



ONLINE NEWS
ASSOCIATION



FRESH NEWS FOR BUSY PEOPLE!

© Issue No. 707 Sept. 14, 2026

the Montrose Mirror

BOARD OF EDUCATION HEARS CORA REQUEST UPDATE; KALB TO CONTINUE AS INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT



Allison Walker spoke about the importance of hearing from students and younger people. Screenshot

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE-All directors were present for the regular meeting of the Montrose County RE-1J Board of Education on Tuesday, Sept. 9. Directors include Board 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.

STUDENT, STAFF, AND COMMUNITY RECOGNITION

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance and a Moment of Silence. Prior to approval of the meeting agenda, District F Director Jody Hovde said that the Board has heard comments from the public about the need for better microphones and that steps are being taken to improve the sound quality of director microphones.

STUDENT, STAFF, AND COMMUNITY RECOGNITION

Public Information Officer Mikayla Unruh presented

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BUGBEAR OR THOROUGHFARE?

By Bob Cox

MONTROSE-The word "bugbear" is not seen often in today's communications but is a real word and has real meaning. In the 1985 edition of Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, it is described as, "An imaginary hobgoblin used to scare children into good conduct 2) Anything causing seemingly needless or excess fear or anxiety." In today's versions it is further described as a "pet peeve" or "anything that constantly irritates people."

The word came up in recent research relating to the problems encountered one hundred years ago with the improvement of the roads east of Montrose. With the gaining popularity of motor cars, the Highway Department was getting more and more pressure to make an automobile trip easier. One of the recurring obstacles was the road over Cerro Summit, or as it was referred to then, Cerro Hill.

When the Strange-Maguire Company was awarded a contract to improve Cerro Hill in September of 1926, the *Montrose Daily Press* printed

Continued pg 23



Horace Reno is credited with being the overseer as highway engineer when the Steel Arch Bridge was constructed in 1923. He later moved from Gunnison to Montrose to function as the engineer for completion of U. S. 50 over Cerro Summit. The bridge, near Sapinero, carried automobile traffic over the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River. Photo courtesy of the Denver Public Library Historic Image collection.

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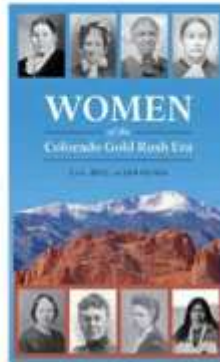
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Dear Readers:

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

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

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

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

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

Thank you,
 Caitlin Switzer,
 Montrose Mirror Editor

the Montrose Mirror

Fresh news for busy people

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

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





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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

TRESSA RUNS A VERY TIGHT SHIP WITH NO ROOM FOR FUNNY BUSINESS

Dear Editor,

I was reading the Mirror, as I do every Monday morning, when I read the comments made by Holly Speaks at the BOCC meeting and my blood began to boil. She questioned the integrity of the Montrose County Elections staff because of the accusations made by certain city personnel. Once I calmed down a little, I decided that I HAD to respond. I agree with Ms. Speaks regarding the sanctity of our votes. But I do believe that Ms. Speaks has fallen into the trap that far too many people fall into, and that is believing the story being told by their political allies and discounting the story being told by people on "the other side." So, let me reassure Ms. Speaks regarding the integrity of Tressa Guynes and the Montrose County Elections staff.

This year is the seventh year that I have served as an election judge for this county. There are many people who have served as judges much longer than I have. I have done nearly every election judge duty. There is no question in my mind that Tressa Guynes runs a very tight ship with no room for any funny business. Every step of the way the ballots are accompanied by at least one duly sworn representative of both the Democrat party and the Republican Party. There are checks, double checks, balances, audits, and every ballot can be accounted for.

Now, I don't know what did or did not happen with the city municipal election, but it appears that the city cannot account for a number of ballots. If every ballot that was turned over to the county can be accounted for, but the ones that weren't turned over to the county can't be accounted for, who looks shady? And when someone gets caught doing something they shouldn't, it's very common to point an accusatory finger at someone else. My advice is to take off the political blinders and demand answers from the people who are not being forthcoming or transparent with their answers.

Sincerely,

DeeAnn Harrington, Montrose

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

A LOOK INSIDE THE MONTROSE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD MEETING RE-1J *Board of Education Regular Business Meeting — September 8, 2026*

Editor:

After reading stories and watching videos about recent Montrose County School District RE-1J Board meetings, I decided it was time to attend one myself and see firsthand what was actually taking place.

What I witnessed was considerably different from some of what I had seen portrayed on social media and elsewhere.

I went into the meeting wanting to look at two things: how the School Board and citizens conducted themselves, and the issues being discussed. I also want to make an important distinction throughout this article between what I personally observed, what is a matter of public record, and what is simply my opinion.

What I Witnessed

The meeting began promptly at 6:30 p.m. with the normal proceedings: call to order, Pledge of Allegiance, moment of silence and approval of the agenda. The board moved through these items quickly and efficiently.

One of the highlights for me was seeing the Montrose and Olathe FFA students speak about their accomplishments at the fair during the student, staff and community recognition portion of the meeting. It was great to see young people being recognized for their hard work and accomplishments.

The board then moved into the President's Report and continued working through the agenda.

Toward the end of the report, Board President Neisha Balleck, with clarification from Laurie Laird, discussed the number of CORA requests the district has been receiving.

For those unfamiliar with CORA, it stands for the **Colorado Open Records Act**. It gives the public the right to request access to many records maintained by public entities, including school districts.

According to my notes from the meeting, district officials stated that they had received approximately 65 CORA requests this year and indicated that this was roughly twice the number received during the entire previous year. They explained that processing the requests had become overwhelming and extremely time-

consuming, while acknowledging that responding to lawful records requests is part of the district's responsibility.

That immediately made me wonder: **Why have there been so many more requests this year?**

Stay with me, because later in the meeting I felt I got at least part of my answer.

The meeting continued with the superintendent's update. Dr. Jessica Kalb addressed agenda items professionally, while Ms. Imus presented financial and enrollment information.

Then came community input.

This portion of the meeting gives citizens an opportunity to address the board within an allotted amount of time.

As many people know, the newly elected board previously authorized an outside investigation involving Superintendent Dr. Carrie Stephenson. On August 24, the board voted 7-0 to offer her an employment separation, resignation and release agreement and authorized the board president to execute the final agreement if accepted within the approved terms.

The underlying investigative material has not been publicly released.

I want to be careful here: I do not know everything contained in that investigation, and I am not going to pretend that I do.

There may be legal, personnel or privacy considerations affecting what can be released. While I support transparency in government, I also recognize that personnel matters can involve information that cannot simply be made public.

Then Came Public Comment

It quickly became evident that some members of the community were unhappy with the board's actions regarding the superintendent—and, more broadly, with several decisions made since the current board took office.

Some speakers strongly criticized the board. A few speakers also discussed their involvement with CORA requests.

At that point, I started having a déjà vu moment from the Montrose City Council meeting I attended the week before.

I was beginning to see what I viewed as a similar pattern: elected officials making

decisions, citizens from the other side strongly disagreeing with those decisions, and public meetings becoming the place where those frustrations are expressed. I also recognize that these are the same people that sat on their hands silently during the previous administration and will voice displeasure with every move this newly elected board makes.

Let me be clear about something: **I strongly support freedom of speech and the public's right to criticize government.**

Citizens absolutely have the right to disagree with elected officials, request public records, ask difficult questions and demand accountability. Those rights belong to everyone, regardless of political beliefs. But just as I said after attending the City Council meeting, having the right to say something does not automatically make what is said factual, respectful, productive or beyond criticism.

From where I sat, board members handled the criticism professionally and allowed speakers the opportunity to express their concerns.

That does not mean everyone has to agree with the board. It simply means disagreement can happen without turning every public meeting into a battle between opposing sides.

My Takeaway

After attending the meeting myself, my personal impression was considerably different from some of the portrayals I had previously encountered.

What I personally witnessed was a board working through its agenda, recognizing students, discussing district business, reviewing finances and enrollment, hearing from administrators and allowing members of the public to voice criticism.

My opinion after watching the meeting is that the board members conducted themselves professionally.

I also believe accountability and transparency should apply regardless of who holds office. When legitimate concerns arise, elected boards have a responsibility to ask questions, investigate when appropriate and make decisions based on the information available to them. They are in deed doing this regardless of what one

A LOOK INSIDE THE MONTROSE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD MEETING RE-1J

Board of Education Regular Business Meeting — From previous pg

side or the other accuses them of.

At the same time, citizens have every right to question those decisions and demand answers. That is part of representative government. But be careful because you might not like the answer you get.

Where I think we get into trouble is when everything becomes about "our side" versus "their side." When our preferred people are in office, we defend them. When the other side is elected, suddenly every decision becomes suspicious.

That mentality does not help our schools, our teachers or, most importantly, our children and this is clearly happening and has and will continue to happen as history repeats itself.

I have already heard opposition and speculation about who might eventually be selected as the next superintendent—even though that selection has not yet been made. The other side will scream and yell that they are not fit for the job.

Merely not fit because it's not their choice. I would encourage everyone, regardless of where they stand politically, to judge that person on his or her qualifications and performance rather than assumptions about who participated in the selection.

I want to thank all seven members of the Montrose County School District RE-1J Board of Education for serving their community. They are going to make decisions some people support and other people strongly oppose. That comes with public service.

We should continue asking questions. We should continue demanding accountability. We should continue using our right to speak.

But we should also remember why the School Board exists in the first place.

Our children.

When the yelling, politics and disagreements are stripped away, providing the

best possible education and opportunities for the children of Montrose and Olathe should be something all of us can agree on.

I also believe we need more parents and community members to get involved and attend these meetings. Too often, it seems like the majority of people who show up are those who oppose what the board is doing.

There is nothing wrong with disagreement—that is part of the process—but those who support the direction of our elected officials need to show up too. Get involved. Listen.

Ask questions. Learn the facts firsthand and respectfully voice your opinion. Our schools and our community belong to all of us, and if we want a voice in their direction, we need to be present, informed, and engaged.

Jason Conant

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OPINION/EDITORIAL/LETTERS

TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER. TAKE CARE OF THE KIDS.

To our Montrose Community:

I just read Dr. Stephenson's letter.

I'm grateful she's gone. That's the honest first sentence.

She spent pages telling this community it was always "for the kids." Then she took a separation deal that paid out that high superintendent salary... and still chose to leave by bad-mouthing others.

Let's talk about "for the kids."

Her own publicly reported pay climbed well over \$200,000 a year. In a district where teachers, aides, bus drivers, and families stretch every dollar.

Did she ever once stop and think what even a quarter of that compensation could have done in a classroom? Extra support. Materials. Positions that actually touch kids.

No. Because the pattern wasn't kids first. It was the paycheck, the title, and the big shiny projects.

Remember the "new high school" plan that could have cost up to 395 million dollars? The one that looked more like a palace than what this community asked for or could afford? Voters didn't just vote it down. They voted it down loudly. Seventy-three percent said no. That should have been a wake-up call about listening. Instead it became another example of spending energy and money on something this district clearly did not want.

And now the exit letter pretends this was all about one political shift and one investigation. It wasn't.

There were many of us. Parents. Staff. Families. People who tried to be heard for a long time. Some of us carried things that were not small. Traumatic things. I am one of them. Her letter does not get to rewrite that.

The current board finally listened. Not to one person. To a lot of people who had

been saying something was wrong.

She can call it politics. She can say there was "no finding of cause." What she cannot do is lecture this town about kids while taking the money and leaving a trail of people who lived a very different story. I won't spend the rest of this year matching her energy.

School is in session. Staff are trying to do their jobs. Families are trying to trust the system again.

That's where my attention is going.

Thank you to the board members who finally treated those concerns as real. Thank you to everyone who spoke up even when it cost them. And thank you to every adult in those buildings who kept showing up for kids while all of this was happening.

Take care of each other. Take care of the kids. That's the part that actually matters.
Kena Jo Iversen, Olathe



MONTROSE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING

& Swearing in Ceremony For Commissioner Caryn Gibson

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Wednesday, September 16 at 9:00 a.m.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

MONTROSE FOREST PRODUCTS ISSUES WARN ACT ***Company cites continued timber-supply and economic challenges***

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE— The Neiman family issued today the required 60-day notices under the federal Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act regarding the potential closure of Montrose Forest Products. Employees were informed earlier today.

The WARN notices are necessary because the company cannot guarantee continued operations beyond the notice period. For months, Neiman Enterprises worked diligently to find a buyer who could continue operating the mill in Montrose but was unable to secure one. The company continues to evaluate all available options for the operation.

The Neiman family purchased Montrose Forest Products in 2012. Since then, the company has invested over \$60 million in the operation and worked closely with government officials, nonprofit organizations and conservation partners to address ongoing timber-supply and economic challenges.

Local U.S. Forest Service staff, Colorado State Forest Service, NGOs, and other conservation partners have made significant efforts in the last year to increase timber availability and support the mill. The company is extremely grateful for their work and commitment. Despite that progress, the mill continues to face concerns with a viable long term timber supply and rising operating costs.

“For months, we searched for a buyer who could continue operating the mill in Montrose, but we were unable to secure one.” said Jim Neiman, president of Neiman Enterprises. “We continue to evaluate all available options; however, because none currently ensures the mill will remain open, providing formal notice to our employees was a necessary step.”

The company is working with employees and workforce partners to support them with available resources during the 60-day notice period.

Neiman also acknowledged the uncertainty facing the mill’s employees, contractors and community.

“My heart is with our employees, contractors and their families,” Neiman said. “Many have dedicated decades of their lives to this mill and have stood beside us through some very difficult years. This situation is not a reflection of them or the quality of their work. Our family is deeply grateful to them, and we carry the weight of the uncertainty this creates for their families and the entire community.”

According to the Montrose Economic Development Corporation, Montrose Forest Products contributes an estimated \$106 million annually to the local economy. A closure would have far-reaching effects on employees, contractors, local businesses and the broader community. It would also result in the loss of critical milling infrastructure that supports active forest management in Colorado.

The potential closure of Montrose Forest Products will not affect production or business at Neiman Enterprises’ other operations. The company remains committed to serving its customers and maintaining the quality, reliability and service they expect.

About Neiman Enterprises

Neiman Enterprises is a family-owned forest products company founded in 1936. For 90 years, the company has worked alongside employees, contractors, communities and forestry partners to manufacture quality wood products while supporting responsible forest management.

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

DAC MEMBERS MUST BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE

Editor:

The District Accountability Committee, DAC, for The Montrose County School District is a legally required committee lead advisory group that provides critical interaction with the Montrose County School Board.

One, as a yet unsubstantiated, rumor that has floated through the community is that recently a current member of the DAC board visited the workplace of the School Board Chair, "unannounced and uninvited." And, in addition may have had also an "uninvited interaction" with the School Board Attorney. If true the DAC must investigate the matter and take corrective action as warranted.

Dee Laird, Montrose



Dr. Joe C Stucky, DDS

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2026

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

STEP UP, EXERCISE YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE

Editor:

While we are all celebrating the 250th anniversary of our Declaration of Independence, it seems to be an excellent time for every citizen to seriously reflect on the many freedoms and rights that were guaranteed to us by our founding fathers in the Constitution. Foremost among those rights, guaranteed us is the right to vote for our representatives. Sadly, history of voter participation shows that far too few realize that with that right comes a sacred duty to actually vote.

Here in Montrose County elections are administered by the office of the Clerk and Recorder. In a review of all primary, general, coordinated and municipal elections since 2014, the percentage of voters who actually voted ranged between 20% and 84%, with the high number representing the latest Presidential election. The average turnout of all 23 elections however, showed that only 50.1% of all registered voters in Montrose county cared enough about the local community and the country to bother voting. The record of voter turnout in Montrose County is absolutely abysmal.

The election schedule for this coming November will certainly be the most important in my lifetime. With approximately 32,500 voters registered in Montrose County, if the average voter turnout proved to hold, that means roughly 16,000 voters will failed to vote and that is absolutely unacceptable.

Hopefully between now and election day those voters who have chosen to not consistently vote will decide to step up and exercise their duty to vote. With the Democrat party being totally absorbed by the socialist/communists in our country, the future of our country and Montrose County depends on a massive turnout in November.

Note: thanks to Tressa Guynes, Montrose County Clerk and Recorder, for providing information on voter participation since 2014!
Dee Laird, Montrose

WITH REGARD TO POLICE CHIEF AND CITY CLERK AMENDMENTS

Dear Editors:

I am opposed to the proposed Charter amendments affording the City Council the power of prior approval of the hiring/firing of its Chief of Police and City Clerk. The existing Charter provisions place this power exclusively with its chief executive officer, the City Manager. Why should this power of hiring/firing of these two staff positions be shared between the Manager and the Council?

Before answering this question some preliminary facts should be stated. Under our City Charter, the City Manager serves at the pleasure of the City Council as the CEO of the City of Montrose. The Council members are likened to a Board of Directors who are elected primarily as a legislative body setting the policies under which its Manager operates the City. The Manager is assisted by a Personnel Department to help with personnel issues which arise from time to time including the hiring/firing of employees. Under the existing Charter, the "chain of command" is direct and clear – meaning the control of all city employees is under the Manager, the Manager is under the Council, and the Council is elected by the citizens. There are a couple of exceptions: the City Attorney and the Municipal Judge who also serve under the Council.

To answer the question, if these two amendments are approved, the existing clear chain of command for two city staff positions (police chief and clerk) will be shared by both Manager and Council. In other words the Police Chief and Clerk will have "two masters". This is a risky situation for the efficient control of any organization as it depends upon the way it is handled.

Do we have any clue as to how our Council might handle such a new power? In my opinion, we have a case in point. This is how the Council handled a recent question over the City Clerk's management of the City Election held last April. The Council could have dealt directly with its employee (the Manager) asking him to have the City Personnel Office to investigate the issue. But no, the Council decided to deal directly with the Clerk in an executive session and asked to exclude the Manager from the session. This action by the Council indicated both a vote of "no confidence" of the Manager and a "power play". Fortunately the Manager, with knowledge of the existing chain of command, insisted on remaining in the executive session with his employee. The action of the Council is NOT an example of "shared power" but exhibited a "power play" by the Council asserting exclusive control over both the Manager and the Clerk at the same time. By so doing the Council attempted to violate even shared control over the Clerk which would have existed under the new proposed amendments. What damage was done? In my opinion Montrose lost one good City Manager and one good Counciler!

I would not trust this Council with such expanded power over these two City Staff positions! Please vote NO on these amendments.

Tom Cheney, Montrose



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: COMMENTARY

DEMOCRACY IS MESSY

By Michael J Badagliacco, "MJB"

MONTROSE-Sit through enough City Council meetings and the "circus" talk starts to sound like a convenient label that doesn't quite fit. What's actually happening is simpler: more people are participating.

Democracy is messy. That line is getting a workout in Montrose. The gallery is getting fuller, public comments run longer. A small group has been a regular presence for months, and plenty of people in town agree with them and plenty don't. That doesn't cancel out the fact that they are there. Local government is supposed to hear from the public, not only from the ones already lined up with the Council.

Most people would prefer a quiet, orderly meeting. Not everyone who shows up is looking to cause chaos. The worse option is an empty chamber and a city that has checked out. Better to hear all sides in the same night. A town where everyone nods along doesn't help us learn much, any more than muscle grows from sitting still. Once Council meetings and work sessions

opened up to real back-and-forth, the tone changed. Some of what gets said is pointed. Some of it is hard to sit through. That is not a breakdown or a "circus."

That's what happens when "we the people" get open, spirited debate.

Elected office is not a dinner party. The people who like what you are doing rarely take up the microphone. The ones who don't will. It's easy to enjoy the public comment period when the speakers are on your side. It's another thing when they are not.

The September 1 meeting saw a full gallery. People who previously stayed home filled the seats, and the crowd looked more like the whole of Montrose, this is what the hope has always been, meaningful diverse opinions that are representative of ALL of Montrose. That is public participation at work. I for one appreciate that we are seeing this level of participation.

How can you help?

- Become informed on the issues
- Be an active participant

- Vote

When you attend a City Council meeting, be respectful of others, whether you agree with them or not. I ask that you always show respect for your fellow citizens and for the business before the Council, especially when we disagree.

We are a community of differing views and strong opinions. That can sometimes create tension. It is still important to respect those differences, even when it means we agree to disagree.

Councilor Reed and I have come together to find common ground to begin moving things forward in the best interest of the community. If we can do so, our community can follow our lead. Your participation in this effort is vital

To some it may look like a circus, to me it looks like civic engagement in action. But every opinion deserves to be heard and respected. Understanding that, Democracy is messy. We must understand that we won't always agree. Not every comment is helpful. Not every meeting is buttoned down and tidy. But the process is working.



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE UNCOMPAHGRE VALLEY TO HOST NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY EVENT, SEPT. 15, 2026, MONTROSE REGIONAL LIBRARY

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE – The League of Women Voters of the Uncompahgre Valley today announced it would be participating in National Voter Registration Day (NVRD), a nationwide, nonpartisan effort to register hundreds of thousands of voters on Tuesday, Sept. 15, at Montrose Regional Library, 320 S. 2nd St. The League available to assist voters who want to register or update their registration if they have moved.

Ballots will be mailed the week of Oct. 5. Oct. 26 is the last day to request a replacement mail ballot or to register to vote and receive ballot by mail. Most important, Election Day is Nov. 3.

“Every eligible American deserves the chance to participate in this year’s pivotal elections,” said Jan Edwards, Voter Service Chair. “Voter registration is the first step to ensuring your voice is heard. We want to make sure every Montrose County Resident who wants the opportunity to vote on Election Day is registered. Colorado voters may register and vote up to and including Election Day.

National Voter Registration Day is an annual nonpartisan campaign to register hundreds of thousands of voters in communities and online. Embraced by celebrities, bipartisan elected officials, and organizations, NVRD leverages the collective impact of thousands of community partners, including hundreds of League of Women Voters groups, nationwide, every year.

“The League of Women Voters of the Uncompahgre Valley empowers voters through education, registration, and get-out-the-vote activities in every election,” said Edwards. “We will host candidate and issue forums while also providing trusted and timely elections information on VOTE411.org. We believe our democracy is strongest when every voice is heard.”



Join us as history “comes alive” at the 4th Annual “NIGHT AT THE DEPOT”

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Friday, September 18th, 5:00-8:00 pm @ The Elks Lodge 801 South Hillcrest Drive

Program includes an intermission with refreshments provided.

Featured Presenters:

Irene Means

Portraying Betsy Ross sharing
“The Real Story of the
American Flag.”

Ann Holmes

In period costume, showing us
a “First Look at the American
Declaration of Independence
and the Constitution.”

Bob Cox

Portraying Calvin Coolidge
giving his historic 1926 radio
address “President Coolidge
Recognizes Colorado.”

Paula Millsapps

In period costume, reading the
19th century historical account
of “Mr. Sydney Jockneck
Describes the Uncompahgre
Valley.”

Tickets: \$10 Adults, \$5 Youth

Tickets are available for purchase at the
Montrose County Historical Museum, 21 N. Rio Grande Ave.
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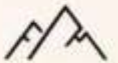
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BUGBEAR OR THOROUGHFARE? From pg 1

an editorialized article, which in part read: ***At last, we are to have work actually starting in improving Cerro Hill, which has been such a bugbear to travelers during wet weather. The company has the road resurfaced nearly all the way over the dangerous part of this side of Cerro Hill with a thin coating of gravel that will make the road safe to travel at all times.***

One must assume that the use of "bugbear" in this instance has nothing to do with hobgoblins. From the time the roads were first started, Cerro was, and still is, a problem for those endeavoring to improve the roads and highways of the state.

H. T. Reno had established himself as a capable highway engineer during his work in the Gunnison area and was recognized especially for the construction of the high bridge near Sapinero.

At about the same time that the Strange-Maguire contract was awarded, Reno was assigned the duties of highway engineer for the Montrose district. He took up residence on South Fifth Street in Montrose and continued to gain accolades for his work, including the oversight of work on Cerro.

In late September of 1926, work began from the top of Cerro, with the first phase going about four and one half miles down the east side.

Historical Highway Department records show that the completed portion of the road was to be 26 feet wide with 18 feet of that to be layered in six inches of gravel. The contractor was to decrease the grade of the hill to about six percent and straighten about 60 percent of the curves.

Two other projects were being addressed by the Strange-Maguire people, both requiring large amounts of steel, gravel and concrete for improving the road from Delta to Grand Junction. Some of those projects were sub-contracted to the Wear Brothers Company. All three projects were being done with help from federal funds and required a large workforce and

several large trucks, graders, steam shovels and other equipment that was just then being developed for these tasks. The company was well-known in both Colorado and Utah, and had to, at one time provide proof that it was a Colorado company in order to qualify for some of the federal monies being assigned to Colorado for highway improvements.

Regarding the Cerro improvements, it is interesting to note that, according to the Department of Highways, the four-mile stretch of road would require just over 7,000 cubic yards of gravel, which would have to be hauled in trucks and wagons of the time. Typically, those conveyances would carry between one and two cubic yards at a time. The epitome of heavy trucks was the Mac AC Bulldog. According to advertisements at the time, the Bulldog used solid rubber tires, a chain drive or optional gear drive transmission and a "robust" four cylinder engine. It had a maximum payload of 11 tons, but Mac cautioned that the maximum did not apply to high altitude or steep grade use. That 11 tons would be less than eight cubic yards of gravel.

In early December of 1926, The *Grand Junction Sentinel* reported the following press release from Strange-Maguire: ***Work at the Cerro Summit road project has been suspended for the winter by the Strange-Maguire Company. This project includes the grading and graveling of a long stretch over the summit, and work has been in progress a number of weeks. Weather conditions at that altitude will not permit further work.***

The cessation of construction coincided with several reports of heavy snowfall that extended well into 1927. Finally, in May of 1927, road improvements picked up significantly. Strange-Maguire and several other companies once again became active. An article in the *Montrose Daily Press* highlighted that renewed push. In part, it read:

Twenty-five miles of present roads on the Rainbow Route between Gunnison and

Montrose will be gravel surfaced and made into an all-weather during 1927. This is good news to all motorists who have found themselves on the wrong side of Cerro and other mean spots during muddy weather. It will mean a wonderful improvement in this transcontinental thoroughfare (sic).

The article went on to describe the planned improvements in several sections and concluded with, our favorite: ***"Lastly, we have Cerro Summit, the bugbear of all motorists in Colorado..."***

Horace (H. T.) Reno received numerous accolades for his work on several of the projects during more than a decade of road improvements. The high bridge near Sapinero and the re-design of the road over Cerro Summit were among his most recognized accomplishments. By October of 1929, the Cerro Summit road was declared completed for the fourth time in 50 years. Mountain States Construction took over where Strang-Maguire left off and completed the final section.

On October 9, 1926, the editor of the *Montrose Daily Press* officially put the bugbear into hibernation a part of the editorial read:

Both sides of Cerro Hill earned federal aid and one can easily drive them in high gear. The old bugbear of Cerro hill is now a thing of the past—no more will there be any fear for one driving over this road in any kind of weather for it is all surfaced. Engineer Reno did a good job laying out the new road and the Mountain States Construction Co. completed the road. The next thing is to bring it on to Montrose for the connecting link.

The editorial also described how he (the editor) had driven the new road and was able to put his vehicle into neutral and coast down the five percent grade. There was no description of the condition of his brakes. Just about any person ever involved in work on the Cerro Summit stretch of U. S. Highway 50 will tell you that the Cerro Hill will never be "complete."

OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE 1619 PROJECT: SLAVERY DID NOT DEFINE OUR COUNTRY, PART 2

Editor:

Democratic Senator Tim Kaine said: "The United States didn't inherit slavery from anybody. We created it."¹

For anyone who knows basic world history, this statement would be considered ludicrous. Historically, every people, nation, culture, and ethnicity has served as master or slaves. Indeed, *"all have sinned and fallen short"* (Romans 3:23). Sen. Kaine has ignored documented history just as the *1619 Project* has.

For example, nearly 30% of Greece's population, and almost 40% of Romans were slaves.² Let's not forget that the Israelites were enslaved in Egypt for hundreds of years before they were delivered from bondage and went to the Promised Land (after a 40-year detour!) about 3,500 years ago. If we are sincere, we find slavery in every very nation in mankind's history.

More examples are as follows: Spain brought African slaves to South America in the early 1500s. Africa already participated in a trans-Saharan and Indian Ocean slave trade, and Black tribes would enslave other Black tribes. Spain brought their slavery mentality to the New World. One could say that that America inherited racial slavery.

Additionally, Native Americans practiced slavery. The trade was so prolific that Edmund Morgan wrote, *"wherever European conquistadors set foot in American tropics, they found evidence of indigenous warfare, war captives, and captive slaves."*³ Up to 20-40% of all Native Americans were enslaved by other tribes.⁴

Our country was not founded on slavery, but was one of the first to abolish slavery. Today, ninety-four nations do not consider slavery a crime.⁵ Currently, over 40 million people in the world are subjected to slavery! Today, Africa has over 9,000,000 people enslaved, the highest in the world.⁶ North America has the lowest rate.⁶

So, America did not create slavery, however, in a way, the early Native Americans "created" slavery. The United States is not perfect, by any means, but we have done more to abolish slavery than any other nation.

Slavery is a human condition, not a race condition. Because slavery was so prevalent, the Pilgrims were determined to not have slavery and began a civil rights movement. In 1641, they passed a law banning the slave trade in Massachusetts based on Exodus 21:16 ("Anyone who kidnaps another and either sells him, or still has him when he is caught, must be put to death") which was included in their law book, The Code of 1650.

Interestingly, in 1646, a slave ship arrived on their shores and the captain offered the Pilgrims slaves, but they made them turn around and return the slaves back from where they were stolen.

Part three will address the involvement of Black Americans in the founding of our country.

Leah Vandersluis

Endnotes

1. Tobias Hoonhout, "Dem Sen. Kaine Claims United States 'Created' Slavery and 'Didn't Inherit Slavery from Anybody,'" *National Review*, June 16, 2020. 2.

2. Santos-Granero, *Vital Enemies* (2009), 1.

3. *Ibid*, 226-227.

4. Sonia Elks, "Slavery is Not a Crime for Almost Half the Countries of the World," *Reuters* (February 12, 2020).

5. "Regional Highlights: Americas," *Global Slavery Index* (2018).

6. "Regional Highlights: Africa," *Global Slavery Index* (2018).

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: COMMENTARY



HOW CAN YOU HELP?

As I get out in the community, Montrose citizens often ask, "How can I help?" Here is my suggestion:

- ***Become informed on the issues***
- ***Be an active participant***
- ***Vote***

When you attend a City Council meeting, be respectful of others, whether you agree with them or not. I ask that you always show respect for your fellow citizens and for the business before the Council, especially when we disagree.

We are a community of differing views and strong opinions. That can create tension. It is still important to respect those differences, even when it means we agree to disagree.

Councilor Reed and I have come together to find common ground to begin moving things forward in the best interest of the community. If we can do so, our community can follow our lead. Your participation in this effort is vital

WHAT IS ON THE AGENDA

City Council schedule for the week of Sept 14, 2026

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

- *IT Purchase Authorizations*
- *Chipeta Lake 2 Addition Annexation*
- *Trail Grant Request through Colorado Parks and Wildlife)*
- *Creating Resilient Forests in Colorado - Authorization of Expenditure*
- *Forest Restoration and Wildfire Mitigation Grant Request*
- *Appointment of Ann Morgenthauer as MURA Executive Director*

Tuesday Council Meeting (6 PM)

- *Ratification of Separation Agreement*
- *Interim City Manager Agreement*
- *MURA Exec Director Appointment*
- *Rotary Park Pump House Replacement*
- *Grant Application Authorizations*
- *Locust Road Annexation*
- *Star Court Townhomes Prelim-Plat*
- *Chelsi Lane & Townhomes*

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.

Thank you,

Michael J. Badagliacco, "MJB"

Mayor, Montrose, CO



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34th 2026 ANNUAL

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SATURDAY October 10th

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

PLEASE BE AN INFORMED VOTER

Editor:

Initiative 362 officially qualified for the State Ballot, with a proposed title "Mail Ballot Voter Identification" as reported by The Colorado Freedom Force. This Initiative adds another layer of security above and beyond adding your signature to the ballot envelope used for verification, however it falls short of proof of citizenship. What it does: it requires additional voter identification such as Real ID driver's license and social security information that can be verified to the person returning the ballot. This Initiative would amend the state constitution and would need 55% of the vote to pass. Even though it doesn't require documented citizenship it's a step in the right direction to make our ballots more secure.

For more detailed information on this Initiative and other legislative information visit The Colorado Freedom Force. They track and report on all the state activities, initiatives and amendments on their website. Be an informed voter.

Carol McBride, Montrose

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**OUR ARMS ARE GETTING
A BIT TIRED.**

OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

ENCOURAGE CONGRESSMAN HURD TO SUPPORT THE LINDSEY O. GRAHAM SANCTIONING RUSSIA ACT OF 2026

Montrose Mirror Editor,

On June 04, 2026, in a 226-195 vote, the U.S. House passed H.R. 2913, the Ukraine Support Act, showing support for sanctioning Russia and standing with Ukraine.

Rep. Jeff Hurd (R-Colo.), one of the Republicans who supported the final bill, said the legislation's "core objectives ... were in America's interests."

"We need to stand with Ukraine against Russian aggression," Hurd said. "Putin is a dictator. What they're doing is wrong."

On July 16th, Senate Majority Leader John Thune (R-S.D.) took procedural steps to place on the Senate calendar the House-passed 'Ukraine Support Act' legislation.

However, on August 07th the U.S. Senate, instead of taking up the U.S. House-passed Ukraine Support Act, voted 86-11 to pass the Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia Act of 2026 (S.5025)

Both the Senate and the House of Representatives must pass identical versions of a bill before it goes to the president for a signature or veto.

On August 10th, U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Emeritus Michael McCaul (R-Texas) and Congressman Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) introduced the bipartisan Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia Act of 2026 alongside 16 of their colleagues.

This legislation — which honors the late Senator Lindsey Graham, who worked on the bill for more than a year and secured the White House's support — will hold major purchasers of Russian oil and gas accountable for supporting Russia's war against Ukraine.

Congressman Jeff Hurd voted for the Ukraine Support Act.

Let's encourage Congressman Hurd to support the Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia Act of 2026.

Contact | Congressman Jeff Hurd

<https://hurd.house.gov/contact>

Neonila Martyniuk, Montrose



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

THANK YOU TO THE CITIZENS OF MONTROSE

Editor:

I would like to personally thank Scott and Linda Riba, TJ and Lacy Sanchez, Cyllia Gardner, Chris Brlecic and the business sponsors of this special event. There was a super response from the citizens of Montrose along with the County Sheriff's Office, the City Police Department and the Montrose Fire District. Thank you all for making this a very special event about America and leaving our differences behind. There were more people waving the American flag than I have seen in a very long time. Thank you again to the citizens of Montrose. The 25th Anniversary of the attack on the World Trade Center in New York City is another day that shall live in infamy. It joins the day Pearl Harbor was attacked and in my lifetime the day our President, John F. Kennedy, was assassinated on public television. And events like the assassination of Charlie Kirk will remain with us for generations due to television. The past helps us to go forward to the future of America. God Bless Montrose city and county, our state of Colorado and may God Bless America.

John Brown, Montrose

MY SCHOOL BOARD COMMENTARY

Dear Directors and Superintendent (interim) Kalb,

I always send you my prepared public comment because I never have time to read it all in 3 minutes.

FYI, the Strategic Plan is NOT available on District Web site. I have looked continuously and we just looked tonight during the 9/8/26 meeting. It might be user error but, please check. I'm excited to read it more in-depth and look forward to public access and updates.

I'm not going to "beat a dead horse" but, during the Special Meeting 8/24/26 you, the board voted unanimously to spend MORE than a half a million \$\$\$\$ of taxpayer money on a Superintendent "separation agreement" (which she has agreed to) and associated costs. That money could have been used for the students. A large part of the costs were exorbitant legal fees. I believe 4 of you ran on a Fiscally Conservative ticket, you don't appear fiscally conservative to me. Even though the public/taxpayers has repeatedly asked, there has been NO reason for Dr. Stephenson's termination given from the expensive THIRD party investigation as to **why** she was dismissed. Is this just because "you can't work with Dr. Stephenson?" Is that a good example to the 5,592 students you are guiding as our Board? The retired RE-1J and current

teachers who have dedicated their careers past and present to Public Education are disappointed. Social skills, emotional regulation and working together are taught every day. That's what PUBLIC school is about, everyone communicating, compromising, working through problems and learning to "get along" with those different from ourselves. That's what PUBLIC SCHOOL is all about, learning to function in society!

So, with Dr. Kalb assuming the Superintendent responsibilities, who is doing the work of Executive Director of Academic Services? (district website lists Dr. Kalb) and who is heading the English Language Learning Dept. (ELL)? Do we have a new Executive Director of Operations? (district website lists Pavlich, who was an excellent EDO but recently retired due Board conduct.) It would seem you have stretched Central Office pretty thin. Not that I am an advocate of a "fat" central office, but who is here to get the work done? (only to be read if Mr. S. has made no comment during the meeting other than Mr. Scarborough says, "aye") Mr. Scarborough, you are my Director, you represent me. You may not like me, or special education kids, or ELL kids and families, or certain schools or teachers or superintendents or anyone who doesn't agree with you, but the fact is YOU represent ME and

I want you to get engaged! You have not made one comment in the last 2 or 3 months at a meeting. I need you to be engaged reading and prepping before the meeting, engaged during the meetings, asking questions, making comments, The voters need to hear of you visiting the schools and attending some of their many activities, we need you WORKING for our kids. Maybe this is way more work, time and energy than you anticipated when the Republican Committee asked you to run for local school board, but this is the job. * To Mr. S's credit: you spoke 5 times during the rest of the meeting. Thank you. (I know, I track goal and objective data). Now hopefully you will have a "Board Engagement" in at least one school to report next meeting, 2 weeks away.

I love the addition of District Wide Events in the agenda. The Quarterly Financials are a marvel, hats off to Ms. Imus, we can't wait until you are "amplified." The drop in enrollment is disheartening with Montrose Classical Academy only having 149 students, instead of 200, Northside down etc. We will see the true Oct. 1 counts next month. They are so important as they generate funding.

Thank you all for doing a thankless job.
Zoe Werden, Montrose

OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

CHANGES FOISTED ON THE GOOD PEOPLE OF MONTROSE

Editor:

It troubles me to read in the Labor Day issue of the Montrose Mirror, ample repetition of a prevailing argument used to sway in ballot changes, by the fact that Montrose voters are fully empowered to vote in or out those Councillors' proposed changes to our town constitution, the Charter.

That is not the issue that those opposed to these ballot changes are aggrieved about. Placing a partially supported set of amendments on the ballot for November is a problem.

First, this is an inefficient, expensive way to throw what many consider ill-conceived and/or ill-considered changes at the wall, so to speak, to test how well they might stick. But beyond that, many issues raised in public comments have been repeatedly ignored by the Mayor and two Councillors. Personally, I see plenty reason here to object to the continued dismissal of increasingly wary voters who have been left out of the process.

There are serious concerns raised by these ballot issues. Our City Attorney himself admitted at a regularly scheduled Council meeting on first reading (8/18/26) that he had read and reread his wording of changes "a thousand times." This fact alone should raise every eyebrow in town as to the importance and valid worth of these rushed changes. Finally, understand that these changes are foisted on the good people of Montrose after the City Attorney edited them yet again and after Council rejected the proposed establishment of a Citizens' Charter Review commission, an idea which should have put the horse before the cart.

These Charter changes did not gain unanimous support by the Town Council. As was repeatedly pointed out in the regular Council Meetings, these Charter amendments might pass into our constitution only because many voters may very well not recognize the intrinsic faults in the changes.

To the Mayor's tackling of any distrac-

tions or whatever he considers rumors, Montrose Mirror, Labor Day edition, I see him obscuring the FACT that voters brought and continue to bring objections of note that he and some Council members do not address or even pause to consider. That is the elephant in the room. Our Mayor appears to be asking us to be inattentive. Think about investing in your dream home. You come to the point where you have to choose a color to paint your house. Is it enough to tell the painting contractor "Don't paint it taupe" ?

Council has preordained what the new Charter can look like. They voted unevenly to railroad these changes into the midterm election ballot process. They did not transparently speak to the eventual outcome of such significant changes, nor to the voters who are ignored in their rushed process to design and get the changes passed.

Respectfully,

Kate Rohrer, Montrose



BOARD OF EDUCATION HEARS CORA REQUEST UPDATE From pg 1

the Student Spotlight and Donations.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Students from Montrose and Olathe FFA Chapters were present to talk about their experiences at the Colorado State Fair.

DONATIONS

Unruh announced the following donations:

- The Northside School-Based Health Clinic received \$5,000 from the El Pomar Foundation Regional Merit Grant Program for general operation expenditures.

- Redhawks Sports Inc. donated \$27,000, designated for MHS Athletic Programs.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Balleck addressed the Mission Statement, Vision, Board Norms, and Values. The Mission Statement is included in the meeting packet for those who wish to access it.

District G Director Shane Daly said that the Facilities Committee did a maintenance walk through Olathe schools and spoke about facility updates.

District F Director Jody Hovde said that Facilities Director Matt Smith is working on ways to make Facilities information more accessible and to improve communication about the Facilities budget.

Board President Neisha Balleck spoke about the District Accountability Committee (DAC) meeting. There was a presentation by STEM/Postsecondary Coordinator John Steele on U.I.Ps (Unified Improvement Plans).

The DAC will be focused on statute requirements, Balleck said. She asked to postpone the ratification of DAC members for the 2026-2027 school year.

"The Board Policy, Bylaws, and Statute are just a little misaligned," Balleck said, adding that she would like to hear from legal counsel prior to ratification. Four DAC members are also looking at the bylaws and discrepancies.

Balleck discussed district-wide events for the coming week, including an MHS Letter Ceremony. PIO Mikayla Unruh and Board Vice President Ted Valerio spoke about the 10th Annual Forensic Academy at Montrose High School.

Other events mentioned include the MHS Pride of Montrose Marching Band March-a-thon; the Northside Elementary School Harvest Night (Sept. 23); Board Tours of the new Early Childhood Center (ECC) on

Oct. 13; and an open house at the ECC Oct. 14. On Oct. 30 there will be a Trunk or Treat event at Cottonwood Elementary. The Board discussed the Work Session of Sept. 22.

CORA REQUEST UPDATE

Board Secretary Laurie Laird gave an update on Colorado Open Record Act (CORA) Requests.

Laird said, "CORA Requests have changed drastically in the last three months. We've had years that we've had two...in the 23-24 and 24-25 school years we had 17 each of those years. (In) 25-26 we had 68, of which 28 were in June alone. And this year, as of today, we're at 64--two months and one week in.

"There's very strict laws around CORA," Laird said, "And timelines. The 68 may not come in every day, it may be five in a day and then none for a couple days. But they still have deadlines to meet....I receive the CORA requests--but I'm not necessarily the one who gathers information...I'm the person who receives, acknowledges, and sends the information out to departments that are affected by that.

"...We take CORA requests very seriously. It's required by law...it's public knowledge. We really want to do our best to make sure you get that information.

"But when we get them, and a lot of times we get them for financial, HR gets them for salary numbers," Laird said. "When we get them for emails that's where we kind of get hung up. Because as a district, Mr. Quon did a check of the last nine days, and we received externally in and out 3.1 million. And that's in two of the months where we only have about 10 percent of our staff working...in months during the school year I'm sure that's much bigger.

"So if you're searching for emails, it has to search all of them. So if we're getting 14 million emails a year, that becomes a very large process. It's part of the law, it's part of what we do, but it's not a quick process. Mr. Quon has to set the parameters, and then he can get the information on how long it takes to pull it. It could be hours, it might not be. And then once it's pulled it has to be reviewed. Because it's a system; it may not pull exactly what the parameters are--if you are pulling CORA and it might pull CASB or some other vari-

ation. So every one has to be reviewed. "So if you have hundreds of thousands they still have to be reviewed and redacted if necessary.

"We just wanted to let you know when there's delays it's not because we don't value the importance of providing the information. It was just me doing CORA requests for many, many years. Now the detail is much larger and so we have more people working on them. We have increased the number of people working on them to try to make sure we're keeping up...it's a pretty big process on a lot of things..."

Information must also be reviewed by the attorney, Laird said. CORA requests come not only from local citizens or reporters, but from the data branch companies that request invoices and financial information from the District for transparency and then sell the information to other businesses. "...so we're basically their marketing," Laird said.

Board Engagement

District F Director Jody Hovde said she visited Pomona Elementary to see new furniture. President Balleck visited Northside Elementary to see new desks. District E Director Tiffany Vincent went to Columbine Middle School for a tour and went to an MHS Football game. Balleck said that there has been a request to schedule the Homecoming Parade so that lower grades are able to attend.

Balleck also visited Olathe Elementary School for a walk-through with Mrs. Jamie Simo, the new Principal. "...She's really just a strong leader, and bringing just positive culture...very organized..."

The District hosted the CASB regional conference last week, Balleck said. She thanked Interim Superintendent Jessica Kalb for her work at the conference.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

President Balleck read a Board Goals update.

Interim Superintendent Jessica Kalb discussed the Strategic Plan and Board updates.

Finance Director Emily Imus presented Quarterly Financials, by Investment and by Fund. Imus also delivered the Enrollment Report.

COMMUNITY INPUT

Speakers included Allison Walker, Joan

BOARD OF EDUCATION HEARS CORA REQUEST UPDATE *From previous pg*

Wofford, Ellen Angeles, and Zoe Werden.

CONSENT AGENDA

Consent Agenda items Two (Donations) and Five (purchase of 4-wheel drive vehicle in an amount not to exceed \$65,000) were pulled for further discussion; the remaining Consent Agenda items including Personnel Report were approved unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

After discussion, donations were approved, as was the vehicle purchase.

The Board voted unanimously to approve payment to BlazerWorks, LLC in the amount of \$114,108 for Jennifer Neely for contracted services for the 26-27 School Year.

The Board voted to approve purchase for a one-year schoolwide license for Subject (digital curriculum and credit recovery platform) in the amount of \$30,000 for use at Black Canyon High School.

Also approved was the 2026-2027 District Technology Refresh in an amount not to

exceed \$300,000 and related expenditures.

The Board voted unanimously to postpone the next item until the meeting of Sept. 23; ratification of the District Accountability Committee members for the 2026-2027 school year.

The Board discussed possible voting on Colorado Legislative Resolutions and reviewed policies presented to the Board for First Reading. No action was taken at this meeting.

Policies:

-BEAA, Electronic Participation in School Board Meetings - Board member recommended changes;

-IKF, Graduation Requirements - revised Board Policy IKF Graduation Requirements for the September Board meeting. JH, Student Absences and Excuses -

Modernized attendance practices and aligned across all schools;

-JKA, Use of Physical Intervention and Restraint;

-JKA-R, Use of Physical Intervention and Restraint Exhibit.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board voted to enter Executive Session pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(f) for discussion of personnel matters concerning candidates for the position of Interim Superintendent, and pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(g) for consideration of any documents related to the candidates for the position of Interim Superintendent that are protected from disclosure under the mandatory nondisclosure provisions of the Colorado Open Records Act and to include all board members present, Secretary to the Board Laurie Laird, and Dr. Jessica Kalb as needed at the Board's discretion.

Following the Executive Session, the board voted unanimously to make Dr. Jessica Kalb the sole finalist for the position of Interim Superintendent.

After a brief Board Planning Discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

WHERE IS THE REASON?

Editor:

Reason is the capacity to consciously apply logic by drawing valid conclusions from new or existing information, with the aim of seeking truth. It is one of the things that supposedly distinguish humans from other species. Each week, as I read about different things leftists do, I am invariably left with the question: "Where is the reason in that?" The three biggest killers of human life in history are socialism/communism, Islam, and abortion. Democrats support all three. Where is the logic in that?

This week is the first-year anniversary of Charlie Kirk's murder, and many on the left have said he deserved to die for his words. Leftists are gathering to interrupt his memorial service at the college campus where he was assassinated. This week we read about the tragedy of Lindsay Clancy, who was on trial for murdering her three children, and the travesty of many on the left saying she deserves to be acquitted. Where is the logic of free-speech becoming unforgivable while killing your own children becomes excusable? The trial ended in a mistrial when one juror refused to acquit. Several of the jurors have since given interviews in which they showed little concern that Clancy admitted to strangling each of her three children one by one: Cora age five, Dawson age three, and Callan eight months. Remarking on the lone holdout juror, one of the jurors summed up their concerns explicitly when she said: "He had the hardest time getting over the fact that Lindsey viciously killed her children." Here is the reasoning and logic eleven of the jurors (and much of liberal America) fail to grasp.

Somewhere along the way, compassion became confused with exoneration. They have developed an excessive capacity to explain the perpetrator while scarcely pausing to think about the dead. There is nothing wrong with trying to understand and explain destructive behavior. That is what civilized people do. But there is a dangerous leap between saying "I understand how you arrived here" and saying "therefore you have no responsibility for what happened." Leftists try to portray accountability itself as evidence that the person demanding it lacks compassion. That's BS. We can feel profound compassion for a person suffering a debilitating psychiatric illness while reserving even greater compassion for innocent human victims. The deaths of three children cannot become a secondary consideration. If mental suffering automatically eliminates moral responsibility, where precisely is the boundary?

If we say Lindsay Clancy should not spend the rest of her life locked up in a state hospital for the criminally insane, what about fictional serial killer Hannibal Lecter in "Silence of the Lambs"? There aren't too many things more sordid than preplanning and carrying out the strangulation of three innocent children. Democrats today want the rest of the country to set aside all reason and believe there is no right or wrong – everything is relative. They want you to be too afraid to stand up and say "Some things are simply wrong, and this is one of them." They want you too afraid to say people shouldn't be able to kill their children – not before birth – and not after birth.

Unrestrained immigration, including letting enemies of our western civilization invade the country and electing them to positions of power, threatens the very existence of this country. Where is the reason in that? Ugandan native, radical Muslim, and Democrat Socialist NYC mayor Sohran Mamdani found yet another way to rub salt into the wounds of 9/11 families last Friday. Those families had already gathered 100,000 signatures on a petition begging Mamdani to stay away from the 25th anniversary ceremonies to honor those killed in the terrorist attacks. The mayor signed an executive order honoring the 9/11 victims, but then, in a direct insult to every family that bled, made sure the symbolic pen used in the signing went to the Muslim lawyer who represented an al-Qaeda terrorist whose sister was married to one of the terrorists who crashed the plane into the Pentagon. The symbolism was not subtle. It was a middle finger to the families who lost husbands, wives, sons, and daughters in that terrorist attack on civilian targets.

When I went to school, we were taught to reason and think for ourselves. We were also given a good dose of history. Those things have not been taught for decades in our public schools because Democrats know they cannot achieve their destructive goals with a thinking public well-informed about historical truths. Here are some historical facts Democrats want hidden from American citizens. All the following terrorist attacks were by Muslims: the current genocide of Christians in Liberia; the 9/11 airline hijackers; the Achille Lauro cruise ship hijacking; the Bombay and Mumbai India attacks; the first World Trade Center bombing; the Beslan Russian school attacks; the Beirut Marine barracks attacks; the Saudi Khobar Towers bombing; the Kenyan US embassy bombing; the Israeli Olympic team attacks; the Buenos Aires suicide bombing; the Libyan US

embassy attacks; the Beirut US embassy bombing; the Iranian embassy takeover; the Air France Entebbe hijacking; the Pan-Am flight #93 bombing; the Boston Marathon bombing; the Moscow Theatre attacks; the London subway bombing; the Bali nightclub bombing; the Madrid train bombing; the U.S.S. Cole bombing; the underwear bomber; the Fort Hood shooting; the Beltway snipers; and the Shoe bomber. The following countries were once Christian and are now 93–99% Muslim: Iraq, Syria, Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Jordan, Turkey, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Kosovo, and Palestinian territories. Lebanon, Albania, Bosnia, and Herzegovina were once Christian and are now over 50% Muslim. Iran was Zoroastrian and is now 99.5% Muslim. Malaysia was Hindu and Buddhist and is now 66% Muslim. Indonesia was Hindu and Buddhist and is now 87% Muslim. Pakistan was Hindu and Buddhist and is now 97% Muslim. Bangladesh was Hindu and Buddhist and is now 91% Muslim. Afghanistan was Zoroastrian and Buddhist and is now 99.7% Muslim.

Ten years before 9/11, the Islamists in this country actually wrote down their strategic blueprint for their incursion and ultimate conquering of America: "The Ikhwan must understand that their work in America is a kind of grand jihad in eliminating and destroying the Western civilization from within and sabotaging its miserable house by their hands and the hands of the believers ..." (Mohamed Akram, May 22, 1991.) Islamists all across the US have openly said who they are and what their intentions are, and we have done nothing. Author Gad Saad wrote an appropriately titled book for this disturbing phenomenon, called "Suicidal Empathy: Dying To Be Kind." When someone shows you who they are, believe them the first time. In addition to the NYC mayor, we have Democrat members of Congress like Rashida Talib openly supporting Islamist terrorist organizations and others like Ilhan Omar making excuses for them. We have the mayor of Muslim majority Dearborn, Michigan, telling a Christian pastor he was not welcome in the city because he spoke out against a street being named for a Hamas sympathizer. Now we have anti-American Islamist Abdul El Sayed wanting to join the jihad by becoming Michigan's new Democrat senator. The most disturbing observation is that all these things are taking place within and with the full support of the Democrat party. Where is the reason in that? The answer is, like everything today's Democrat party does, there is none.

Ed Henrie, Montrose

OPINION/EDITORIAL: COMMENTARY

LETTERS DESERVE ANSWERS, NOT LABELS

By Michael J. Badagliacco

Several letters in the September 7 Mirror ask why the Charter amendments are on the November 3 ballot. Fair question. Here is the claim, the evidence, and the reasoning.

The official redline is [here](#):

November elections

Ellen Angeles is right that more voters do not automatically mean more attention to city hall. She is wrong that we have no evidence a date change is worth putting to a vote.

City of Montrose election records show April return rates of 25% in 2024, 26% in 2022, 28% in 2018, and 35% in 2026.

Colorado Secretary of State abstracts show Montrose County November even-year turnout of nearly 88% in 2020, 71% in 2022, and 82% in 2024. Those November figures are countywide. The gap is still obvious.

Stand-alone city elections have run about \$30,000. Coordinated elections have run about \$5,000 to \$10,000. Under C.R.S. 1-5-505.5(1)(a), the state reimburses counties 45% of a coordinated election when the state certifies ballot content. The city's share drops. Savings can reach as much as \$25,000 an election.

Colorado already lets municipalities put a November date to the voters. See C.R.S. 31-10-109. Firestone did it. This measure does the same thing for Montrose. People are partisan, the month is not. Ballots arrive weeks early. I trust you to find the city questions on a November ballot.

Term limits

Cliff Faurer is right that Colorado already has term limits. Article XVIII, Section 11 of the Colorado Constitution sets consecutive-term limits and lets a person sit out one full term and return. That same section also lets Montrose voters (or other political subdivision) lengthen, shorten, or eliminate those limits. That is what this ballot question is.

The current rule is consecutive years, not a lifetime cap. After eight years, or six in the at-large seat, a person can sit out four years and come back. Ordinance 2728 would set an eight-year lifetime maximum across all seats after November 3, 2026. It does not cut short anyone now serving.

The 2025 package is not this question. Ordinance 2690 bundled term language with gender-neutral wording, meeting notice, recall rules, the municipal judge, utilities, and more. It failed 3,588 to 3,924. **A bundled no is not a verdict on a standalone lifetime cap.**

Ideas come from people. Long incumbency also comes from people. The voters of Montrose will decide with their vote if it makes sense or not.

Police Chief and City Clerk

Amendments 2729 and 2730 do not fire Chief Blaine Hall or Clerk Lisa DelPiccolo. They do not let Council run the Police Department or the Clerk's office. The manager still hires, fires, and supervises day to day. Council would only approve appointment and discharge.

That is a check, not a takeover. Those two offices sit at the center of elections and public safety. In 2014 the Charter took Council out of that confirmation. These measures put a public vote of the elected body back in the file. Experience matters. So does who answers to whom when something goes wrong.

Process

Neonila Martyniuk quotes Councilor Reed and asks whether legal analysis, policy discussion, and public engagement occurred.

They did. The City Attorney drafted the ordinances. Council debated them in work sessions and regular meetings from June through September 1. Public meetings on the proposals were held July 29, August 3, August 4, and August 18. The final vote was September 1.

A Charter Review Commission is one method. It is not the only method. Home-rule cities may refer Charter questions themselves. Council voted not to form a commission and to put four separate questions on the November coordinated ballot instead. That is a process disagreement, not the absence of process. **Voters still decide.**

Trust

Dave Stockton asked what led me to thank residents for their trust. I thank them because they are the ones who vote, pay the bills, and live with the results. Distrust of government is not a vice. It is why we have elections, open meetings, and **a Charter that only you can change.**

A news release that thanks the public is not a demand for affection. Bill Bell and the Council announced a mutual separation. The next manager will be hired in public under the Charter we have now, unless voters change it. These amendments do not put department heads on a "chopping block." They add a Council vote at hire and at discharge. That is a check.

I was elected to represent and serve the whole city. Party labels in a letter do not decide a Charter question. The text does.

What I am asking

[Read the four questions.](#) Ask what each one does. Ignore the version that never quotes the redline. Then vote.

Your votes still decide this. That is the point.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

MONTROSE COUNTY INVITES PUBLIC TO TIME CAPSULE CEREMONY AT HISTORIC COURTHOUSE

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE— Montrose County invites the community to the Historic County Courthouse, 320 S. First St., 3rd floor, on Tuesday, Sept. 15, from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. for a time capsule ceremony connecting more than a century of Montrose County history. The event will be held on the third floor and is free and open to the public.

Members of the public will have an opportunity to view the contents of the original 1922 courthouse time capsule, which have recently been placed on permanent display. The collection includes newspapers, photographs, documents and other items preserved by Montrose County residents more than a century ago.

The public will also get a first look at the contents of the new 2026 time capsule before it is sealed and placed in the courthouse. The new capsule includes items representing Montrose County government and the community in 2026, with contributions from County elected offices, departments, and community members. It will remain sealed for 100 years and is scheduled to be opened on Sept. 15, 2126.

"There is something special about standing in the same courthouse and looking at the items our community chose to preserve in 1922, then thinking about the people who will gather here in 2126 to see what we left for them," said Board of County Commissioners Chair Kirstin Copeland. "We hope residents will come see both collections and be part of this moment in our county's history."

The formal program will begin at 9 a.m. with comments from Montrose County Commissioners and Montrose County Assessor Brad Hughes, followed by a video telling the history of the original 1922 time capsule and its opening. Following the program, attendees will be free to move throughout the third floor to view the newly installed 1922 time capsule displays and explore the contents of the 2026 time capsule before it is sealed.

For more information about Montrose County History, visit <https://www.montrosecounty.net/1316/Time-Capsule>

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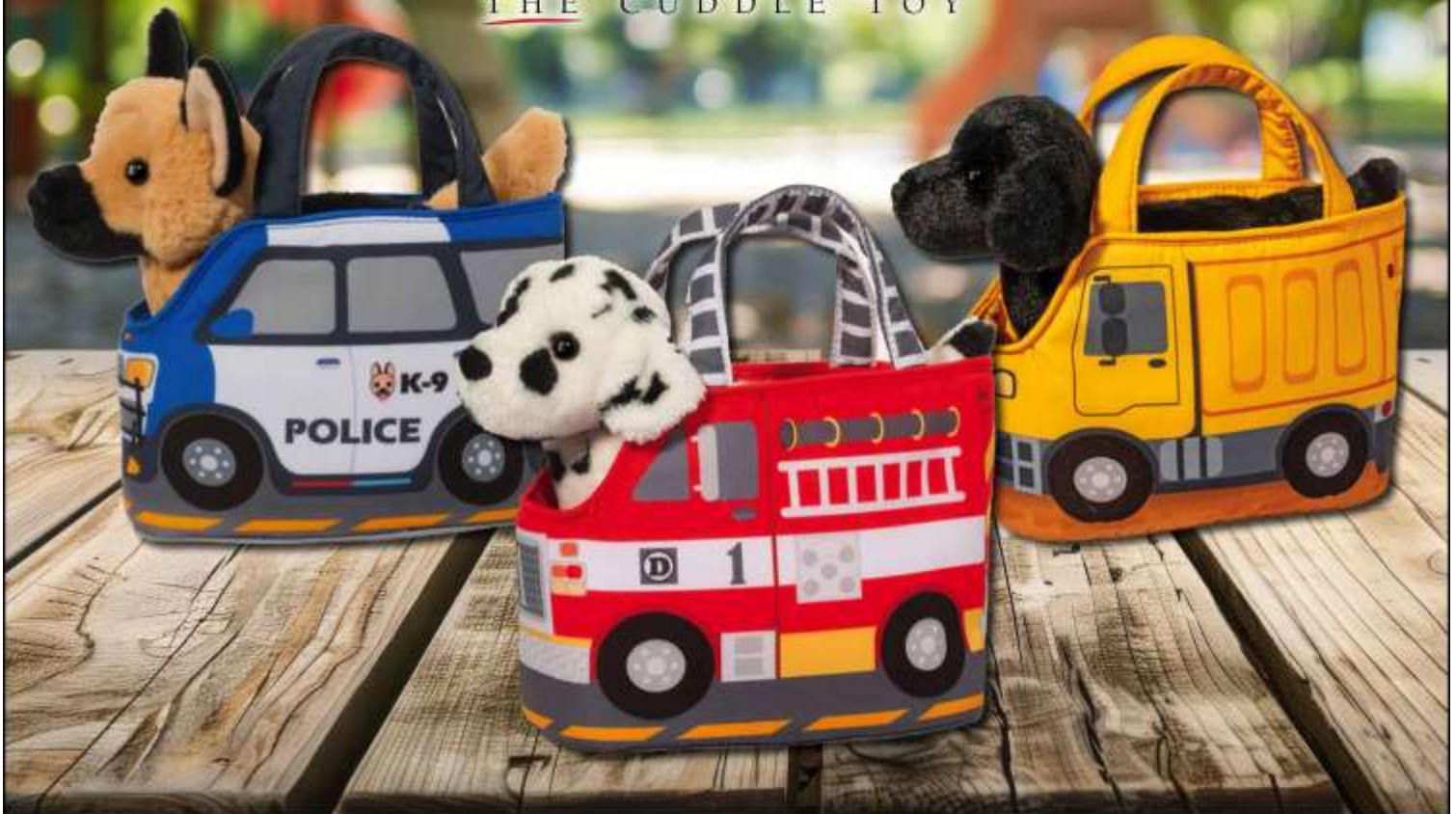
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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

VOTE NO ON THE FOUR MONTROSE CITY CHARTER AMENDMENTS

Please vote no on the proposed city charter amendments this November.

Editor:

The public pushback against the four proposed amendments, and the attitude of the mayor and two other conservative council members driving them, feels to me like a repeat of what we saw with former Montrose County Commissioner Scott Mijares in 2025.

Like Mijares, Mayor Michael Badagliacco appears to be pushing power toward a central executive structure rather than preserving the checks and balances between the city manager and the city council that keep local government accountable to everyone, not just the current city council or the political party in charge, locally or nationally.

Our city government isn't supposed to function as a partisan mirror of a mayor's personal politics; it exists to execute the law and serve residents regardless of who's in charge. Our city government is

nonpartisan meaning it is not supposed to be aligned with a political party's ideology. Badagliacco pursued firing City Manager Bill Bell, whose major "sin" appeared to be that he wasn't hired by this council and was a frequent topic of David White's opinion pieces.

The job and role of city manager should be able to carry out their job duties regardless of whether they share the mayor's political outlook.

If the proposed amendments pass, the City Council would have the right to approve or disapprove the City Manager's decision to appoint and discharge the Police Chief and City Clerk. Badagliacco has said he won't interfere beyond that — but given how openly he has embraced the local Republican party "playbook" of mass chaos and firings in what is supposed to be a nonpartisan office, I don't find that reassuring.

I'm also concerned by how frequently David White's name comes up related to both Badagliacco and Mijares and the chaos our community has endured because of these three men as elected officials.

It may be a coincidence, but the pattern is worth noting and watching.

The proposed four charter amendments offer no clear benefit to the public or to good city governance. If passed, they will concentrate power and advantage in the hands of three council members — Badagliacco, Ulibarri, and Woodden. One proposed amendment even extends their terms in office by seven months.

VOTE NO ON ALL FOUR city charter amendments on November 3rd. Fill out your mail-in ballot and hand-deliver it to the ballot box. Let's keep what's working Montrose!

Jolene Buntin, Montrose

25 YEARS AFTER 911

Editor:

With the Twenty Fifth Year of "9/11" around the bend it could be the largest gathering for the equally largest murder of Americans in a single day. Stealing four massive aircraft full of Americans, 17 Arabs attempted to slam all of them into buildings (one taken over by gallant Americans & crashing) with 2,977 Americans murdered within an hour.

With hundreds of people rushing to help within minutes and more working day and night for years to clean up, Over Twenty Five Thousand have died from breathing the billions of dangerous particles left in the air! The City of New York was immediately overwhelmed with the entire incident and after twenty five years it still is!

In the meantime millions of people from Arab lands have emigrated to America, many of whom have been less than friendly with not only Americans, but others who live in or close to American cities. Many have become or have been born American Citizens. Months ago one such person, Zohran Kwame Mamdani, ran and won Mayor of New York City. Mayor Mamdani was previously or became friends with two men, Abdulhama Mohamed El-Sayed who is now the Democratic nominee in the 2026 Michigan U.S. Senate.

A close friend of El-Sayed is Hasan DuganAbi Piker who also wanted the job but lost. Recently Hasan DuganAbi Piker declared that he was GLAD that NINE ELEVEN happened! With all (or some) of

Hasan's friends hearing this they were horrified, especially El-Sayed who told Hasan to say he didn't mean it. Hasan has now said he's sorry.

Not wanting to be left out of the coming 2026 9/11 Tributes Mayor Zohran Mamdani intends to be present at the tributes even though a thousand New Yorkers have told him he's not wanted! However, "Zohry" has a reason to be there (with friends), and he intends to dive into the 2,500+ men and women who died during and after years of breathing the poison dust. Surely a most terrible situation but if "Zohry" has his way he and his top Democrats could ruin the 19/11 Tributes and come out like roses even they'll never smell like them!

Gary Paul Johnston, Montrose

REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

CITY COUNCILOR DAVE FRANK RESIGNS

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE— Dave Frank has announced his resignation from the Montrose City Council, effective Monday, Sept. 7. He was elected to represent Council District IV on April 7, 2020, won re-election in 2024, and served as mayor for the 2022/23 and 2025/26 mayoral terms.

Upon his resignation, Councilor Frank released the following statement: "It has been an honor and privilege to serve the City of Montrose for the past 6 years. I am extremely proud to have been a part of the wonderful forward-thinking projects that made Montrose a better place to live," Frank said. "The stress and conflict of being a Council member take a toll on both our public and personal lives. I encourage citizens to step up and champion what is best for the City of Montrose."

On behalf of the City Council, Montrose Mayor Michael Badagliacco issued the

following statement:

"On Monday, September 7, 2026, Councilor Dave Frank submitted his resignation from the City Council. According to Mr. Frank, he did not make this decision lightly. The City Council would like to thank Mr. Frank for his dedicated service to the City of Montrose over the past six years, and we wish him well in his future endeavors."

Mr. Frank began serving on City Council in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, a period fraught with many uncertainties for the community and operational challenges for the City of Montrose. During the span of his service, the city achieved important milestones in developing critical municipal infrastructure. He is noted for his diligent research into the details of city issues, projects, and operations, and as a devoted champion of the Montrose community.

In addition to his work on the Montrose City Council, Mr. Frank has taken an active

role in advocating for municipal issues in Colorado, having served on the Executive Board of the Colorado Municipal League.

The process for filling vacancies on the City Council is provided in Article 1, Section 11 of the Montrose City Charter: "In case of a vacancy, the remaining Councilors shall choose by a majority vote, and within 30 days after such vacancy occurs, a duly qualified person to fill such vacancy. He or she shall serve until a successor is elected at the next ensuing special or general municipal election, whichever first occurs, and has been duly qualified and takes office. If three or more vacancies exist simultaneously, the remaining Councilors shall, at the next regular meeting of the Council, call for a special election to fill such vacancies, provided that there will not be a general election within 90 days."

For information, [visit CityofMontrose.org](https://www.cityofmontrose.org).



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OPINION/EDITORIAL COMMENTARY

STATEMENT FROM COUNCILORS BADAGLIACCO AND REED

To our Constituents:

We have not always seen eye-to-eye. We have disagreed, sometimes strongly, about decisions facing the City, the processes by which some of those decisions were made, and what we believe is best for Montrose. Those disagreements are real and remain. We will not pretend otherwise.

But there is something more important than the disagreements between us: our shared responsibility to the people of Montrose.

We both believe in this community. We want Montrose to remain a place where people can raise their families, build their businesses, retire with security, and feel that they belong. We want a city that is safe, well managed, financially responsible, welcoming, and prepared for the future. Those shared hopes are larger than either of us and more enduring than any single controversy.

That is why we met. We did not meet to erase our differences or to ask either person to surrender his convictions. We met because disagreement among elected officials must never become more important than the community they were elected to serve.

Montrose has experienced a difficult and divisive period. Public confidence has been tested. Relationships have been strained. Citizens who care deeply about this city have found themselves on different sides of important questions. Too often, disagreement has been interpreted as disloyalty, and questions have been treated as attacks. We want to begin changing that.

Reconciliation does not mean silence. Finding common ground does not require anyone, elected official or citizen, to abandon what he or she believes. It requires us to listen to one another, to respect the sincerity of those who see an issue differently, and to remember that after a vote is taken, we remain neighbors.

The four proposed charter amendments will be decided by the voters in November. We continue to have differences concerning those proposals and the process that brought them to the ballot. This joint statement does not resolve those differences,

constitute an endorsement or opposition of the amendments, or ask anyone to change a vote. Each of us remains free to express his views, and we shall, and every citizen must be equally free to study the questions, speak openly, and vote according to conscience.

What we can agree upon is that a city charter benefits from thoughtful review from time to time. The charter belongs to the people of Montrose, and its provisions shape their government long after any individual council member has left office.

Accordingly, following the November election and consideration of the proposed amendments, we will jointly ask the City Council to establish a citizens' charter review commission. The commission should broadly represent the community, examine the charter as a whole, invite meaningful public participation, and recommend whether additional changes would serve the long-term interests of Montrose. Whatever recommendations it may make, if any, and whether the Council and voters ultimately accept or reject them, the process itself can provide a constructive opportunity for citizens with different perspectives to work together on the future of their city government.

Recent questions concerning the 2026 General Municipal Election also tested our ability to work together. Those questions mattered to the community and deserved careful examination. An internal review of the information has been undertaken so that the public would not bear that cost. We confirm the certified election results, which stand.

An initial review has also identified weaknesses in the election process that should be corrected. We agree that the City should implement measures providing clearer election-administration responsibilities, refined and city-specific agreements, a formal and impartial process for selecting and appointing election judges, and an official place where every candidate is invited to await results on election night.

Confidence in an election's outcome and improvement of the process are not competing objectives. Both matter. Asking a

difficult question is not an attack, and correcting a genuine weakness is not an admission of bad faith. When citizens raise a legitimate concern, their government should examine it honestly, protect public resources, preserve what is sound, and correct what can be improved.

The commitments announced here will not eliminate every disagreement, nor are they intended to do so. They are intended to demonstrate that common ground must be more than words. Trust is rebuilt when public officials listen, include the community, acknowledge differences honestly, and follow expressions of goodwill with meaningful action.

We remain committed to finishing the work already underway, planning carefully for growth, stewarding public dollars, maintaining dependable infrastructure, supporting public safety, and protecting the character that makes Montrose worth calling home. We will listen to residents, including those who did not vote for us, and treat fellow council members, city staff, and the public with the respect these offices require.

The measure of our work will not be which person wins an argument at a meeting. It will be whether Montrose is safer, stronger, more livable, more welcoming, and more accountable because we served.

We cannot change what has already occurred, but we can decide what happens next.

We choose to move forward, not by forgetting our differences, but by handling them better; not by asking anyone to be silent, but by listening more carefully; and not by expecting agreement on every issue, but by remembering what brought each of us to public service in the first place.

Montrose is more than the government we administer or the issues we debate. It is our neighbors, our families, our shared history, and our shared home. It belongs equally to those who agree with us and those who do not. That is the common ground on which we stand, and the Montrose we will work together to serve.

*Mayor Michael Badagliacco
Councilor J. David Reed*

REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

ZIGGI'S COFFEE CELEBRATES EDUCATORS AND SCHOOL DISTRICT STAFF WITH FREE DRINKS FOR ANNUAL EDUCATOR APPRECIATION DAY

Special to the Mirror

DENVER – Ziggi's Coffee, the Colorado-based drive-thru coffee shop franchise with more than 120 locations across 25 states, is celebrating its annual Educator Appreciation Day on Monday, Sept. 14, offering one free small drink of choice to teachers and school district employees nationwide as staff embark on a new school year. Last year alone, Ziggi's gave away more than 13,000 free drinks as part of this day.

Unlike National Teacher Appreciation Week in May, Ziggi's Educator Appreciation Day extends beyond classroom teachers to also recognize the full school community – including bus drivers, custodians, front-office staff, aides and administrators – the employees who also help keep schools running every day.

The tradition reflects Ziggi's roots as a neighborhood coffee shop: with locations in 25 states, Ziggi's coffee shops sit within minutes of school communities coast to coast.

"Every Ziggi's Coffee shop is built into the neighborhoods we serve – and that means we're often just down the street from the schools where teachers and school staff show up to support our kids and communities," said Brandon Knudsen, CEO and co-founder of Ziggi's Coffee. "Educator Appreciation Day is our way of saying thank you to the people who help shape our communities every day, not just teachers, but the entire school team that keeps our districts running. It's a tradition we're proud to keep growing, year after year."

How It Works

On Sept. 14, teachers and school district employees can visit any Ziggi's Coffee location nationwide to receive one free small drink of their choice. To redeem, guests must be present in store, show a valid school or district employee ID, and be a Ziggi's Rewards member. Limit one free drink per person; all members of a group must be present at the time of purchase to receive the offer. Not valid through online or third-party delivery orders. If guests are not yet a Ziggi's Rewards member, they can sign up for free by visiting <https://ziggiscoffee.com/rewards/> before Sept. 14.

*Limit one (1) free small drink (16oz hot or 16oz cold) per customer. Must be present at the time of purchase to redeem. Must show a valid school I.D. or other proof of school district employment and be an active Ziggi's Rewards member to receive discount. Active Rewards membership is required to redeem; this offer does not earn Rewards points. Size upgrades, modifications, and/or add-ons charged separately. Offer cannot be combined with any other special offer or discount. Excludes bottled beverages and any other menu size. Offer cannot be redeemed through third party or mobile app orders. Valid for in-store purchase during normal business hours at all Ziggi's Coffee locations on 09/14/2026 only.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

FORUM TO FEATURE MONTROSE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE – SHERIFF GENE LILLARD

Special to the Mirror

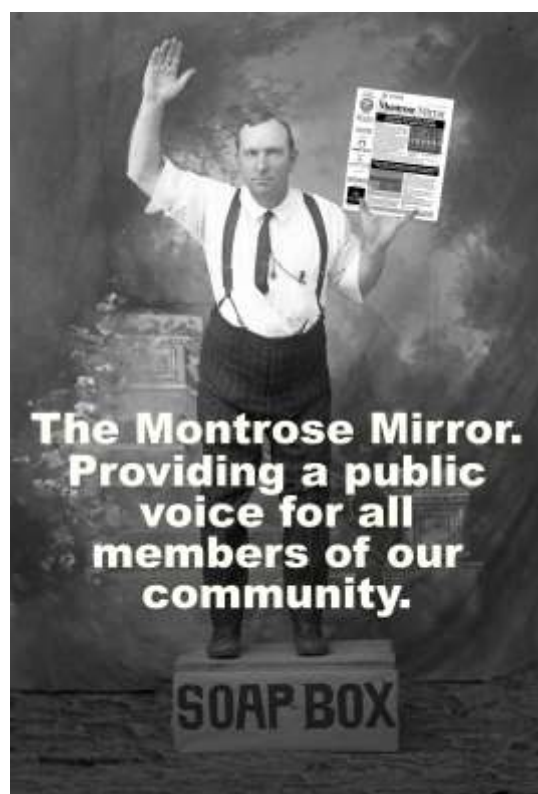
MONTROSE-Come hear Montrose County Sheriff Gene Lillard as he presents an update on his office and an overview of the issues requiring their attention.

In addition to the more visible presence of the Patrol, Investigations, and K-9 divisions, Montrose County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) provides Code Enforcement, Animal Control, School Resource Officers, and Victim Advocates to residents in the unincorporated areas of the county. The Sheriff is also the official custodian of the county jail. The Sheriff is responsible for the care and housing of inmates, transportation of prisoners, execution of writs, and support of court operations.

Sheriff Lillard is a native of Colorado and was raised in Telluride and Cedaredge. He has lived in Montrose County for the last 49 years, beginning in 1976 as a full-time patrol officer with the City of Montrose.

He was elected as the 21st Sheriff of Montrose County in 2018.

Join the Forum on Wednesday mornings in Cascade Hall at the Colorado Mesa University-Montrose campus, 245 S Cascade Ave., 8 AM May – September and 9:00 AM October – April.



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YOUR BRAIN ON NATURE: PARADISE VS. MORDOR



By Dr. Lauren Hall Ruddell, Ph. D.

Greetings Mirrorites!

OLATHE-Recently I found myself pondering the topic of the Rights of Nature. For readers unaware of this movement, it's the effort to provide natural features with legal standing. Personhood, if you will. Here's a brief synopsis of what this is so we can understand its implications for human well-being.

The Rights of Nature movement represents a shift in modern legal and environmental philosophy. It challenges the long-standing Western worldview that humans are the center of the universe. This has historically relegated nature to property, an inert collection of "resources" to be owned, exploited, and managed for human utility. Instead, the Rights of Nature framework asserts that ecosystems, wildlife, and the Earth itself are living entities possessing inherent, inviolable rights to exist, thrive, and regenerate. Paradise now has legal standing in many places. This means there is now a mechanism where these entities can be represented in court, allowing guardians or communities to sue on their behalf when their "right to exist" is threatened by pollution, development, or extraction. This movement is gaining traction, even in today's nature hostile political climate.

For example, in 2008, Ecuador became the first country to formally recognize the Rights of Nature in its national constitution, setting a global precedent that has since inspired similar legal experiments across the world, from the Whanganui



Idealized 25-30% greenscape for urban settings that help promote nature exposure and prevent extinction of experience. Anti-Mordor! Courtesy of the Arbor Day Foundation. Courtesy photo.

River in New Zealand to legal battles over rivers and forests in Colombia and India. I like reading about this because it lifts my spirits when I am pretty sure the world is heading for Mordor. For those of you readers who are not sci-fi geeks, Mordor is a fictional place invented by the author of the Lord of the Rings books and in everyday slang is a metaphor for a gloomy, industrial and barren place. I imagine an America filled with open pit mines and data centers to be just such a place one day.

I began wondering in the last couple of weeks if an argument can be made that the Rights of Nature movement benefits humans. In a future, nature-less, Mordor where we are all Orcs desiring only our next meat meal, will we be just as happy as we are now, after all? Some politicians and policy makers say yes, of course, and are delighted with a structure three times the size of Manhattan to be [built in Utah](#). Top legislators in this country think this project is 'really cool.' Ironically, it will be just the opposite, raising the annual average temperature for the surrounding community by 28 degrees F. But who cares, since it will, supposedly, create

hundreds of indoor jobs for tech prisoners.

We know that prisoners, the incarcerated kind, do way worse mentally when confined to gray spaces only. Greater within-population violence and recidivism (return to prison for offending after release) is significantly higher in old-fashioned slammers than facilities that offer gardening opportunities or 'pups for prisoners' programs. A faculty member at my old alma mater in Utah has shown that even virtual nature experiences help reduce aggression and improve prison harmony.

Further digging led me to a new topic I was previously unfamiliar with. I suspected that a phenomenon such as the Extinction of Experience (EoE) framework must surely exist, but hadn't run across it yet. But here it is, folks. And it's true whether you spend your days in a tech prison, actual prison, urban high rise or ghetto, too little nature time eventually hardens you. Too little availability results in a downward spiral of disconnection and indifference to the natural world. More contentment with Mordor and disinterest in Paradise results. The good news is there is a

YOUR BRAIN ON NATURE: PARADISE VS. MORDOR From previous pg

Goldilocks amount of green coverage and exposure to that coverage that reverses this effect and leads to an upward spiral of greater and greater appreciation for nature, and therefore greater and greater mental health benefits. And it's pretty modest coverage overall. *"Our analyses show that when greenspace coverage falls below 23 %..., a self-reinforcing feedback loop emerges, consistently leading to the EoE. Conversely, when greenspace exceeds 25 %, this vicious cycle is mitigated—or even reversed—into a virtuous cycle, where nature experience and connectedness to nature reinforce one another over time."* (Reintgen Kamphuisen et al, 2025). Twenty-five percent vegetation coverage in an environment that one can access isn't all that much. OK, now that is cool. And useful. So protecting nature in order to calm our brains is of mutual benefit to nature and to ourselves. But sadly, the trend is not currently in that direction.

Researchers Soga and Gaston (2016) raised an alarm about the extinction of experience in nature. Catchy terms for this such as *nature-deficit disorder* are now common parlance (Louv 2005). Despite a good deal of coverage about this online and even in legacy media outlet's such as The New York Times and The Guardian, people's connection to nature has declined by more than 60% since 1800, Computer modelling predicts that levels of nature connectedness will continue to decline unless there are far-reaching policy and societal changes.

This does not bode well for our brains. For example, direct and indirect nature exposure increases blood flow to areas of the brain responsible for experiencing empathy and altruism, benefiting our personal lives and society in general. In addition, and important for prisoners of all sorts, nature exposure reduces aggression. Lack of exposure and indifference to nature has, of course, the opposite effect.

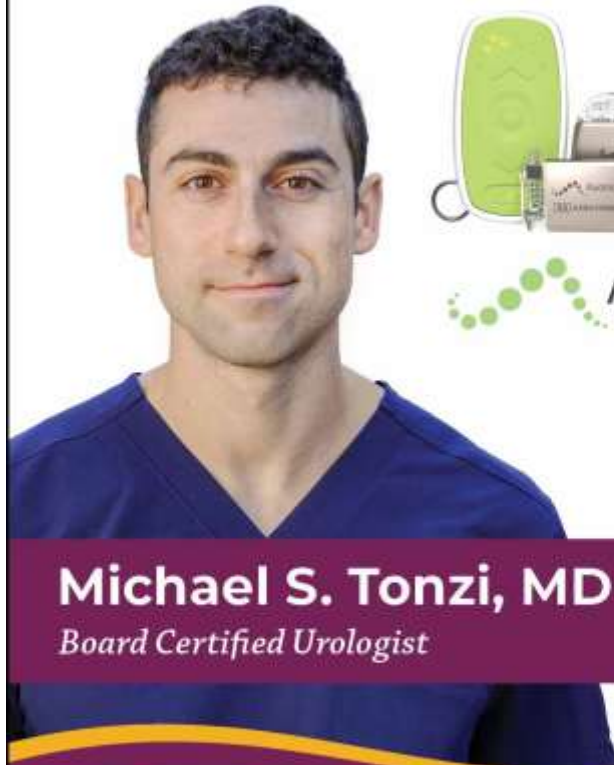
Free yourself from impending Mordor by voting pro-nature and being actively involved in greening your own neighborhoods and getting your nature exposure now in our beautiful Colorado fall weather in the next few weeks.

And for current information on local efforts involving The Rights of Nature, check out this excellent recent commentary by Gary Wokner of Save The Colorado.
Happy prison breaking,
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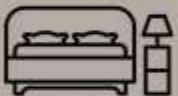
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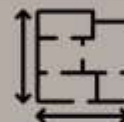
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OPINION/EDITORIAL: COMMENTARY

LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS – BEWARE THE STALKERS!

Staked Out or Found Out? The tactics of the “Community Organizers” need a civil adjustment!

By David White

It appears as though if you're an elected official on the conservative side of the political spectrum in Montrose these days, that it's fair game to follow you around town and monitor your movements or show up to any number of meetings to offer up threats or other forms of intimidation in the hopes that such actions might cause the person to back down from a stated position or objective and that it's okay to show some form of civil disobedience to make a point.

As a former elected official, I have had my share of interactions with community members in noticed public meetings, while out and about in the community, traveling, etc. but never had folks tailing me in vehicles, taking photos from a distance or otherwise engaging in actions that one might consider to be stalking. However, those kinds of actions are, apparently, a part of the playbook that's being used in Montrose these days.

We've seen a remarkable increase in “protests” come to our small town over the course of the last two to three years in a variety of ways that are obviously not organically created but are rather being brought in by outside influencers. In just the last year we've learned that groups such as Colorado Rural Voters (funded by the Western Organization of Resource Councils Foundation based in Billings, MT); regional and national movements such as Indivisible, No Kings, Common Cause Colorado along with others have brought hundreds of people to Montrose for “protests” all with the goal to overwhelm the local population with their antics. Even the local Democrat Party has a link to the ACLU website on how to conduct a protest and what your rights are if you do and are arrested. That's all well and good, but really, has it come to this?

If things weren't already being heated up with all of the above activities, at the recent September 8, 2026, RE-1J School District Board of Directors meeting, Ellen Angeles, a former Democratic Party candidate for the State Board of Education (District 3) and School District teacher

disclosed during the public comment period when questioning why the District wasn't charged for a visit by the school district's attorney on July 2nd, she stated that ***“we have pictures of Brad Miller (the attorney for the school district) on July 2nd when we have a picture of Brad Miller in front of Ms. Ballack's workplace and he was there.”*** (Neisha Ballack is the School Board President.) (See the referenced video here at the 1:09:34 mark - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NWVrZS6_f7k&t=4289s).

The key takeaway is the fact that one or more persons (the “we” in the above statement) took the time to “stake out” Ms. Ballack's workplace waiting to photograph her and others that might have ties to the school district for some questionable reason and purpose. Sleuthing or intimidation? Infringing upon the freedom of association or some other nefarious reason to sew dissent? Answers need to be forthcoming from Ms. Angeles and her associates.

In another incident, the wife of a City Councilor was forced to move from seat to seat during the September 1, 2026, City Council meeting where she was in attendance as an observer when a frequent antagonist who has attended many City Council meetings over the last few months was deliberately trying to stir trouble by following her from seat to seat. Again, intimidation or just plain rudeness?

At the same City Council meeting, yet another frequent antagonist and political organizer, spoke during the Council's “call to the public” and personally called out and tried to publicly shame the County Clerk, one of her employees and her office for the numerous missteps by the City Clerk over the handling of the 2026 municipal election in an attempt to deflect attention away from the party they were there to defend. (Seen here at the 9:09 mark - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nsh2llute1M>) On top of that, another Councilor was reported to have been subjected to being followed or “tailed” to their home by a heretofore unidentified “someone” after a recent Council

meeting. What the heck? What are we devolving into folks?

It's one thing if you civilly present your argument to the elected body you have an issue with, whether it's in writing, at a public meeting or just in casual conversation, but it's not okay to employ the tactics that have been identified in this commentary. Numerous threats are made against elected officials on a daily basis, but to see this becoming a daily occurrence in our town is disheartening.

While I've had disagreements with elected officials as well as other public officials over policy, regulations, misuse of taxpayer dollars, etc., none of those disagreements gave me license to “get in their physical space” or violate their privacy. That goes for most folks; however, this latest crop of community activists and organizers see things differently. I say, knock it off. We can call things out and voice an opinion and I often do when I have the facts to back up what I'm saying without getting into their non-public lives.

Outside of publicly available information and statements that they make in their roles as elected or appointed officials, what's left is their business. Most local elected officials have day jobs that have nothing to do with their elected positions and rely on those to support their families. Let's remember that especially if these antagonists intend to put themselves in line to run for office. The tables could turn. That's something worth remembering.

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.

OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

EVOLUTION

By Don Stott

I have been looking through my hundreds of columns and books I have written, and I can find nothing about evolution.

-Strange, because I firmly believe in things which can be seen, and are logical. Inflation as an example. In 2025, the U.S. Government spent \$8.1 trillion dollars, and only took in \$5.26 trillion dollars, which means that \$2.84 trillion had to be printed, bonds sold, or some form of decreasing the value of the dollar, or inflation. All very simple, even though most people believe that the Fed's interest rates cause inflation.

Evolution, is taught everywhere, even though no one has ever seen a whale with legs, a giraffe with a short neck, or a fruit fly with a life span of 30 days, 'evolved' from a different fruit fly. No prehistoric Neanderthal man has ever been discovered with three legs, no ears, or any variation of a human, as we now know us. Why do people believe in something which has never been observed as having happened, of which there is no evidence of, and the idea is patently absurd? The same who think the Fed's interest rates cause inflation?

You have heard of the gold Krugerrand, haven't you? It's from South Africa, where the currency is called the 'rand.' A long dead president of South Africa, was a man named Paul Krueger, which would be the same as our George Washington. Hence the Krugerrand in South Africa, would be like our 'Washington dollar.' I mention this because Krueger went to his grave, believing that the Earth was flat. Did his followers also believe that? Was it taught in South African schools?

Most believe evolution was formed by Charles Darwin when he wrote "The Origin of the Species." It was in two volumes, but the two books never tell of how the species originated! Darwin was born in 1809 in London, of fairly wealthy parents. He was inquisitive, believed in the Bible and creation. Darwin was a regular visitor to the London Zoo, and loved the finch bird. He also was a collector of various specimens. In 1831, Darwin signed on

to a five year cruise, which took him literally, around the world. Unfortunately, he was always sea sick; he visited so many places that a mountain was named after him, but he never found any evidence of evolution. When he returned in 1836, he decided that Bible truths were not true at all. Darwin became a noted scientist, and this is when he wrote in 1859, "The Origin of the Species," which two volumes never wrote about their origin. As far as I can read, Darwin never used the word 'evolution' in any of his writings.

Darwin coined the phrase, "Natural Selection," which of course has been common throughout all history of animals, fishes, and man. We all mate by 'natural selection!' Male fish find the prettiest female fish, as do all animals and humans. No evolution there.

Herbert Spencer (1829-1903) began writing of his idea of evolution, and after reading Darwin's two volumes, wrote, "Principles of Biology." In that book, Spencer coined the phrase, "Survival Of The Fittest." Spencer was self taught, and was a railway engineer. He had no degrees, but was vocal in many fields, had many theories about a lot of things, and by 1900, was basically ignored. What of Spencer has survived is, "Survival of the Fittest," which has nothing to do with evolution, but like 'natural selection,' are habits of all living things of all species. The fittest always survive!

The evolution nonsense, has increased over the past 175 years, as absolute truth, like the current "Big Hole," which scientists say eats stars. No one has ever seen a 'big hole,' but it seems to be accepted as gospel truth, like the 'ozone cloud' or whatever it is called, which 50 years ago, scientists predicted Earth's demise, unless all that F-12 (Freon) was replaced with F-134. We're still here, and at a cost of many hundreds of millions of dollars, F-12 is illegal, and I'm certain that the inventors and manufacturers of F-134 were, and still are delighted.

When something is never seen, evidence of it never discovered, no 'in between' species ever been observed, uncovered,

or in any way proven, why is it taught as immovable, uncontested, 'truth'?

As I finish this on Friday morning, the 25th anniversary of 9/11, I remember it well. My wife Bonnie and I were transfixed on the TV screen watching it all take place. As the 25th anniversary is taking place, there are no photos of Shanksville, Pennsylvania shown, where flight 93 was supposed to have crashed. I remember it very well. All that was shown was a pile of dirt with smoke rising from it. Where was the crashed plane? I well remember the fire and damage done to the Pentagon, but there was no plane there. Pilots have said that such a maneuver would have been impossible. Where were the engines and fuselage at the Pentagon? Where were pictures of World Trade Center #3, which also crashed, but no plane having crashed into it? The answers to 9/11, will be forever buried.

In July of 1945, a B-25 bomber crashed into the Empire State building in New York, and the Empire State Building never collapsed! Why did the World Trade Centers collapse? They were supposed to be 'state of the art,' and were impossible to collapse due to a plane crashing into them. Look at the movies and think of how they could have possibly collapsed!

Did U.S. pilots give up their seats to Arabs who took over their planes and crashed them into the World Trade Centers? Some of these supposed pilots, took flying lessons in Florida, but failed completely, and were unable to be taught to fly even the most basic of planes. Like evolution, the ozone cloud, big hole, inflation, evolution, and other 'mysteries,' we will never know the truth, but we will teach and celebrate them forever, I suppose.

We're here to try to explode the fantasy that paper money and government do not create prosperity or wealth.

Prosperity, invention, manufacture, and for that matter security, are created by nature when she created gold and silver. Freedom is not given by government, but is a natural desire inbred in all of us. Sorry, I guess 9/11 has me angry all over again!

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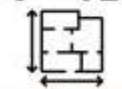


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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

BLM AND SOUTHERN UTE INDIAN TRIBE PLAN FOR OIL AND GAS DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHWESTERN COLORADO

Special to the Mirror

DOLOROS— The Bureau of Land Management and the Southern Ute Indian Tribe are formally initiating a planning process to guide and analyze the future development of tribal trust oil and gas resources within a 110,00-acre planning area located within the Southern Ute Indian Reservation. The anticipated future development would be in the Mancos Shale Formation, an underground rock layer approximately 7,000 feet beneath the surface within the San Juan Basin region.

To initiate the planning process, the BLM and Southern Ute Indian Tribe will host an in-person public scoping meeting from 6 to 8:30 p.m. Mountain Time on Sept. 24, 2026, at the Sky Ute Casino Resort, Event Center, 14324 US Highway 172 North, Ignacio, CO 81301. Please contact us if you need reasonable accommodations to participate.

The planning area that is the subject of the BLM decision-making encompasses approximately 108,000 acres, including 64,000 acres of tribal trust minerals. These tribal trust minerals are minerals that are held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Southern Ute Indian Tribe. The project area also contains 42,000 acres of fee minerals that are owned by an individual, company, tribe, or other entity. There are no federal public lands or minerals located within the planning area. BLM's planning decision will concern the development of the tribal trust minerals within the planning area and the associated environmental effects.

This planning effort represents an important step in supporting the Southern Ute Indian Tribe's long-term management of its trust mineral resources, and fulfillment of the United States' trust obligations to the tribe. The Bureau of Indian Affairs will serve as a Cooperating Agency.

Comments may be submitted through the "Participate Now" option (preferred) to the [BLM National NEPA Register](#). Comments may also be mailed or delivered to the [BLM Tres Rios Field Office](#), Attn: Ryan Joyner, 29211 Highway 184, Dolores, CO 81323. Comments must be received by Oct. 9, 2026, which is 15 days after the public meeting. For more information, contact Ryan Joyner at BLM_CO_TR_Mancos_Shale@blm.gov or 970-882-7296.

The potential development is expected to boost the local economy, provide jobs, generate income, and increase demand for services.

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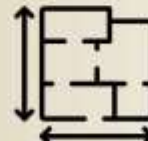
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COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

DALE VAN PELT

May 11, 1931- September 5, 2026

DALE VAN PELT was born on May 11, 1931 in Oberlin, Kansas to Kenneth and Charlotte (Uehlin) Van Pelt. He passed away at home on September 5, 2026 surrounded by his family and caregivers at the age of 95.

Dale and his four siblings (Don, Violet, Lee, and Charlene) grew up in Decatur County, Kansas until 1947 when the family moved to Cedaredge, Colorado. Dale and Lee were two peas in a pod, often working the farm chores together and managing to get into a little trouble along the way. When both of their wives passed away in the early 2000's, Dale and Lee would return to their boyhood and spend nearly all of their time together, laughing and carrying on just like they did as kids.

Dale met his future wife, Dorothy "Dot" Tabor at the Delta Sales Yard, and the two were wed on February, 22, 1952. The pair had only been married one month when Dale was called to serve in the Army for the next two years. Dot was able to follow him to Detroit, but returned home when he was called to the Canadian Border later that year.

When Dale returned home after serving in the Army, he worked with his brothers Don and Lee and traveled all over Southern Colorado and Utah working on a drill rig. Dale and Dot eventually settled in Uravan, Colorado, and on January 31, 1955, Sandra "Sandy" Van Pelt was born, and she quickly became the apple of Dale's eye. Dale took Sandy hunting, fishing, and hauling ore with him in the truck; the two often had stories to tell Dot when they arrived home.

In 1973, Sandy married Neil Snyder and he and Dale grew to be very close. In 1977, Dale's first grandson was born (Brandon), followed by his first granddaughter in 1981 (Billi).

In 1987, Dale and Dot's third granddaughter was born (Brooke), and even though Dale and Dot lived in Montana during this time, they were close with their grandkids and doted upon them every chance they got. When they returned from Montana, they lived in Redvale for a while before settling down in Montrose in 1988 where he remained until his death. Dale and his grandkids spent many holidays, weekends, and summers together. The kids loved spending time with him, and he was always willing to take them hunting or fishing or out to the airport to watch planes take off and land.

Dot passed away in 2001, and Dale remained in Montrose close to family and his brother Lee, and sister Charlene. He was blessed with three great-grandchildren; Berkeley Ann in September of 2005, Alexis Rae in May of 2007, and Brady Dale in July of 2008. His house was decorated with their photos over the years, and he always welcomed the opportunity to visit them, or share a hunting story or two (or three).

Dale loved telling stories, making people laugh, and spending time with his family and devoted caregivers. He was surrounded by family in Montrose and visitors would stop in just to say hi. He always had a handshake and a shot of whiskey to offer.

Dale was preceded to death by his wife,



Dot, his brothers Don and Lee, and his sister Violet. He is survived by sister, Charlene Weiszbrod, his daughter Sandy Guthmann, grandchildren Brandon (Dawnessa) Snyder, Billi Phillips, and Brooke (Casey) Knopp, his great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews.

The family will be hosting a Celebration of Life on Sunday, September 20 at 1 p.m. at Dale's residence in Montrose.

A graveside memorial will follow at a later date.

The family would like to thank Professional Case Management (PCM) and their staff for the wonderful care over the last several years, and Hope West Hospice for their care over the last month of his life. Additionally, the family would like to thank his caregiver and best friend, Lucy Skiles, who made his last few years some of the very best of his life.

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COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

PEGGY "PEG" BAUMGARDNER *December 11, 1943-August 30, 2026*



PEGGY "PEG" BAUMGARDNER, 82, of Montrose, Colorado, passed away at home on August 30, 2026, after a lengthy, hard-fought battle with lung cancer.

Peg was born on December 11, 1943, to Jess W. and Mabel (Griffith) Passmore in Marshall, Arkansas. Her family lived in Mountain View, Arkansas, until she was eleven years old. It was then that the fam-

ily moved to Ridgway, Colorado for her dad to pursue work in the timber industry. She graduated from Ridgway High School in 1961 and attended Mesa College Business School in Grand Junction, Colorado, for one year.

In 1963, Peg married Jack Baumgardner in Denver, Colorado. Jack was the brother of her best friend, Shirley (Baumgardner) Broadhead. Peg and Shirley remained lifelong friends, exchanging daily morning and evening texts—along with their friend Chan (Falduto) Foote—to check on each other and to say "good night".

Jack and Peg lived in Ridgway and Carbondale before returning to Montrose in 1968, where Peg lived for the remainder of her life. She worked for the Montrose County School District for 20 years, starting as a paraprofessional and retiring as the Head Secretary for Special Services. She also worked for court reporters, dermatology offices, and neurologist Dr. Michael Hehman for over 16 years, officially retiring at age 75.

Peg loved to dance, listen to music, and visit the Passmore family cabin on the Big Cimarron. She held a yearly cabin gather-

ing with her long-time friends and sisters-in-laws to share laughs, stories, and secrets that were not to leave the cabin. She loved her extended Baumgardner family and considered herself lucky for the kindness and love they showed her over the years.

Peg was preceded in death by her grandmother, Maggie Ingram; her father, Jess W. Passmore; her mother, Mabel (Griffith) West; her brothers, Larry and Gene Passmore; and her husband, Jack Baumgardner. She is survived by her Aunt Pauline Tomlinson; her half-sister, Velda (Hooper) Bryson; her son and daughter-in-law, Scott and Sue Baumgardner; her daughter, Mindy Baumgardner; and her granddaughters, Hailey and Bethany Wells. In addition to her immediate family she is also survived by her companion and friend, Larry Johnson; and numerous cousins, nieces, and nephews.

A memorial service will be held on September 24, 2026, at 2:00 PM at The Sherbino in Ridgway, Colorado. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to HopeWest, The Sherbino, or a charity of your choice.



COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

KATHLEEN KEARNEY

October 21, 1942- September 5, 2026

KATHLEEN KEARNEY, age 83, of Montrose, Colorado, passed away peacefully on September 5, 2026.

Born on October 21, 1942, in Crowley, Louisiana, Kathleen was the daughter of the late Dorys Mitchell Reed and James E Reed. As a young lady in the South, she was crowned Queen of the Children's Carnival in Lafayette, Louisiana and served as Senior Class President at Lafayette High. She graduated from Lafayette High School in 1960, attended the University of Southwestern Louisiana, and graduated from Regis University in Denver, Colorado in 1992.

In 1962, Kathleen married Tom Kearney, with whom she shared 64 wonderful years of marriage and three children. Kathleen and Tom moved their family from Louisiana to Houston, Texas in 1969; and realized their dream when the family moved to Montrose, Colorado in 1980. During her 46 years in Montrose, Kathleen showed boundless energy and commitment to her many community and social endeavors. Upon her arrival in Montrose, she became an active member of St. Mary's Catholic Church, serving on its parish council as well as being a lector and a greeter over the years. She served on boards for the Academic Booster Club and Historic Montrose Downtown. After moving to the Cobble Creek community in 2015, she joined the Hospitality Committee and served as its chairperson for several years. She also served on numerous committees for the Cobble Creek Ladies' Golf League. She began volunteering at Heirlooms for Hospice around 2019, thoroughly enjoying that pursuit as both a volunteer and one of Heirlooms' best customers.

Kathleen worked for State Farm Insurance for 16 years and for Dr. Richard Shannon for seven years. She loved to hike, play pickleball and golf, snowshoe, work in her garden, feed her birds, and play many games including bridge, which she had played since college. Her true passion was travel – and Kathleen and Tom reveled in their adventures to Italy, Australia, Peru, and so many other rewarding destinations. She proudly wore the badge of being “a good cooker.” And she cherished everything about the holidays – especially decorating and admiring her Christmas tree – and a 38-year tradition of family Thanksgivings in Phoenix, never complete without a batch of her world-famous gumbo.

More than anything, Kathleen treasured the people in her life. Her kindness, southern hospitality, and unwavering devotion to her family and friends will be remembered by everyone fortunate enough to know her.

She is survived by her three children, Brian (Karin), Kim and Allison (Mike); five grandchildren, Kolby (Leah), Shea (Jackie), Dylan (Mariah), Aaron and Isaac; four great-grandchildren, James, Ava, Tatum and Reed; and her brother, David Reed (Debbie and daughter, Kate).

A funeral mass will be held at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Montrose on October 16 at 10 a.m. Private interment will immediately follow. All are welcome to a Celebration of Kathleen's Life at the Cobble Creek Golf Course Clubhouse from 12:30-2:30. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to HopeWest or the San Juan Cancer Center in Montrose.



Now more than ever...

Thank you for reading

THE MONTROSE MIRROR

COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

MICHAEL LYNN HOLDEN

October 30, 1949- September 4, 2026



MICHAEL LYNN HOLDEN was born in La Junta, CO on October 30, 1949. He went to be in the care of his Savior and Lord Jesus Christ on September 4, 2026, one day after celebrating 33 years of marriage to his beloved wife, Irene.

His parents, now deceased, were Charlotte Germaine Holden (Holden) and Wilber Lee Holden. When Michael was 6 months old, his parents moved from La Junta to Scott City KS. His parents lived on a turkey ranch. They moved to Lovelock, NV on the Circle L Ranch for 3 years and back to Scott City, KS, where he continued his education through his sophomore year in high school. While in high school, he played football, basketball, and competed in track. When his sophomore year was finished, his family moved to Hastings, NE, where he finished his junior and senior years. During the summer, he worked on combine crews across Kansas. When he returned home, his mom had enrolled him in Hastings College. After trying college for a semester, he decided to join the Navy in 1969, and headed to San Diego. There he went to Boot Camp and later to Groton, Connecticut where he went to submarine school. He spent the next 13 years qualifying on submarines which included: the USS Quillback SS424, USS FS Key SSBN657, USS James K Polk SSBN645, and USS

Groton SSN694.

His travels took him from San Diego, California to Charleston, South Carolina to Key West, Florida to Groton, Connecticut to Holy Lock, Scotland, and Rota Spain. He went by submarine through the Panama Canal to Bremerton, Washington. He completed missile firing tests in Cape Kennedy, Florida, and then back to Rota Spain, where more missile tests were conducted. He qualified as an electronics instructor and taught Iranians in San Diego, CA. He also received training on a new sonar system and became an instructor to teach sonar repair for 3 to 4 years.

He received an honorable discharge after 13 years in the Navy, where he had served most of that time as a sonar tech. He was awarded three good conduct medals.

After the Navy, his job was with McDonald Douglas Astronmies Corp. in St. Louis, Missouri, where he was an instructor to write a course for NATO about missiles.

When an opportunity to work in field service came, he traveled to different Air Force bases, and government contractors to teach the operation and repair of missile test equipment.

Later he got a job with General Dynamics out of San Diego, Ca to repair missile test equipment and from there, another field service job on SAC Air Force Base in Marquette Michigan. He spent over 4 years there and while at that base, he met President Bush and also used his artistic ability to paint a huge mural on 20 x 20' doors depicting the Earth with two B52 bombers and a new type missile next to an old type missile. Quite an undertaking!

After Desert Storm was over, the contract with SAC Air Force Base ended so he decided to take a layoff in the Denver Colorado area where his two sons Shawn and Rick Holden lived. His first marriage had ended in divorce. He worked with a cabinet maker there and managed an apartment complex.

After traveling to Montrose, he answered an ad for a stipple artist. Although he had no formal training, because of his self-taught talent, they hired him. He worked

for Habitat T-shirt Company for over 6 1/2 years doing stipple wildlife artwork to be printed on T-shirts! That is also where he met the love of his life – Irene Leonard (Helmick) Holden. They were married in 1993 in Montrose at Valley Manor Care Center's backyard, where Irene was working at that time in the activities department for the elderly. Even though they never had children together, Michael said that Irene was his "anchor" that kept him in Montrose where he resided the rest of his days.

Surviving him, besides his wife, Irene, are his sons Shawn (Kim) Holden, Bentonville, AR; Rick Holden, Blue Hill, NE; and James Nicklin, Nassau, NH. Also, his stepchildren: Amy (Jim) Bollinger of Montrose; Laney Helmick, Paron, AR and deceased stepson Aaron Helmick; his siblings: Patricia (Steve) Consbruck, Dalhart, TX; Douglas (Linda) Holden, Volcano, CA; and Andrew Holden. He also has 11 grandchildren, 9 bonus grandchildren, plus 1 great grandchild and 10 bonus great grandchildren. He is also survived by 2 aunts, 3 cousins, and many nephews and nieces.

Besides the ocean, Michael's greatest joy was the mountains! He helped his wife run the family ranch on Fitzpatrick Mesa and also enjoyed plowing snow for CDOT over Cerro Summit and Blue Mesa in the winter months. He devoted a lot of his time helping Irene with hunting groups and managing cow operations that rented the ranch. In 2020, he had an accident while welding that caused him to break his neck. He was flown to St. Mary's Hospital where he had surgery, but was paralyzed from the neck down. He kept telling everyone that "God told me he was going to heal me" and after months of rehab at St. Mary's, he was able to walk out of the hospital with a walker! God miraculously did heal him, and he was able to enjoy six more years! He never regained his strength, but always gave God praise for every day! He truly loved the Lord with all his might! He also showed love and caring for family and friends, and had a grateful attitude for all his blessings.

COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

CHARLES DAVID CORDOVA ***June 29, 1944- September 4, 2026***

CHARLES DAVID CORDOVA, 82, passed away peacefully on September 4, 2026, surrounded by his family in Parker, Colorado, where he resided at the time of his passing.

Charles was born June 29, 1944, to Luis Martinez and Lola Dolores (Gallegos) Cordova in Montrose, Colorado, where he was raised. As a young man, he took the last name Cordova, having grown up with his stepfather, Ray Cordova.

Charles married his hometown sweetheart, Virginia (Bosgal) Cordova, on June 24, 1966. They were married at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Montrose, Colorado, where they remained lifelong members. Together, Charles and Virginia shared 52 years of marriage before Virginia's passing in 2018. During their marriage, they also lived for short periods in Elgin, Illinois, and Johnstown, Colorado, before returning to Montrose. Charles later moved to the Castle Rock area to be closer to his children.

Charles began his career as a computer operator and held several jobs before spending many years working for DMEA (Delta-Montrose Electric Association). He eventually retired from WAPA (Western Area Power Administration) in Montrose.

Family was at the heart of Charles's life. He cherished spending time with his children and grandchildren and especially enjoyed bicycle rides, fishing, and camping - his favorite pastimes. He was always ready for a project around the house and could often be found putting in his garage. Charles enjoyed playing on softball teams, especially alongside his two sons, and he never missed an opportunity to cheer on two of his favorite teams, the Colorado Rockies and the Los Angeles Dodgers. He also loved learning about his family history through genealogy.

His faith was an important part of his life. Charles was an active member of St. Mary's Catholic Church, serving in many roles over the years, including Lector, Eucharistic Minister, church bookkeeper, and member of the Knights of Columbus, among others. He believed in giving back and also volunteered with CASA and the prison ministry.

Charles was who family and friends relied on when it mattered most. There are so many things we will remember and miss deeply about him, but perhaps most of all, it will be his wonderful sense of humor and quick, witty comebacks that will continue to bring smiles and laughter to our memories of him.

Charles is survived by his children, James Cordova of Elizabeth, Colorado; Amy (Cordova) Dixon of Castle Rock, Colorado; and Sonny Cordova of Colorado Springs, Colorado; eight grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; and his brother, Lloyd Martinez of Sun Lakes, Arizona.

He was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Virginia Cordova; his parents, Luis Martinez, Lola Dolores Cordova and Ray Cordova; and his sister, Emily Martinez.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to St. Mary's Catholic Church.



Thank you for reading

THE MONTROSE MIRROR

ISSUE 591 Sept. 14, 2026

ART & SOL

LAST CHILD IN THE WOODS: SAVING OUR CHILDREN FROM NATURE DEFICIT DISORDER: a book by Richard Louv

By Carrie Krickbaum,
Friends of Youth and Nature

REGIONAL-It doesn't hurt that some of us need to be reminded that children are becoming increasingly disconnected from nature, right? I remember when we were given a book after our son had attended an "Advanced Junior Ranger" camp at Black Canyon National Park. That very influential book, *Last Child in the Woods: Saving our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder* by Richard Louv, came out in 2005. It was, and still is, meant to inform the reader about the impacts on children spending too much more time indoors than they have in the past. It wants us to let them be outdoors and let their imaginations run wild.

Richard Louv coined the term "nature-deficit disorder" to describe the human costs of alienation from nature. Louv attributes the lack of nature in the lives of kids today to some of the current childhood trends, such as the rise in obesity, depression and attention deficit disorder. Louv argues that isolation from nature is not only harmful to children's overall health including physical, emotional, and spiritual growth, but also to their appreciation and understanding of the environment...this is the world we live in and are responsible for taking care of.

The book presents an argument that since the 1970s, children have become increasingly disconnected from the natural world, spending more time indoors in front of computer/telephone/TV screens



Children exploring wildflowers in the West Elk Wilderness, Photo Credit Anne Janik.

and less time engaging in outdoor play. This disconnection, Louv suggests, has serious consequences for their physical and mental well-being. Urbanization, the easy access to technology, and parental fears about safety have contributed to this disconnect with nature.

Mental, behavioral and emotional growth of children is greatly enhanced by engaging directly with nature. Louv believes that engagement in unstructured play and exploration of the outdoor environment

elevates children's creativity and problem-solving abilities, while promoting health and emotional well-being.

In the book, Louv remains optimistic about reversing the trend of increased alienation from nature. Efforts of individuals, organizations and communities are working to reconnect children with nature. These efforts include outdoor education programs, creation of more natural play spaces in urban areas, and campaigns to encourage families to spend more time

Continued next pg

LAST CHILD IN THE WOODS: SAVING OUR CHILDREN FROM NATURE DEFICIT DISORDER

From Previous pg

outdoors, including hiking, camping, gardening and other outdoor activities. Louv encourages parents and educators to foster an appreciation for the natural world in children from a young age. Families are urged to adopt a culture that embraces outdoor exploration as part of daily life. This sounds like a wonderful idea that has been promoted by many other authors, educators, and conservation groups.

Last Child in the Woods is not a doomsday warning but rather a collection of evidence that recommends a major shift in the relationship between children and nature is paramount to guarantee a more physically and emotionally healthy population. According to Richard Louv's book website (<https://richardlouv.com/books/last-child>), his book *Last Child in the Woods: Saving our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder* has

spurred an international movement to connect children, families and communities to the natural world. Since then, he has published other books that will also change or reinforce the way you think about your future and the future of your children. These include: *"The Nature Principle"* which continues to focus on ending Nature Deficit Disorder and *"Vitamin N"*... a guide to Nature-Rich your life along with several more.

In 2018, he was awarded the national Audubon Medal, whose recipients include Rachel Carson. This is just one of many awards he has received.

Friends of Youth and Nature (FOYAN) is a non-profit organization that promotes opportunities for youth and families to go outside, experience outdoor activities and explore nature. For outdoor safety tips, trail game ideas, hiking trails, and other ways to get young people involved in



Exploring the Dominguez-Escalante Conservation Area. Photo Credit, Anita Evans

the outdoors, visit the FOYAN website at www.friendsofyouthandnature.org.



RSVP for the Montrose Veterans Memorial Brick laying ceremony on September 26th.



1st Annual Montrose

BOOK FAIR

Literary Festival • Local authors & Artists

Ute Museum, 17253 Chipeta Rd., Montrose

COUNTDOWN

**Sat.
Sep. 19**



**10 am-
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DAYS TO GO

**Live Music • Silent Auction • Books & Art for Sale
Artists Painting • Food • Prizes • Museum Discounts**



BOOK FAIR

SEPTEMBER 19th - UTE MUSEUM - 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

FREE Literary Festival · Local Writers & Working Artists



Books · Live Music · Food · Prizes



MONTROSE BOOK FAIR IS A FESTIVAL – WITH SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE!

Special to the Mirror

This Saturday at the Ute Museum, help us celebrate the incredible talent and diversity of our creative community: authors, artists, illustrators, and indie publishers. We will be joined by and supported with books and information from our local history associations (Mesa and Montrose Counties).

Got kids? We'll have—literally—hundreds of illustrated books. Perfect for family lap-reading time. Great tools for teachers and educators. Grandparent favorites and make the perfect gift for holidays, birthdays, and special occasions.

Love history? It's a big part of this event. Learn more about local history, discover new information about the American West, and read true stories by about World War I and II by the people experienced the front lines.

Are you a caregiver? Is caregiving in your future? Find out how to manage this difficult job and discover ways to plan for and manage situations arising from illness, accidents, or aging—in place or at care facilities. Written by authors who lived and experienced helping those in need...or needing help themselves.

Wanna find the best hiking and biking trails in our area? We've got you covered with maps and guidebooks helping you get out on the local trails. Written and published by the folks who found them and use them with gusto!

How about a heart-stopping military thriller? We're having a book launch for retired SEAL, [W.L. Bach](#), whose 5th book is just coming out.

And just in case, that prediction comes thru, visit with [George Dewiliby](#), an author from Montrose Cardiology Department who writes about caregiving...but would spot your reaction of Bachman's book takes your breath away!

Love stories? Short stories romantic fiction, mystery and YA—we'll have them all, including stories by [Laura Padgett](#) who tells stories with her harps, a heart-warming memoir by [David Padilla](#), and hilarious kid's quotes from Montrose beloved, [Dr. Mary](#).

Love art? Some of our favorite artists from Ridgway, Montrose, Cedaredge, Palisade, even Albuquerque will be attending, some of them painting and drawing while you watch.

Buy a book or a painting and have it signed just for you, maybe with an inscription. Artists will have hand-painted greeting cards, too—so pretty, and farmable so you can keep them or send them on.

Sign up for an art class and get a Show Special tuition discount. Kate Burke, owner of San Juan Publishing, also teaches art classes at various local venues, and will make those classes affordable if you sign up during the Book Fair.

Listen to live music. Renny Currin will be playing outside on the patio (or inside if it rains), so you can enjoy music while you talk about books and art, chat with the creators, or peruse your purchases and plan how to use them.

Hungry or thirsty? Museum vendors will have fry bread and drinks out on the patio.

Best of all—a Live auction! Loyal local businesses have donated merchandise and services to support the Festival. Make a bid, or... to be sure you get what you want...exercise the Buy Now options. Among or favorites, dog basket or cat basket donated by Chow Down. Or maybe the packages donated (with wine) by LaNoue DuBois Winery, Endless Pastabilities Italian restaurant, or everybody's fav, The Stone House.

Museum Gift Shop specials and discounts all day, too.

Come on over to the Ute Museum on Saturday, from 10 am to 4 pm, and join in the festivities. All ages welcome. Free admission. And a chance to support our historic, literary, and artistic communities.

Organized by San Juan Publishing Group. Hosted by Ute Museum. In a creative partnership we plan to repeat every September at the museum. Event sponsors, Alpine Bank and Montrose Lifestyle.

For more information, including a list of participants and donors, visit <https://sanjuanpub.com/2026-montrose-book-fair/>



Ute Museum Courtesy photo.

TRIVIA NIGHT

Hosted By:



Altrusa is a Social Service Organization that donates funds to local non-profits

Saturday Oct 24th



**PRIZES
SNACKS
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ALL!**

**Please join us for our 6th Annual
Trivia Night at the
Montrose Elks Lodge!**



Scan to Register

Date: Saturday, October 24th at 6:30pm.
Registration: \$30 per person (up to 8 people per team)

*Includes unlimited access to appetizer & dessert bars and non-alcoholic drinks.

*Elks Cash Bar will also be available

MORE INFO

970-275-0751

COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

GLEASON A SEMIFINALIST FOR NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Special to Art & Sol

MONTROSE— Montrose High School senior Wyatt Gleason has been named a Semifinalist in the 2027 National Merit Scholarship Program, a distinction earned by less than 1% of U.S. high school seniors.

More than 1.2 million students across the nation participated in the initial stage of the 2027 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2025 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT). Just over 16,000 students nationwide were named semifinalists, representing the highest-scoring entrants in each state.

"We're incredibly proud of Wyatt," said Heidi Voehringer, Principal of Montrose High School. "This is an outstanding achievement and well-deserved recognition of his hard work and commitment to academic excellence. We're proud to see him representing Montrose High School at the national level."

As a semifinalist, Gleason will have the opportunity to continue in the National Merit Scholarship Program and advance to finalist standing. To do so, semifinalists must meet additional academic and application requirements. Finalists will compete for about 6,700 National Merit Scholarships worth approximately \$24 million that will be offered in spring 2027.



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♥ **ENCOURAGING WORDS ALWAYS WELCOMED**

♥ **A DESIRE FOR FUN, MAKING NEW FRIENDS,
and getting *SOME EXERCISE* almost makes a
perfect morning!**

LADIES WEDNESDAY MORNING COFFEE BOWLING LEAGUE 9am - 12n

STARTS: Wed Sept 2, 2026

SIGN UP AT THE ROSE BOWL
90 Rose Lane, Montrose

COME JOIN IN ON THE FUN
**CALL 970-249-4348 for more
information**



REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

DELTA EGYPTIAN FILM FESTIVAL ANCHORS A WEEK OF WESTERN SLOPE MOVIES

Special to the Mirror

DELTA- The first Delta Egyptian Film Festival will put Western Slope filmmakers on the big screen Saturday, September 26, as the centerpiece of a high-energy week celebrating local creativity, downtown possibility and 98 years of movies at The Egyptian. The events begin Friday, September 25, and keep rolling through the theater's birthday on Thursday, October 1.

The week is built around the community-supported laser projector installed after The Egyptian's projector failed this summer. What began as an urgent effort to save the screen has become a chance to fill it with student work, locally produced features, a free community movie and three wonderfully excessive nights of 1980s cinema.

"Our community stepped up when we needed a new projector, and they invested in what this theater can mean to Delta," said Kelly Anderson of The Egyptian. "Now that beautiful laser projector is bringing people downtown, giving Western Slope filmmakers a place to shine and helping us celebrate 98 years of movie memories together."

Friday Opens With Big Ideas and a Free Movie

On Friday, September 25, state partners and local leaders will gather at 440 Main Street for Creative Delta Building a Creative Economy Together, a resource and economic development roundtable focused on using arts, culture, film, historic preservation and creative placemaking to strengthen Delta's economy. The conversation will connect local priorities with practical programs, funding and technical assistance.

Then the conversation becomes a celebration. At 7 p.m., the public is invited to The Egyptian for a free community screening of **MICHAEL**. An online RSVP includes admission and popcorn, with seating lim-

ited to 300 people on a first-come basis. The free screening is the theater's thank-you to the community and a chance to experience the new laser presentation together.

Saturday Belongs to Western Slope Filmmakers

The Delta Egyptian Film Festival begins at 10:30 a.m. Saturday and runs straight through a 7 p.m. vampire invasion. The day follows a creative path from high school and college filmmakers to locally made feature films, all on the same historic screen.

One ticket covers all three student showcases. The program includes original work from Colorado Mesa University, the rural high school Film Exposure Program and CMU Tech, followed by the 1 p.m. filmmaker panel at the Delta Library Comic-Con. At 4 p.m., **CINEMORTAL** returns to the theater where it was filmed. Writer and director Tycho Wade and a crew of recent film-school graduates turned The Egyptian into the setting for a late-night horror mystery packed with scares, laughs and strange surprises. At 7 p.m., Grand Valley native Hank Braxtan brings **AMERICAN VAMPIRES**, his action-horror feature filmed entirely in Grand Junction with more than 50 local actors, filmmakers, veterans, CMU Tech students and faculty members.

Festival admission Each of the three ticketed programs - the student showcases, CINEMORTAL and AMERICAN VAMPIRES - is \$10 for ages 6 and older. Children 5 and under are free with a paid adult, and Egyptian Theater members receive free admission. The two feature films are unrated, contain gore and strong language, and are not recommended for children.

The Party Rolls Through a 98th Birthday Celebration

The celebration returns Tuesday for Reel Classics Trash '80s, a three-night salute to

movies that aimed for greatness, missed spectacularly and became far too entertaining to leave buried.

-Tuesday September 29 at 7 p.m. XANADU - roller skates, Greek mythology, neon, Olivia Newton-John, Gene Kelly and enough glitter to light up the decade.

-Wednesday September 30 at 7 p.m. OVER THE TOP - Sylvester Stallone settles family problems the only sensible way available in 1987, with big rigs, power ballads and competitive arm wrestling.

-Thursday October 1 at 7 p.m. THE ADVENTURES OF BUCKAROO BANZAI ACROSS THE 8TH DIMENSION - The Egyptian turns 98 with rock and roll, rocket cars, interdimensional aliens, Jeff Goldblum in a cowboy costume and John Lithgow at maximum John Lithgow.

The October 1 finale celebrates 98 years since The Egyptian opened its doors. The building carries nearly a century of Delta movie memories, while its new projector, film festival and growing creative partnerships point firmly toward the next one.

Tickets and Information

The Delta Egyptian Theater is located at 452 Main Street in Delta. Online RSVPs for MICHAEL, festival tickets and complete event information are available at deltaegyptian.org. The Delta Egyptian Film Festival is made possible with support from the Colorado Office of Film, Television and Media.

About the Delta Egyptian Theater

The Delta Egyptian Theater is a nonprofit, single-screen historic theater serving Delta and Colorado's Western Slope. Opened in 1928, The Egyptian brings first-run films, classics, live performances and community events to downtown Delta. In 2026, community support made a new laser cinema projector possible after the theater's projector failed, protecting the big-screen experience for the theater's 98th year and beyond.

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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)

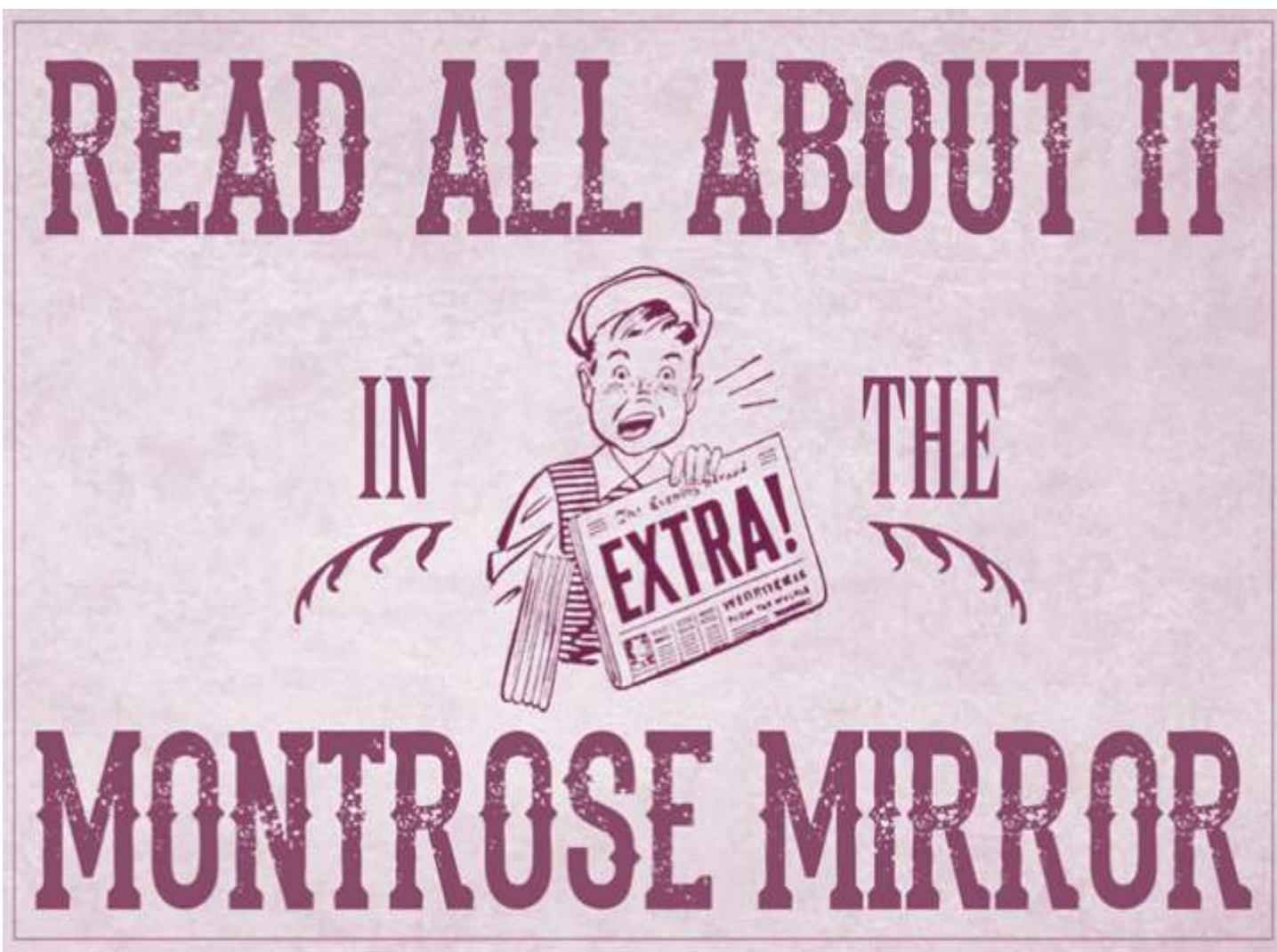
Name of current Senior Pastor

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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All Day

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bring a flyer, or
take a picture of it,
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Ministries to receive
a percentage.*

*Doin' Good in
the Neighborhood*
Applebee's

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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

Sept. 16-We have an exciting program this month for everyone who has explored the Colorado Plateau. Come here intrepid adventurers Bill Harris and Fred Blackburn present shared backcountry experiences across the Plateau. Wednesday September 16 at 7pm - United Methodist Church - 19 S Park Avenue - Montrose Chipeta Archaeology Society. Free

Sept. 18-Montrose Republican Women invite you to our program on Friday, Sept. 18 from noon to 1:30p at the Hampton Inn Montrose. Montrose County Manager Joe Kerby will be discussing Montrose County issues and future plans for 2026-27. Brown bag lunch. Doors open at 11:30a. Contact Kerri for more information: [970-209-5170](tel:970-209-5170).

Sept. 19-Let Them Eat Cake! Saturday, Sept. 19 at Hillcrest Congregational UCC, 611 S. Hillcrest Drive. Benefits Shepherd's Hand and our church's Women's Union. Registration at 1:30 pm, cake party begins at 2 pm. Bring a cake, a cake server and \$5 donation. Go home with a pizza box full of sweet treats!

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

Sept. 19-Colona Community Church Annual Harvest Dinner, 3-6pm. Celebrating 114 years. Live Music. Colona Stockyards. Free to All.

Sept. 19-1st Annual Montrose County Book fair. Ute Museum. 10am to 4pm.

Sept. 26-Magic Circle Players invites you to a COUNTRY WESTERN HOEDOWN at beautiful South River Farm in Montrose. Join us for an evening of live music, food trucks, line dancing, and a cash bar. We have barn tours, photo booths, a Sheriff and a jail cell! Pay to have your friends "arrested," or purchase a Sheriff's badge onsite for immunity. Come celebrate AUTUMN with an unforgettable evening of community, fun and entertainment. TICKET PRICE: \$65, INCLUDES ONE MEAL TICKET. Doors open at 5:30 PM, event begins at 6 PM. Tickets at magiccircleplayers.com. Magic Circle Players, 420 S 12th St, Montrose. Box office: 970-249-7838 or boxoffice@magiccircleplayers.com.

Sept. 27-Sept 27, Sunday 3pm. **FREE POPS CONCERT, Montrose Community Band @ Montrose Pavilion**. Come laugh, cry and reminisce while listening to American screen and stage soundtracks from great American composers John Williams, Henry Mancini and Rogers & Hammerstein (the Sound of Music). We have also thrown in some Bee Gees, John Denver and more.

Oct. 8-Thursday October 8, 7 PM, Baldrige Hall, Montrose United Methodist Church, 647 South 1st Street, Montrose. Black Canyon Audubon Society will host Dr. Bruce Ackerman and Susan Werner, both retired wildlife biologists who will present "Whale Watching, Birding and Kayaking in Baja Mexico" with images of whale sightings as well as other parts of their adventure including kayaking, fishing, snorkeling with sea lions and, of course a few birding excursions. For more information about the speaker and topic go to programs at blackcanyonaudubon.org

MIRROR IMAGES...NEVER FORGET



Mirror Staff Report

MONTROSE-Last Friday, Montrose remembered innocent lives lost during the attacks on our nation on Sept. 11, 2001, as citizens, public officials, firefighters and law enforcement joined in a moving tribute to victims and First Responders on Sept. 11, 2026. The tribute drew citizens as well as public officials. "We were pleased with the crowd," Organizer Scott Riba said. "We had young and old alike, and it was very well attended by law enforcement and by fire fighters." Thanks are due to Police Chief Blaine Hall, Fire Chief Tad Rowan, Interim City Manager Ann Morgenthaler, Linda Riba, Lacy and T.J. Sanchez, Chris Brlecic, the Montrose County Historical Society & Museum, and City of Montrose Streets, Parks, and Special Events crews. Contributors included Montrose Printing Center, Alpine Floral, Cyllia Lynn Photography, Rene Bobo Designs, and the Montrose Mirror. Photos are courtesy of Cyllia Lynn Photography.

