appreciated the instructor's approach.

"She took time to introduce movements slowly and worked with students at their individual levels," said Diana Griffin, Delta County Resident. "We also received access to a video so they could practice what they learned outside of class."

For Diana, those lessons have become part of everyday life. "It was great, and I'm still using what I learned every morning as part of my daily routine. I also really appreciate the zero cost for this. Some other places charge a per-class fee, which then becomes prohibitive for seniors."

Beyond learning Tai Chi, the classes offered participants an opportunity to stay active, work on balance and mobility, and connect with others in a welcoming environment.

And when the six weeks came to an end, participants made it clear they weren't ready to stop. The response was so positive that the program is returning this fall.

The next six-week Tai Chi session begins Wednesday, September 9, and runs through October 16. Classes will be held on Wednesdays and Fridays at 10 a.m. in the Delta County Library community room. The program has been very popular, and space is limited.

The classes will once again be offered at no cost through Delta County Public Health's Chronic Disease grant and in partnership with the Delta County Library.

For more information, visit: <https://www.deltalibraries.org/event/tai-chi-classes-2945>



Tai Chi Instructor Jenny McIntyre. Courtesy photo.



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SAVE THE DATE! LOCAL EVENTS CALENDAR

ONGOING-

ALTRUSA INTERNATIONAL OF MONTROSE believes in "Leading to a Better Community" and is always looking for new members. We meet in Montrose on the first three Tuesdays of each month. Our local Altrusa Club has given back over \$1,000,000 in 50 years. Our members unite their varied talents in service to others, achieving as a group what individuals cannot do alone. If you are interested in more information or to come to a meeting, please contact us at 970-765-7666 or Email: Altrusa.Montrose@gmail.com or <https://www.altrusamontrose.org/>

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. 20-There will be a Retirement Reception for Commissioner Sue Hansen on Thursday, Aug. 20 from 5-7 pm at the Historic Montrose County Courthouse BOCC Room, 320 S. 1st St. . All are welcome.

320 South 1st Street in Montrose. All are welcome! Stop by to share your congratulations and help us thank Sue for her eight years of public service.

Aug. 21-Montrose Republican Women invite you to join us for our 90th Anniversary and our celebration of Colorado 150 with a historical presentation from Carolyn Bellavance of the Museum of the Mountain West. She will share stories of "Montrose- the Early Years". Raffle drawing will be held for prizes: 1) Trip to Las Vegas 2) Handmade King-sized Quilt. Proceeds go to our Scholarship Fund. Program is Noon-130p at Hampton Inn Montrose. Doors open at 1130a. Brown bag lunch. Contact Kerri for information 970-209-5170.

Aug. 23-Fortuna Tierra Club is hosting the 11th Annual Log Hill Hustle starting at 8 AM at the Divide Ranch and Club Clubhouse. You can register for the 5K and 10K races at <https://runsignup.com/Race/CO/Ridgway/LogHillHustle>. More information about the race can be found at Fortuna Tierra Club's website at <https://www.fortunatierra.com/>.

Aug. 27-Friendship Quilters of Western Colorado will meet Thursday, Aug. 27, at Friendship Hall, Montrose County Fairgrounds, 1001 N Second Street in Montrose. The meeting starts at 9am with social time, followed by a business meeting, program, and show and share. Three prize winners from the Black Canyon Quilt Show will bring their quilts and talk about their process. Another member will give a presentation on labeling quilts. Questions? 360.448.0153.

Sept. 5-Tuesday Sept. 1 at 5, at Hispanic Affairs Project 504 n, 2nd -Citizens' Climate Lobby meets to help mitigate results of pollution locally. Non-partisan, Environmental, All Welcome, Info at 970-765-9095.

Sept. 19-Lake City Uncorked Wine & Music Festival - third Saturday in September. This year Sept. 19, 2026. Gates open at 10 am; music starts at 11 am; wine flows at noon. Food vendors, unique arts and handcrafted items, 7 bands, wines for tasting, beer booth. lakecitydirt.org/uncorked

RIBBON CUTTING AT CITY MARKET SOUTH



On Wednesday, Aug. 12 Kroger celebrated with a ribbon cutting at the reopening of the South Montrose City Market.

The store offered special discounts and welcomed shoppers to the newly renovated space at 16400 South Townsend Avenue.

Photos by Mayor Michael Badagliacco.

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