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the Montrose Mirror

© Issue No. 357 Dec. 30, 2019

Happy New Year!

FORGOTTEN FOUNTAIN A REMINDER OF WHEN MONTROSE WAS DRY



This historic photo by Walker Art Studio shows the WCTU fountain on the courthouse lawn. Courtesy photo Denver Public Library Western History Collection..

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE-For those who notice it at all, the old, dry, stone fountain in a quiet Montrose neighborhood is just a crumbling artifact from a bygone era, marked by the letters "WCTU." Though now as forgotten as the old stone fountain itself, the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) was once a formidable force in America, an organization that was powerful and active in the 19TH and 20TH centuries. According to the *Montrose Daily Press* (Aug. 6, 1909), the WCTU had a chapter in Montrose as early as 1884.

As Writer Sam Bock blogged earlier this year, Colorado was one of a few states that imposed liquor bans in 1916. Bock's [informative article](#) on Colorado's prohibition movement states, "...women (who had gained the right to vote

[Continued pg 11](#)

COMPLETE COUNT COMMITTEE PLANNING FOR 2020 CENSUS

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE-Since it was established in 1790, the United States Census has been the primary source of information concerning the U.S., the people who live here, and the nation's economy. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the first Census was directed by Thomas Jefferson, and as required in the Constitution, the Decennial Census has been conducted every ten years ever since.

The Census web site notes that "The Decennial Census is the once-a-decade population and housing count of all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Island Areas as required by the U.S. Constitution. The results of the decennial census determine the number of seats for each state in the U.S. House of Representatives and are used to draw congressional and state legislative districts and to distribute more than \$675 billion in federal funds each year."

Here in Montrose, a Complete Count Committee began

[Continued pg 7](#)



Above, Census takers will begin counting in Montrose county in March of 2020. All Census workers take a life-long oath of non-disclosure. Photo courtesy U.S. Census Bureau.

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Still hot, experts say!](#)

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with Jack Switzer!](#)

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COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

STRIDE INTO 2020 WITH A FIRST DAY HIKE

Special to the Mirror

DENVER- Colorado Parks and Wildlife is ringing in the new year once again by participating in America's State Parks First Day Hikes, encouraging people to Live Life Outside in 2020. More than 30 events have been slated for Jan. 1, 2020 at state parks across Colorado, providing opportunities for people of all ages to get outdoors. "Our First Day Hike events have become increasingly popular over the years, and with good reason," said CPW Director Dan Prenzl. "They're a great opportunity to spend some time out in nature with friends and family and mark a fresh start to the new year. What better way to celebrate than with a nice park stroll and a hot cup of cocoa? We'll see you out there!"

Coloradans can find nearby First Day Hikes of varying distances and levels of difficulty by visiting the Colorado Parks and Wildlife [First Day Hikes web page](#). All hikes are free of charge, but a valid park pass is required. Whether discovering the landscape with an experienced Naturalist guide on an organized hike, or viewing and photographing wildlife on a self-led hike, First Day Hike participants are sure to start the new year on a positive note. Hikers, bikers and horseback riders alike can enjoy scenic views, warm beverages and snacks,

and have the opportunity to borrow snowshoes, fat bikes and ice fishing equipment at some parks. With snow likely on the ground at the beginning of the new year, visitors can also anticipate sledding, snowshoeing, ice skating and cross-country skiing opportunities.

Warmer weather at other parks may create muddy conditions, so please respect any trail closures or other posted notices. CPW reminds visitors to dress for the weather by dressing in layers, and to bring plenty of water and snacks. First Day Hikes is a national program that was created more than 25 years ago to encourage healthy lifestyles and stewardship of natural resources through outdoor recreation.

According to the National Association of State Park Directors, more than 72,700 people across the country joined guided First Day Hikes in 2019, collectively hiking over 150,280 miles.

Start 2020 on the right foot by spending



Celebrate the start of 2020 with a First Day Hike at any of Colorado's 41 state parks. CPW courtesy photo.

time outside. Whatever the outdoor activity, be sure to share your state park adventures with us on social media by using #FirstDayHikes.

Whether planning to participate in a First Day Hike, reserving a spring campsite or scheduling hunter education courses, you can start your 2020 outdoor adventures by visiting cpw.state.co.us.

THE MONTROSE MIRROR

Published every Monday since 2010 in Montrose, Colorado by Caitlin Switzer, to a readership of over 13,000 residents of Western Colorado.

We encourage contributions and commentary. Content may not necessarily reflect the opinions of the publisher. For additional information and advertising opportunities, please contact:

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

MONTROSE BRAZILIAN JIU-JITSU'S JENNIFER LUJAN TO SPEAK TO MONTROSE COUNTY NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH ABOUT SELF-DEFENSE

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE--Montrose County Neighborhood Watch meets Jan.10 with speaker Jennifer Lujan of Montrose Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, who will discuss how this martial art form can be used for self-defense. Neighborhood Watch meets the second Friday of every month at the Montrose Regional Library, Room 102 from 1:30 PM – 3 PM. Contact Chris Hebert with questions at 970-901-5876.



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

CITY OFFICES CLOSED ON NEW YEAR'S DAY

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE — City of Montrose offices will be closed New Year's Day, Wednesday, Jan. 1. Police Department offices will be closed, however, officers will be on duty and responding to calls.

Montrose City Hall, Visitor Center, Municipal Court, Animal Shelter, Montrose Pavilion, Black Canyon Golf Course, and City Shop will be closed.

The adjusted trash collection schedule for January 1 will be as follows:

- Residences north of East Oak Grove Road; trash pickup will occur on Monday, Dec. 30.
 - Residences south of East Oak Grove Road; trash pickup will occur on Tuesday, Dec. 31.
- Recycling collection for customers with Wednesday, Jan. 1 pickup will instead occur Friday, Jan. 3.



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MONTROSE OBT TO WELCOME COMMUNICATION & MARKETING SPECIALIST CAITLYN LOVE



Caitlyn Love. Courtesy photo Grand Junction Downtown.

Mirror staff report

MONTROSE-Expect to see a new face around the Montrose Office of Business & Tourism (OBT) starting Jan. 6. Communication and Marketing Specialist Caitlyn Love joins the City of Montrose after several years in promotional roles with Downtown Grand Junction. Love will work with Chelsea Rosty's team at the OBT.

"She comes to us with a wide breadth of experience in tourism promotion and downtown promotion," Rosty said. "We're excited to have her join our team."

After growing up in Southeastern Wyoming, Love graduated from Colorado Mesa University (CMU), where she completed her Bachelors' Degree in Business Administration in 2014.

The Mirror: many views, one newspaper.





LORRIE MORGAN

And



AARON TIPPIN

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COMPLETE COUNT COMMITTEE PLANNING FOR 2020 CENSUS

From pg 1

meeting and sharing information in 2019. Among those working together to promote and help prepare the community for the 2020 Census are Montrose County GIS staffer Lisa Goetsch and Media Relations Director Katie Yergensen; the main regional contact for the Census itself is Brian Meinhardt, a partnership specialist for the U.S. Census Bureau in Colorado. Because there are individuals in Montrose County who are classified as hard to reach, the County has received an \$80K Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) grant to help with outreach efforts, which are still in the planning stages. As the 2020 Census gets underway in March, expect neighborhood get-togethers and community meetings, Yergensen said. "We are trying to connect with as many people as possible, and

meet people where they are, so they feel safe," she said. "The count is incredibly important; it can impact our political representation, and federal funding is based on population." There will be no questions on citizenship information in the 2020 Census, Yergensen said, and Census workers take a lifelong oath of non-disclosure to protect the confidentiality of all Title 13 information. According to federal law, the penalty for unlawful disclosure is a fine of not more than \$250,000 or imprisonment for not more than five years, or both. According to the Colorado Fiscal Institute, thirty percent of households in Montrose County did not respond to the 2010 Census. There are 12,535 individuals in Montrose County who are classified as "hard to count."



A historic Census Poster. Courtesy U.S. Census Bureau.

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MONTROSE REAL ESTATE MARKET REMAINS HOT FOR SELLERS, BUT MAY BE REACHING A PLATEAU, EXPERTS SAY



Real estate sales in Montrose continue to be a seller's market, experts say, with a scarce inventory of affordably priced homes.

Mirror staff report

MONTROSE—At the end of 2018, the local real estate market was hot and getting hotter. A year later, the market continues to be strong, but may be reaching a plateau, experts say.

The most recent statistics from the Montrose Association of Realtors show that for single-family residential units, year-to-date statistics through November of 2018 showed 943 new listings and 671 sold listings. The median sales price was \$254,450; the average sales price was \$283,620. The average number of days on the market before a property sold was 95. In 2019, November year-to-date statistics for single-family residential units show 869 new listings and 637 sold listings. The median sales price is \$270,000; the average sales price is \$304,695. The average number of days on the market before a property has sold is 104.

When it comes to townhouses and condominiums, year-to-date statistics through November of 2018 showed 69 new listings and 46 sold listings. The median sales price was \$186,250; the average sales

price was \$190,847. The average number of days on the market before a property sold was 56.

In 2019, November year-to-date statistics for townhouses and condominiums show 51 new listings and 49 sold listings. The median sales price is \$245,000; the average sales price is \$229,911. The average number of days on the market before a property has sold is 88.

Broker/Associate Betsy Spitzer of Berkshire Hathaway Home Services said that vacant land is also selling well right now, and the average price of a single-family home heading into 2020 is \$307K.

"Montrose is a pretty hot market," Spitzer said. "It's still a sellers' market; prices are still high, but I think things have leveled off." Though new building is taking place here, inventory remains scarce, she noted. "There's still a lack of listings."

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FORGOTTEN FOUNTAIN A REMINDER OF WHEN MONTROSE WAS DRY

From pg 1

in state-wide elections in 1893) voted for Colorado to ban alcohol because, as the wives of saloon-going men, they disproportionately suffered from the negative effects of drinking in the form of domestic violence." In addition, "...unions often formed out of the natural foment and commiseration that happens over a few after-work beers. With saloons acting as midwives of labor organizing, it was predictable that mine owners, railroad magnates, and timber barons would want to ban the beer that fueled feelings of solidarity among their workers."

Here in Montrose, prohibition came even earlier—local saloons went dry after the 1909 municipal election, just as completion of the Gunnison Tunnel brought water to farms across the valley. The April 9, 1909 headline in the *Montrose Daily Press* read, "Dry Forces Win a Sweeping Victory."

Montrose County Historical Museum Director Sally Johnson said of the decision, which won by a majority of 129 votes, "It was the ladies; they got tired of everyone drinking and shooting up the town."

Also, "Carrie Nation came here," Johnson said. "She was fresh from a hatchet job in Kansas."

Carrie Nation, born in 1846 was a well-known temperance advocate infamous for destroying drinking establishments, first with a brickbat and later a hatchet. *Britannica.com* notes, "Alone or accompanied by hymn-singing women, Nation, who was typically dressed in stark black-and-white clothing, would march into a saloon and proceed to sing, pray, hurl biblical-sounding vituperations, and smash the bar fixtures and stock with a hatchet."

However, Carrie Nation was apparently not the only one who found a city without saloons to be a vast improvement. Eleven months after Montrose voters chose to become a dry City, Citizen CE Adams wrote a letter to a Gunnison friend extolling the virtues of the sober town.

"The records show that the city is being run at 25 per cent less expense than during wet periods," Adams wrote, "...the general moral tone of the town being very much improved by the absence of the saloon and the men staggering in and out of them, we find almost a total absence of the crowds of loafers who formerly hung around three of the prominent corners, using vile language and passing remarks about ladies on the streets... It is as certain as night follows the day that when the sale of intoxicating liquors is stopt in any town the moral plane of the community is thereupon elevated."

The anti-alcohol activists who first encouraged Montrose to vote against the saloons were mostly forgotten after Prohibition was finally repealed on Dec. 5, 1933. Though it once sat on the courthouse lawn, the WCTU fountain was even-

tually moved to a private home, and today sits on a quiet suburban street, a crumbling relic of a nearly forgotten time in Montrose. Still, the Montrose county web site recalls that the WCTU fountain played a role at the opening ceremony for the new county courthouse in 1923:

"The most gala event to take place in Montrose since the opening of the Gunnison Tunnel was the grand opening dedication of the new Montrose County Courthouse. The ceremony began with an invocation by Reverend Alonzo D. Fairbanks, a valley pioneer.

Next on the agenda was the dedication of the spacious fountain on the Courthouse lawn, donated through funds raised by the Women's Christian Temperance Union.

As the fountain water was turned on, the WCTU members sang, 'It's There to Stay.'"

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

I FIND MYSELF BEING A DEFENDER OF THE TRUTH

Editor:

I consider myself a fiscal conservative. Wikipedia defines that philosophy as – “Fiscal conservatism is the economic philosophy of prudence in government spending and debt. Fiscal conservatives advocate the avoidance of deficit spending, the reduction of overall government spending and national debt whilst ensuring balanced budgets.”

The key items in that definition for me are, avoidance of deficit spending and ensuring a balanced budget.

No one like taxes. But they are necessary in order to pay for the services provided to the community by your local government. I moved here from Park County, 50 miles SW of Denver.

Ninety percent of the roads in Park County were/are unpaved. And every year residents of Park County complained about the condition of their roads, yet when the County asked for a tax increase to improve the roads it was voted down. The County could not pay for the services without a

proper revenue stream. It's no different here in Montrose.

Recently I cautioned about how media outlets and certain contributors to the local press like to feed their listeners' anxiety. They use emotion to incite anger, frustration and confusion. Well, it's happening again.

I find myself being a defender of the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. In a recent opinion-piece a local writer makes a wild, false, misleading statement about the City Manager's pay. He would like you to think Bell's **net pay** is \$225,000.00. That is an absolute mischaracterization of the truth. Making that kind of statement is irresponsible. That same contributor asserts if you make more you can afford to pay more. While that may be true, I ask, is it fair for one person to have to pay more than another for the same services being provided? I think not.

A different contributor states the City imposes a 5.05% tax on groceries. That is misleading as well. I inquired about it at

my local grocer. That 5.05% is comprised of what I call a “sin tax”.

The State and possibly the county tax you on prepared foods such as bakery and deli items.

It's not the City trying to gorge you. Taxation at the grocery store is complicated; check it out, <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/sites/default/files/Sales04.pdf>.

Buyer beware, as I cautioned a couple of weeks ago, don't take everything you read at face value.

Use your judgment to weed out fiction.

I live on a moderate retirement income. As you, I would prefer a lower tax rate. But sound judgment leads me to the conclusion that the City's general fund can't afford a 15% to 20% hit on its budget.

If I want to continue receiving the services delivered, I have to be willing to contribute toward paying for them.

As a Fiscal Conservative, I'm not willing to operate with the mindset of deficit spending. Neither should you.

Dave Stockton, Montrose



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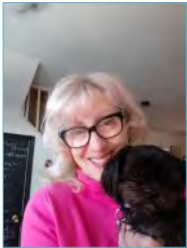
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LOOKING BACK, AND LOOKING FORWARD TO A NEW DECADE



Caitlin Switzer.

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE-It was December of 2010, and things were looking bleak in the newspaper business. My three children were all still at home, the oldest in high school. I had just finished several months of working for the Ridgway Chamber of Commerce. Prior to that, I had worked for five years as a stringer for the *Telluride Daily Planet* but lost my job in 2008 when the Planet was sold to yet another out-of-area buyer.

At the Ridgway Chamber, I had been introduced to E-blast technology, and quickly realized that it could be used for more than Chamber of Commerce newsletters. In late December of 2010 I put the first issue of the *Montrose Mirror* together at a rickety old picnic table in my kitchen. It was intended as a small business newsletter for other entrepreneurs; after all, the Mirror was my third small business. I had owned a landscape maintenance company in Denver with my first husband

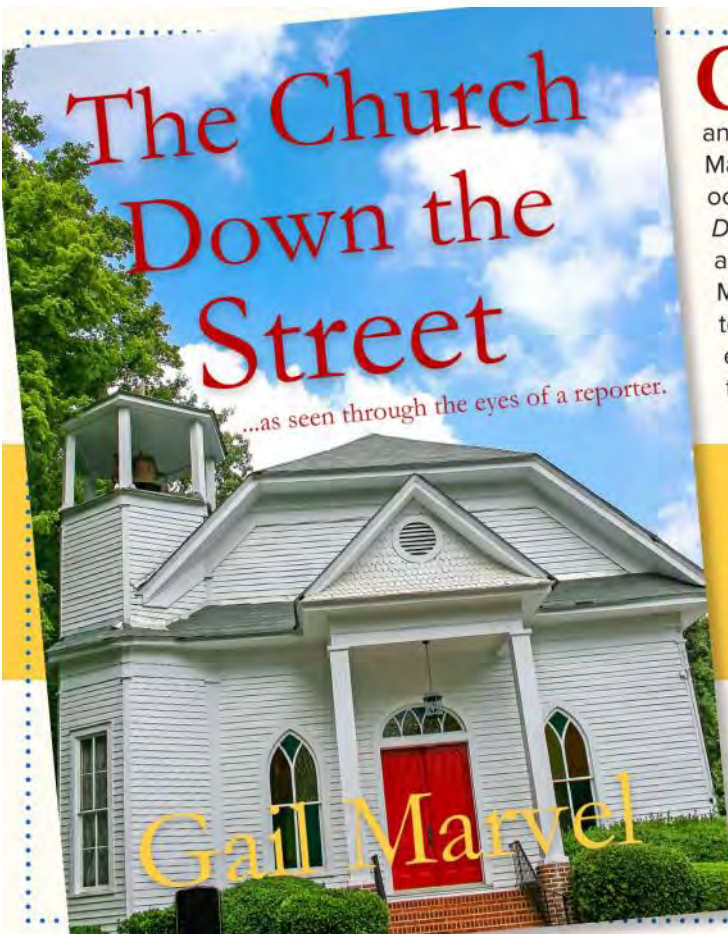
before selling the company and moving back to the Western Slope where we had gone to college. I had also started a small public relations firm (Elevation PR) in 2009, with my dear friend Yvonne Meek, IT specialist Peter Fagen (who still runs the Mirror web site), and local reporter Beverly Corbell.

Issue No.1 of the *Montrose Mirror* was surprisingly well received, given my deficit of graphic design skills. The first stories were about Recla Metals, a business I have always admired, and about local bakeries. Shortly thereafter we found our first sponsor, when Jenni Sopsic of the former Montrose Association of Commerce & Tourism (Montrose Act) recognized the value of an online, local, news source. The *Mirror* took on a new look shortly after that, when a second sponsor, Abbie Brewer, created an improved template for us—one that we still use today.

And in 2013, I met local writer Gail Marvel. To say that she changed the course of the business would be an understatement; Gail started with a series of articles on local churches and went on to write

about service clubs and classic cars. She also began to attend and write about meetings that I could not get to because my two younger children were still small. Today, Gail still covers meetings and takes photos for the Mirror, and she provides valuable advice based on her own life experiences as a military veteran, a former Montrose City Councilor, a professional writer, and a lifelong local. She has broken major news stories and continues to influence our editorial direction and coverage.

The Mirror now focuses on local government, a topic that continues to be of great importance to our growing readership. We will continue to do so in 2020 and beyond. Thank you to Gail Marvel, thank you to Peter Fagen, and thank you to all of our dedicated contributors, sponsors, advertisers, readers, and friends for a great ten years. Thank you to Deb Reimann for the stunning mountain photographs, and graphic artist Rene Bobo for so many gorgeous ad designs. And thank you to my family, for all of the love and support as we begin our next decade of covering local news.



On the Western Slope of Colorado, within a 20-mile radius of the City of Montrose, there are more than 70 churches and houses of worship. Over a 2½-year period, reporter Gail Marvel visited most of these congregations on two separate occasions, resulting in approximately 120 visits. *The Church Down the Street* is a compilation of these visits organized in a topical format — Hospitality, Program & Source Material, Music, Meditations & Invitations, and The Message. Similar to the Apostle Paul writing about the church through the eyes of an apostle, *The Church Down the Street* is about the church as seen through the eyes of a reporter.

Gail Marvel's new book, *The Church Down the Street*, is now available online at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) and [wingedpublications.com](https://www.wingedpublications.com).

GAIL MARVEL

Montrose Author & Reporter



The individual stories of these visits were published in *The Montrose Mirror* and the archived stories, *Experiencing the Church* series (issues 90–150); and *Houses of Worship* series (issues 197–250), can be found at www.montrose.mobi/.

Montrose Real Estate Today...

The real estate market in Montrose is alive and well. Increasing home values and low interest rates are creating a vibrant atmosphere for both sellers and buyers. Here are some properties that may be of great interest to you. Brought to you by Kerri Noonan-Inda!



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

TRUMP'S PRESIDENCY SHOULD NOT HAVE LASTED AS LONG AS WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON'S

Dear Editor:

I have chosen, in the past, not to respond to attacks or criticism of something that I have written. In last week's issue of the **Montrose Mirror**, a gentleman, in his letter to the editor, chose to both malign me and attempt to sway readers using a whole series of misinformation and less than half-truths. Since it's the end of 2019, I will break my rule and respond.

First, he states that I must have had a bad night before taking "cheap shots" at Trump and the Republicans. He underestimates me. I have had a bad three years under Trump and the Republican led Senate. And I am not a Democrat. For many of the reasons I have previously stated the Republican Party of Trump is anti-environment, anti-women's rights, anti-immigration, anti-renewable resources, etc.

But second, the writer states that my reference to the Republican senators as "white males" equates me to being racist, sexist, and homophobic. Really? There are 100 senators in the US Senate. Of those, fifty-three are Republicans. So 79% of the Republican senators are "white males". Many are old also, so I could have added that. What I wrote has NOTHING whatsoever to do with anything "racist, sexist, or homophobic". So I will correct myself. I should have said that the Republican senate is 94% white (thus including the women). Diversity is not a strong suit of the Republican senators.

Let's jump to one very important and misleading "fact" of his letter. He states that I should "personally donate all gains achieved under Trump's policies to charity as the president does". He cites that Trump donates his salary of \$400,000. Let's put his salary in perspective. Since being in office, Trump has cost the taxpayer over \$115 million for his golf trips. Doesn't stop there. All these trips are at golf courses owned by Trump so he is more than making up for his paltry \$400,000 a year. Why paltry? Because the

amount taxpayers are spending would equal 287 years of his salary.

I would make a gentleman's wager. My wife and I donate more to charity based on our fixed income than does Donald Trump. All he has to do is show his tax return and I bet I'd win the bet. Remember the Trump Foundation? He was made to pay \$2 million in court ordered damages for his misuse and misappropriation of donations. And "gains"??? I paid more in taxes last year under Trump. The writer also likes to throw in President Barack Obama's name with golfing and holidays as a misuse of taxpayer monies. Trump has played over 2.5 times as much golf as Obama. And Trump plays only at his courses, which means more revenue into his family pockets, Obama played primarily at military golf courses.

Another technique the writer tries to use is "blame it on someone else". I criticized Trump for buying his way out of military service (bone spurs he can't remember where they are), and stand behind it. The writer tries to deflect by saying I did not speak out against President Bill Clinton. That has nothing to do with Trump. He, nor any of his family members, served in the military. Even Queen Elizabeth served.

I sat and listened to testimony given by courageous public servants at the Impeachment Hearings. These people, at a threat to their personal lives, as well as their careers, put America first! To call them "phony impeachment witnesses" and referring to Col. Vindman as "pretty boy"? First, it is Lt. Colonel Alexander Vindman. He spoke out for HIS country. These people, Dr. Fiona Hill, Maria Yovanovitch, and others, are our public guardians. They are non-partisan civil servants whose mission is to protect our democracy. The writer has no right in any way to vilify these American citizens. They are not political appointees directed to do Trump's bidding. Nor are they people like Rudy Giuliani, a personal lawyer for

Trump, who has no place interfering in our foreign policy. Forget quid pro quo. Trump went to a foreign country and asked them to involve themselves in our election process by investigating a rival candidate. And then he publicly asked China to do the same! How can you not say this is wrong?

Finally the writer stated that I was making sniveling and whining remarks about whom he feels is the best president ever. He is welcome to his belief. Here is what I believe. Trump's presidency should not have lasted as long as William Henry Harrison's. Besides being a bully, a name caller, an adulterer, a liar (over 13,000 lies and counting); I am even more concerned with his actions. He is upsetting the checks and balances system in our government. He is eroding our relationships with our allies and with NATO. He is making decisions with our military personnel without consulting or caring about what our military leaders think. He is increasing the National Debt by giving tax cuts to the rich, many of whom are paying ZERO in taxes. He is taking private land away from Texan citizens to build "his" wall. He is doing all he can to support the fossil fuels industries with little or no regard for clean air, water, protection of the public lands, and enhancement of all wildlife species.

And lastly, there are two things about him I cannot stomach. First, he does not have a sense of humor. Making fun of people, belittling others, is not funny at all. Second, he does not have a dog. Even George Washington had a dog. And yes, the Obamas had two dogs. I guess I am sniveling and whining a little about his lack of humor and no dog. Actually I wouldn't wish a dog on Trump.

So to the gentleman who wrote last week's letter I apologize. I just couldn't let things go unsaid. In my years in law enforcement I had this philosophy. Let the person have the last word. But I will have the last action. So ends 2019.

Jon Sering, Montrose

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

SHOW SUPPORT FOR BIPARTISAN EFFORT TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE

Editor:

We now have a real opportunity to, not only show our concern for some of the effects of climate change, like erratic weather, drought, tree mortality, and fire, but the opportunity to support a bipartisan effort to address it. I am happy that there are now bipartisan efforts in both houses of Congress (Climate Solutions Caucuses), to discuss climate solutions and to work on climate legislation to address them.

Most recently, the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act (HR 763) has been introduced in the House to collect impact fees on polluters and rebate these funds equally to all households to offset any energy price rises. This is really a free market approach, bringing our energy resources back into a true cost/benefit ratio. The benefits would be felt by all: users, industry, climate, and economy.

I urge all, not only to make our Congressional representatives aware of your interest, but our local leaders, as well.

Wayne Quade, Montrose

REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

SENIORS INVITED TO MEET WITH POMONA THIRD GRADERS

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-The Montrose Senior Center invites seniors to meet with 8 to 10 year old Pomona 3rd graders to compare and contrast stories of when they were their age, Monday Jan 13, 20 and 27 from 1 PM to 2 PM. This learning opportunity will foster kindness, curiosity and understanding across the generations. Please volunteer by calling Cindy at 970 252 4884.



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

HISTORIC 18% LOCAL TAX INCREASE KICKS IN WEDNESDAY, WHAT IT MEANS TO THIS COMMUNITY

Editor:

As your Christmas spending bills start to arrive, be ready to start paying more on everything you buy. On January 1st history will be made in the Montrose community. The City's cash register will be humming as the local sales tax rate jumps 18% (from 3.3% to 3.88%). Please keep in mind, this new cash influx comes at a time when the City of Montrose keeps breaking its all-time tax revenue collect records every year.

Apparently, year-after-year record breaking tax revenues are not enough. Fast forward to Wednesday. You get to pay more. You get to pay more on the cost of your living essentials and necessities. Your grocery bill increases. Your utility bill increases. Just about all of your bills and purchases increase. The result? The City gets a fresh pile of dough estimated to be worth \$3.4 million each year. *(Side note: I welcome the discussion to explain my opinion to the disingenuous nature as to how this \$3.4M was "sold" to the voter vs what it really means to the voter.)*

On the backs of the taxpayer

At a time when the typical citizen (median income est. \$22,000) in Montrose has survived Christmas, boom, they are welcomed into 2020 with an 18% local tax increase. At a time when the lower income Montrose community family is facing big winter heating bills, boom, they now get an 18% local tax increase on everything they buy.

There is no doubt that a lot of tax revenue comes from the tourist industry. During the 2A campaign the City stated the figure to be 1/3 of the total. But, I must say, I am really tired of the "other people are paying" argument, forgetting about the hard working middle class families in the Montrose community who are affected much more by tax increases than a tourist.

The January 1, 2020, 18% increase will be felt by a lot of families. Let me offer one example, family groceries. The USDA (U.S.

Department of Agriculture) estimates a family of four, middle class America, spends about \$750 on groceries each month (\$6.25 per family member per day – sounds about right). In Montrose, that family in 2019 paid \$297 in sales tax to the City of Montrose for groceries. In 2020, that same family (assuming the same expenditure) will now pay \$350 in sales tax (representing the 18% increase). Please keep in mind, the sales tax on these groceries is after you have already paid your income taxes, so your net pay gets taxed again.

Do you think an extra \$297 could have gone a long way for the family of four (five or six) in 2019? I sure do. Instead, the City of Montrose is one of the rare tax collectors in the entire U.S.A. that fully taxes groceries. In 2020, that family gets to contribute another \$53 to Montrose in the name of tax-and-spend. This example is isolated to just one category, groceries. When you take a few minutes to understand the numbers and the impact, the 18% historic tax increase kicking in on January 1st is disconcerting. In just over five years, the City local sales tax rate will have increased by 30%. It was early 2014 when the total City sales tax was 3%. In just over five years a 30% increase has taken it up to 3.88%. Thirty percent in five years! What about the next five years? When does it stop?

Folks, while all Montrose community members are carrying the tax burden on family essentials like groceries and utilities, the City of Montrose is blowing money on luxury amenities, bad ideas, failed ideas, gifted monies to private business, speculative real estate deals, a growing bureaucracy, and a lot of fat perks. Everything I just listed is its own news items and discussion point. The City Manager and City Council are playing with your money.

The most alarming piece of the puzzle?

While we should be having fair discussions and expressing differences of opinion

(important parts of the local political process), there appears to be an impressive lack of accountability and transparency within the City of Montrose governance. Currently, a community member must dig like Woodward and Bernstein to get a decent sense of where the money is and how it was spent. Council needs to make full transparency and accountability a priority item. Urgently.

Today, the burden to get at the facts is put upon the community members to research answers (called a CORA request). The complex and meaningful questions often are not answered. When the City is questioned, the "answer" is often finessed with the art of deflection. Does the City serve the people, or do the people serve the City?

I am concerned by the efforts and expense put in by community members to hunt down information, or ask questions, which should be 100% part of the public domain. And, I have personally witnessed, and been a part of, the deflection process. Why does the City not meet the same level of transparency as the County? City Council needs to answer.

City Council to act?

I have sat in on City Council meetings and work sessions, and I follow the local developments. I have heard the \$125,000 Tesla charging station proposal. I have heard about the beautiful parks and connecting sidewalks. I have watched the amphitheater budget swell into the \$3+ million range. I have observed a lot of topics involving spending money.

What I have not heard are the discussions to cut back, a break for the people who have contributed to the pile of cash. I started a (one-way) discussion at the December 17th City Council meeting, proposing for Council to relieve part of the local tax burden by exempting groceries from city sales tax. The State of Colorado exempts groceries from state sales tax, as is the case with 35 other states and many of our western slope neighbors. Montrose

Continued next pg

HISTORIC 18% LOCAL TAX INCREASE KICKS IN WEDNESDAY, WHAT IT MEANS TO THIS COMMUNITY From previous pg

Montrose is one of the rare examples in the United States where a full sales tax is charged on groceries. Groceries need to be exempt from the City of Montrose sales tax, pursuant to the standard set by the State of Colorado. In very short history the Montrose citizen has faced a 30% local sales tax increase, including the fresh 18% increase that hits Wednesday. The increased tax burden negatively impacts most of the area citizens. They feel the impact every day. While tax supported amenities are good for some, a tax break is good for everyone. Further, this tax break request is about the necessities. City Council has the authority to be proactive, represent its core citizen, and act now by introducing and voting YES on an ordinance to exempt groceries from local sales tax. Granted is the authority, does Council have the will?

Scott Damman, Montrose

OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BINGE SPENDING IS A CONTAGION

Editor: Are County Commissioners now drinking from the City Counselors' spiked taxpayer punch bowl? Gee whiz folks, let's take a \$90,000 binge drink of Tax Payer money on the off-chance they can promote profitable (or maybe "breakeven") concerts to justify and partially "mitigate the losses" resulting from the \$10 million financially imperiled Event Center gamble. No, not a gamble, a black hole full of red ink. A chapter right out of the Bell-city manager's play book, the one used to hoodwink gullible, unsuspecting, good old folks that think they, the bureaucrats, have "We The People" best interests at heart. Can you spell Black Canyon Golf Course, the Pavilion? both swimming in 100's of thousands of red ink.

I urge all county-wide citizens to view the Nov. 15th meeting video on the County's website. The meeting was filled with what could only be described as the blind leading the blind because apparently NOBODY is skilled, let alone a veteran, in the concert promotion business. Go figure. There are significant legal elements involving contractual performance, conditions involving venue and artist perks and

proclivities (eg: wine, roses, facilities expectations, etc.) all ringing of legal implications. And yes, including weather - concert gets cancelled, no problem, the artist still collects his and her paycheck just as if they had performed that night. The County eats it. And guess what? - a professional concert promoter could not be obtained as the Montrose area doesn't satisfy the risk/reward gamble as a viable destination, or at least not considered a viable venue worthy of the risk. Hence the County is taking on the risk.

A couple of boogies they need to score is needing to sell 2,400 tickets (\$15- to \$85-) and sell a minimum of \$15,000 in alcoholic beverages. They're putting on the full court press in marketing promotion blitzes at some additional cost... mentioned giving up \$5 per ticket as part of the compensation to the entire western slope demographic.

It also becomes apparent by the discussion that this exercise is staff's response to the commissioners' marching orders stated as "You challenged us to make money". So, be careful what you ask for, you may have to put out large chunks of cash

called "venture capital" for which you may get a return on investment of ZERO but alas, not for the faint of heart, or in this case, wallet. But what the heck, these government folks have learned lessons well from the DC Swamp with \$22 trillion in debt and no means of covering it. It must be a function of advanced business degrees from the Alfred E. Neuman School of Business with the enduring slogan "What, me worry?"

I do want to thank the Commissioners for teaching a lesson in REAL transparency for allowing the tax payer to see in Full-Light-Of-Day how and where the money is spent.

Something the city mgr. and city counselors have no intention of doing. If you were doing this in the private sector, you would likely find yourself dusting off your resume for your next job interview, if you could get one. And this is same nutso business model the City has planned for a \$3.5M outdoor, amphitheater that will only be open on a very limited, seasonal basis.

Hold on.

R. L. Michaels, Montrose



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These are some of the homes I sold in 2019. Thanks to all my clients for making this a great year. If you are thinking of selling or buying in 2020, I would love to help you. Best wishes for good health, joy, success and prosperity in the New Year! ~ Don Bailey



55652 Fredonia Rd.
Olathe, CO

SOLD \$505,000
2,543 sq.ft.
3.45 acres



63272 & 63270 Orange Rd
Montrose, CO

SOLD \$500,000
2,440 sq.ft. + Office
7.14 acres



16820 Shavano Valley Rd.
Montrose, CO

SOLD \$389,000
2,503 sq.ft.
2 acres



209 Sage Dr.
Montrose, CO

SOLD \$385,000
2,023 sq.ft.
.33 acres



66907 Solar Road
Montrose, CO

SOLD \$352,000
2,373 sq.ft.
5 acres, 4.8 irrigated



2516 Glen View
Montrose, CO

SOLD \$295,000
1,636 sq. ft.
.17 acres



58114 Elk Drive
Montrose, CO

SOLD \$285,000
1,715 sq.ft.
5.637 acres



2609 Glen Mor Dr.
Montrose, CO

SOLD \$280,500
1,702 sq.ft.
.18 acres



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READER PHOTO SPOTLIGHT: DEB REIMANN

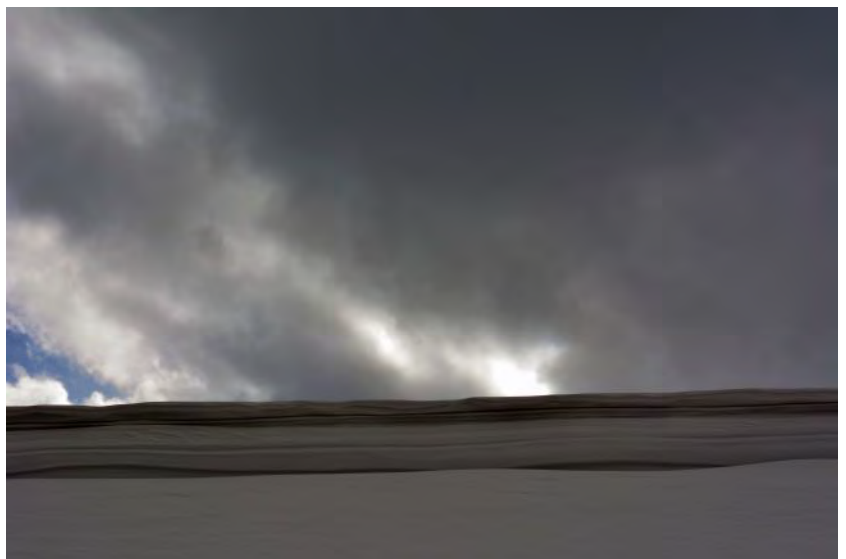


Photographer Deb Reimann took these photos near Ouray. At left, a mountain sheep. Below, a mountain ram.



At left, climbers at Ouray Ice Park.

Below, Snow Shelf and Light.



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A FRESH POINT OF VIEW...WITH JACK SWITZER

A DECADE COMES TO AN END, AND A NEW ADVENTURE BEGINS



Jack as a kindergarten student in Laura DeHart's class at Oak Grove Elementary...



...and ten years later, age 16 and a junior in high school.

By Jack Switzer

MONTROSE—"Wow. The end of a decade?" I thought to myself, just sitting in bed. I had heard about it days ago, but the whole weight of it had only just fallen on me Christmas morning. A whole 10 years had passed since I was five, and back then

I didn't even know what a decade was. I had just started elementary school then, now I'm almost finished with High School.

Now I know what people mean when they say how fast time passes. How many iPhones were released during that time? How many newspaper articles were printed? How many babies were born? I wish I could read the statistics. It would be incredible to be able to see every little thing that's happened within the short

span of 10 years. What was everyone doing ten years ago? What were YOU doing ten years ago? What's going to happen in these next ten years? My mind is currently spilling with questions.

What will I do when I'm out of high school? I'm sure most people reading this

would chuckle at that question, as they've asked themselves the very same thing. However, all any of us were and are able to do is just keep moving on, planning ahead if we have to. But we all have a future ahead of us. There's always something around the corner we can't foresee or predict, something new to conquer. A personal example of a new challenge to overcome would be my seething hatred for J.J. Abrams' new Star Wars movie, a total waste of two hours of my life. I could've used that time to do literally anything else, but I just had to watch it. More on that next week.

To wrap it up, this will be the last thing I write this decade. It's odd to think I'm writing "professionally" for a newspaper and learned how to write in the same decade. So I don't mind this being my final piece, reflecting on all that's happened and what's to come.

Thank you for reading and have a wonderful new year.

*Save a tree —
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Here are some land parcels I sold in 2019. Thanks to all my clients for a great year. If you are thinking about selling in 2020 I would love to help you get the best price for your property. If you are looking to purchase, I want to help you find your special place. Don



TBD Riverside Road
Montrose, CO

SOLD \$740,000
39 acres
9.47 irrigated



TBD 1900 Road
Delta, CO

SOLD \$265,000
72.11 acres
40 irrigated



15158 6200 Road
Montrose, CO

SOLD \$171,250
8.69 acrec
8.69 irrigated



TBD Government Springs Rd
Montrose, CO

SOLD \$149,000
42.02 acres



277 Cotton Lane
Montrose, CO

SOLD \$134,900
40 acres



TBD V66 Trail
Montrose, CO

SOLD \$110,000
40 acres



TBD Bible Camp Road
Montrose, CO

Under Contract \$99,000
36.87 acres



TBD Wildcat Canyon Rd
Montrose, CO

SOLD \$56,000
40 acres



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

CENTER FOR MENTAL HEALTH COMMITTED TO HELPING OUR COMMUNITIES COMBAT DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-With the holidays in full swing, The Center for Mental Health (CMH) wants to inform and remind the community of the local behavioral resources available. These resources are especially critical if someone on the Western Slope is feeling hopeless or having suicidal thoughts, or knows of someone who is. CMH recently expanded behavioral healthcare offerings across the region, so finding urgent mental health care is easier than ever before.

Although the holidays are promoted as a time for family and fun, not everyone feels festive. In fact, the holidays are a time when depression and sadness can really set in. "We recognize that this is the time of year when people can feel increasingly isolated and alone," said Shelly J. Spalding, CEO of The Center for Mental Health. "We have expanded our care on the Western Slope in the effort to helping those who need counseling or crisis services this time of year."

To better serve their six-county service area, CMH opened new locations in Telluride and Crested Butte, and a brand-new Crisis Walk-In Center (CWC) in Montrose. Services have been expanded in several of CMH's Western Slope locations to meet the needs of the community. "Our Crisis Walk-In Center is open every day, including Christmas. Anyone, of any age may walk in if they feel in danger of hurting themselves or others, or just can't cope and don't know where to turn" said Amanda Jones, Chief Clinical Officer. "When we opened our Crisis Walk-in Center in September, we had a number of local teens who needed support to cope with suicidal thoughts and other crises. We are a safe place, close to home, where they can be treated with their family during a difficult time," said Jones.

Unfortunately, suicide has impacted almost everyone at some time in their life. It maybe the loss of a close friend or family member, a member of the community, or even hearing about it on the news. At times, we may worry that someone we know and love might be in danger of hurting themselves. So, in addition to offering urgent care for those in crisis, CMH provides classes in Mental Health First Aid and suicide prevention strategies such as Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) and Question Persuade and Refer (QPR) so people can recognize danger signs and have tools to help others.

"I wasn't on anyone's radar," said Ian Hatchett of Crested Butte. "I was happy, engaged in my social circles, and employed in a career as a mountain guide. Then, I experienced the perfect storm of personal issues that led me down a dangerous path. If it weren't for the combination of my friends, my therapist, and The Center for Mental Health, I simply wouldn't be here today. I will do anything in my power to share my experience in the hopes that I can make a difference in someone's life."

Hatchett isn't alone, in fact, suicide rates nationally are on the rise. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), suicides are the leading cause of death among individuals between the ages of 10 and 34 and the fourth leading cause of death among adults 35 to 54 years old. In fact, there were more than twice as many suicides (47,173) in the United States as there were homicides (19,510) in 2018.

Unfortunately, Colorado's Western Slope has higher suicide rates than Colorado's more urban areas. This is consistent with the situation in rural communities across the country. According to the Colorado

Institute of Health, Colorado has one of the highest suicide rates in the country, and that rate is especially prevalent in the state's southwestern corner and the Western Slope. "We know that as a rural area, we need to be on higher alert to those who feel lost and alone," added Spalding. "We have assembled an esteemed staff of professionals who know what to look for and who understand how to treat someone who is feeling hopeless," said Kimberly Behounek, The Center's Regional Director for Gunnison and Crested Butte.

"I had reached my lowest point and had given up," added Hatchett. "Luckily, my therapist at CMH had the right suitcase of skills and gave me permission to forgive myself for giving up. As a nation, we need to demystify the process of mental healthcare and break the prejudices around it."

When Hatchett needed help, he traveled to Gunnison to get care. "They didn't have anything available near me in Crested Butte at the time, but now CMH has an office right here."

"We recognized that easier access to quality behavioral health is one fundamental and unique challenge that we could address," said Spalding. "We still have a way to go, but we have made a lot of progress in making mental healthcare more accessible in our community by providing more local providers and new, convenient locations."

The Center for Mental Health is a non-profit organization seeking to promote mental health and well-being. It provides behavioral healthcare services through more than ten facilities across 10,000 square miles including Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray, and San Miguel Counties. Visit www.centermh.org to learn more.

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COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

COLORADO EMPLOYMENT SITUATION-NOVEMBER 2019

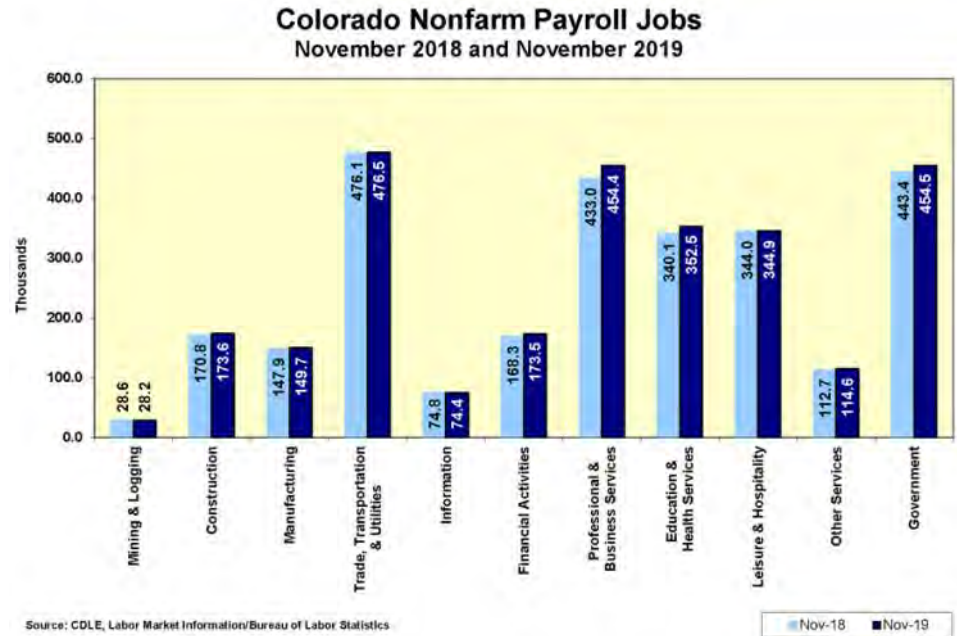
Special to the Mirror

COLORADO-Employers in Colorado added 4,100 nonfarm payroll jobs from October to November for a total of 2,796,800 jobs, according to the survey of business establishments. Private sector payroll jobs increased 3,100 and government increased 1,000. October estimates were revised up to 2,792,700, and the over the month change from September to October was an increase of 4,300 rather than the originally estimated increase of 3,100.

According to the survey of households, the unemployment rate was unchanged from October to November at 2.6 percent. The number of people actively participating in the labor force increased 5,600 over the month to 3,170,400 and the number of people reporting themselves as employed increased 6,700 to 3,088,100, causing the number of unemployed to decrease 1,200. Due to rounding, the unemployment rate was unchanged from October at 2.6 percent. The national unemployment rate decreased one-tenth of a percentage point in November to 3.5 percent.

Over the year, the average workweek for all employees on private nonfarm payrolls increased from 33.0 to 33.2 hours and average hourly earnings increased from \$29.56 to \$30.55.

The largest over the month private sector



job gains were in educational and health services, trade, transportation, and utilities, and financial activities. The largest over the month decline was in leisure and hospitality.

Over the year, nonfarm payroll jobs increased 57,100, with an increase of 46,000 in the private sector and an increase of 11,100 in government. The largest private sector job gains were in professional and business services, educational and health services, and financial activi-

ties. There were no significant private sector over the year declines.

Over the year, the unemployment rate is down one percentage point from 3.6 percent. The number of Coloradans participating in the labor force increased 40,900, total employment increased 72,500 and the number of unemployed decreased 31,600.

The national unemployment rate declined from 3.7 percent in November 2018 to 3.5 percent in November 2019.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

SAN MIGUEL POWER SENDS OUT OVER \$1.5 MILLION IN MEMBER DIVIDENDS

Special to the Mirror

RIDGWAY-At its November meeting, the Board of Directors of San Miguel Power Association (SMPA) approved the return of \$1.5 million in Member Dividends to the consumer-members. This move completes the process by which excess revenues get shared back with consumers over time.

In a typical year, SMPA has money left over after paying its expenses. The excess revenue, called "margins" is allocated to each consumer in proportion to their contributions for that year. For a period of time, these margins are used by the cooperative as capital to finance operations and construction. This helps keep rates at an affordable level by reducing the need to turn to lenders for funds to maintain and enhance SMPA's existing electric system.

When the Board determines the time is right, allocations for a given year or combination of years are repaid to members as "Member Dividends."

This month, many SMPA members received checks in the mail. The dividends represent allocations from the years 1991, 1992, and 1993. The majority of members received dividend checks between \$20 and \$250. Some large power users, including towns, counties, and schools received checks over \$5,000. "Giving member dividends back to you is one of the ways we distinguish ourselves from investor-owned, for-profit utilities," said Board President, Rube Felicelli. "It's a commitment that is absolutely foundational for an electric cooperative like SMPA."



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VALLEY MANOR CARE CENTER



ISSUE 243 Dec. 30, 2019

ART & SOL

FRIENDS OF YOUTH & NATURE: BUNDLE UP – FOR WINTER FUN!



Family fun. Courtesy photo.

By Lynea Schultz-Ela, Friends of Youth and Nature

REGIONAL-Who among us hasn't learned the hard way that, when adventuring outside in winter, preparation is worth its weight in gold. Whether you're suffering a highway shut down or a snap storm that puts you on the side of the road while on a car trip or you're suffering from cold and wet blue jeans and boots while sledding on a local hillside; cold weather can be miserable. My husband remembers as a child having his dad cut up bicycle inner tubes to tie around the tops of his irritating boots so his feet would remain dry—it did nothing to alleviate the unforgettable cold and the freezing feeling.

leather—these are pretty much death fabrics as they absorb water and do not dry out quickly! Instead, go for multiple layers starting with a base layer made of wool or polypropylene to wick moisture away from your skin. Put on a fleece as middle layer, and a wind resistant outer shell. If you're going out in severe cold, beef up those layers to stay toasty and dry underneath.

-Definitely cover head and ears. Any cap that covers well and stays on will work. Microfleece is a good option for warmth and dry coverage.

-Do NOT use irrigation boots—instead go for warm boots and gaiters or a snowsuit that goes over the top of the boots. The

We want children to remember the fun of sledding, skiing, snowman building, the discovery of winter animal tracks, and the joy of successful snow angels and snow forts. The key to remain warm and dry in the midst of wet, cold snow is being prepared.

Here are a few tips to keep in mind for cold-weather comfort:

-Clothing: focus on warm outer layers that repel water. Blue jeans, cotton,

goal is warm and dry feet. In a pinch try putting plastic bags over your child's feet before sliding them into the boot. It definitely helps.

-Use mittens that go up into the jacket and repel melting snow. You'll want a warm soft inside and a synthetic material on the outside of those mitts.

-Consider a scarf or a jacket that zips up to the chin in case of wind. You could also wear a cap that you can pull down into a facemask if the cold and wind is biting.

-Once again, dress in layers. Active children can warm up quickly and sweat resulting in a case of the shivers from the damp inner layers. Shivering uses lots of calories and will not create good memories.

-Bring an extra set of socks, gloves and even a fleece top for a quick change in the car once the snow fun is over. The ride home will more comfortable for kids who put it all out there in the snow.

Aside from clothing choices, you should always bring snacks and water. My grandkids now remind me every time we have an outing "DON'T FORGET THE SNACKS" because you guessed it—I have forgotten them. Generally, think about carbohydrates that provide quick energy and quick recovery. Kid friendly food bars make this easy, but also a nut or nut free butter and jelly sandwich is perfect. Dried fruit provides quick energy and is healthy too.

Continued next pg

FRIENDS OF YOUTH & NATURE: BUNDLE UP – FOR WINTER FUN!

From previous pg

Water is important. Given the length of time that most kids actually spend playing outdoors in winter it's okay if they drink water before and after the activity instead of during all the fun. To help increase the quantity you could have a warm thermos of hot cocoa, tea, or soup. Any fluids will help replenish their active selves.

Stuck in the car on the side of the road, or waiting for a road closure to reopen? Tuck all the above in the car before you take off, and include a pack of cards or drawing paper and pencil. Electronics are the entertainment du jour but they may be short lived or out of range in the event of a road closure. There are many interac-

tive games that don't require electronics. Remember "hang man" and designing your own mazes on paper? How about writing haikus (three-line Japanese style poems) starting with a description of the view out their window.

In western Colorado we have an abundance of sunshine and with a little bit of driving to the Uncompaghre Plateau, the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park, or the Grand Mesa National Forest, we also have an abundance of snow. The combination invites adventure and fun—so grab your sunscreen, snacks, and the right warm clothing and get out there!

For more winter-specific and general

outdoor activities with kids, visit www.friendsofyouthandnature.org. For more fun snow play ideas, search "snow activities for kids", or check out these links: <https://www.parents.com/fun/activities/outdoor/snow-activities-kids/>, <https://www.howweelearn.com/fun-things-to-do-in-the-snow/>, <https://artfulparent.com/winter-activities-for-kids/>

Friends of Youth and Nature is a non-profit that promotes opportunities for youth and families to go outside, experience outdoor activities, and explore nature. For more information visit: friendsofyouthand-nature.org

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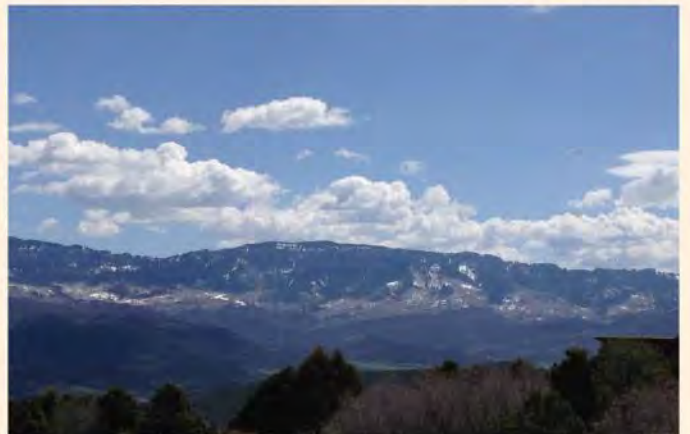
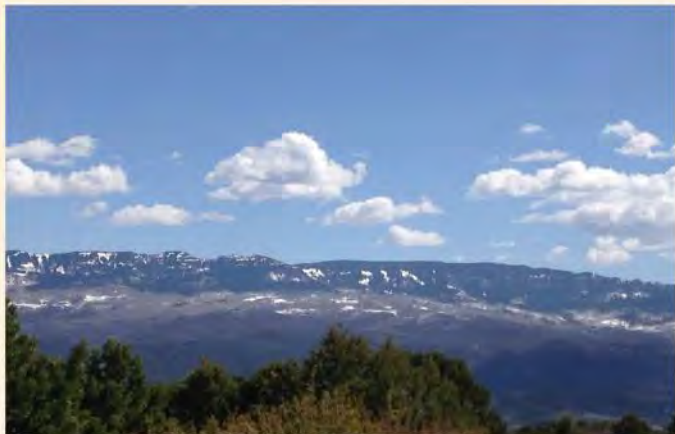


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COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

ED BRUMMEL OF SALIDA & RETTA AWARDS STUDENTS FEATURED @ JANUARY POETRY CLUB READING JAN. 14

Special to Art & Sol

TELLURIDE ... The Telluride Institute's Talking Gourds Poetry Club is proud to kick off the new year with a reading by long-time supporter and poet Eduardo Rey Brummel of Salida and student Rella Award contestants at 6 p.m. Jan. 14th at the Telluride Arts HQ.

Earlier that same day, the Rella Awards ceremony for student contestants will take place at 4 p.m. at the Telluride Mountain School at Lawson Hill.

Thanks to a generous donation from the Bardwell Donachy Family Fund, Talking Gourds is offering two \$200 local student poetry awards, honoring the literary career of Ettore Rella (1903-1988) -- a Telluride native who studied in Rome and became a poet and playwright in New York City.

One Rella Award will go to a poem submitted from a High School student, as selected by the Talking Gourd Poetry Club members. The other to a poem submitted by a student in Grades kindergarten to 8th grade.

Brummel, who regularly makes the four-hour trek from Salida to Telluride for our Poetry Club events, will be the featured reader this month. His writing has appeared in places such as *High Country*

News, *Colorado Central*, *Desert Call*, and others. For the last sixteen years, he has lived on the Eastern Slope, half an hour from the top of the Continental Divide.

The theme prompt for January will be "Snow."

Up-to-date paid members of the Poetry Club are eligible for a free broadside copy of a select poem of the featured reader(s) crafted by Daiva Chesonis -- co-owner of another of our partners, independently-owned Between the Covers Bookstore. Non-members can purchase the broadsides at the store.

Membership forms are available at the club meeting.

Starting this month, Talking Gourds is sponsoring a new student poetry contest, thanks to a grant from the Bardwell Donachy Family Fund -- the [Rella Awards](#). Named for Ettore Rella (1903-1988), a poet and playwright who was born in Telluride, studied in Rome and went on to become a celebrity in New York City.

Poetry Club readings in Telluride start at 6 p.m. beginning with Club News & Other Business. Following that, the featured readers share work for 45 minutes to an



Eduardo Rey Brummel of Salida. Courtesy photo.

hour. There's a short break. And then we pass the Gourd, and everyone gets to share their own poem (on any topic) -- or a piece by a favorite author on the month's theme. Both events are free and open to all.

Time & Place

The address of the Telluride Arts Gallery is 135 W. Pacific Ave. -- across the street from the entrance to another of our partners: the Wilkinson Public Library. The Telluride Mountain School is located at 200 San Miguel River Road in Lawson Hill outside of Telluride.

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

Up Bear Creek by Art Goodtimes

In the Middle of an Explosion

AL-GORE-ISM ... My mnemonic for a statistical tool used to separate lines of data into multiplying bins and put a clear spin on things. After all, he supported the Internet, didn't he. He invented its initial popularity, no? ... These days an algorithm is the mechanism for assembling personal habit dossiers for each and every citizen/consumer on line. On our cell phone. Tracking our every trip ... What if we pulled a rabbit out of our Radical Middle hat and applied an honesty algorithm to the clarinet mind of President Emeritus Bill Clinton, and he had resigned, honorably, when caught in a baldface? ... Okay, he was a lecherous guy. I have it on local knowledge. Power does that to some people. Did it to Kennedy. But that isn't what sticks in my craw. He lied about what happened. And got caught! Just as badly as Nixon. If we can't publicly trust our leaders to tell us the truth, trust in government evaporates ... Resignation would have been the honorable thing to do. And Gore would have been president. But there was no honor in the last failed impeachment ... And Voila! Eventually a bully rises to the top because the Haves have no more need for charades, and now Team D is trying unsuccessfully to impeach the current embarrassment in the White House. The rise of bullies seems to be happening in many countries around the world ... Why? ... My take in these last days of the American Empire's Gregorian/Julian Christian calendar is just what the late mountain wise woman Dolores LaChapelle said about our times – We are in the middle of an explosion. It's climate changing faster than we thought. It's the black swan nuclear shadow. Injustices and toxicity worldwide. Population *koyaanis-qatsi* ... But it's all happening in slow-motion and we just aren't quite feeling it (enough) yet. Slow in human time scale. Meteoric in geologic time.

TED LIVELLI ...

Shucks, just like him to ride off orange-helmeted into the sunset and vanish. He did that for years, commuting between Arizona and Telluride. Spent summers here sleeping under the stars. A habitué of main street benches. For year he worked as sound guy for the Telluride Mushroom Festival. Part of the scene. With Andy Weil. Gary Lincoff. The Salzmanns ... A constitutionalist with his own extreme take on federal usurpation of power. Unafraid to go against the grain. But an artist really. I have several sketches of his I bought. Including an octopus that's truly intriguing ... Our friend Susan Santé stopped at his digs in Payson last week and found out he'd passed late this summer. Disease came on quickly. And he was gone ... Bless him.



Ted Livelli (courtesy photo)

EMOJIS ... It's interesting, and perhaps not unrelated, that Japanese – a tongue which hosts what linguists call the world's most complicated writing system -- would be the source of an international pictographic language of startling simplicity and effectiveness.

HYPOCRISY ... In Montrose, I watch the day's most aggressive Colorado driver, cutting in and out of lanes, tailgating, and notice he has a "Respect Life" bumper-sticker ... Then there's the recent poll announced in *The Week* that showed 72 percent of Euro-American evangelical Protestants believe a person who commits "immoral personal acts" can serve effec-



Barn cat with mouse (courtesy photo).

tively in public office. That's up from 30 percent in 2011 ... The Moral Majority proves not exactly moral when it comes to leadership.

WEEKLY QUOTA ... "Every time you put a key in your ignition, you're committing a crime against nature." –bicyclist, jeweler and visionary Rolling Wheel of Placerville.

BARN CAT ... Rio found the yellow tabby sprawled face down in the dirt by the welcome mat in my Cloud Acre driveway. On his way in for tea. Gunpowder black with cream & honey ... I never gave her a name. She was wild through and through. And naming her seemed almost an insult ... The day before she passed she didn't eat the two mice I'd left for her. Unusual. Her right eye almost shut. Moving slowly. Didn't spook when I walked by, but when I stooped to touch, she sprang away – as though I broken some compact we'd made since day one, when I tried to scare away yet another stray ... We'd become

Up Bear Creek by Art Goodtimes, continued

wary friends. Waited to be fed. Hung close to home ... Sorry for her last winter, I'd let her come sleep on the enclosed porch – warmer than the barn. 'Till she started pissing & shitting there. Had to evict her. Built a plywood half-door gate to keep her out ... Even then she looked ragged, as though healing from a fight. Some nights, when the wild black cat appeared, the cauterwauling got so loud I'd come outside in the night in my t-shirt with a flash-

light and scare the brawlers away ... A survivor. She grew on me. Her lack of affection a mark of the wild – undomesticated feline. But a familiar none the less ... Never let her come inside. Though by the end she'd talk to me. And I to her. Always checking to see if she needed food. Her always running off if I got near ... Her absence heavy tonight, like spring snow.

SOPRIS SUN ... Gotta love that non-profit

newspaper hybrid over in the Roaring Fork Valley. Whereas in many communities, like Telluride, out-of-town investor media chains come into town, squeeze out the local competition, and then maintain a stranglehold on advertising and news -- what little of that they invest in ... If you're a benevolent type, get a subscription. Or better yet send them a donation at P.O. Box 399, Carbondale CO 81623

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COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

WILD RAINBOW TROUT POPULATION GROWING IN THE GUNNISON GORGE

Special to Art & Sol

MONTROSE-Work to restore wild rainbow trout in the Gunnison Gorge is starting to pay off as the population of the species is slowly increasing, according to surveys conducted recently by Colorado Parks and Wildlife. CPW biologists are hopeful that the success on the Gunnison will eventually help bring wild rainbows back to all Colorado's rivers and streams.

Rainbow trout once dominated the renowned Gunnison River; but in 1994 CPW biologists found fish there infected with whirling disease and their population drifted toward zero. Brown trout, which are much more resistant to whirling disease, quickly took over and now are the dominant fish in the gorge and many other Colorado streams. Whirling disease infected streams and rivers throughout the state and imperiled rainbow trout populations.

The most significant observation from the Gunnison survey completed in October showed an abundance of "young of the year" fish that hatched in mid-summer and that showed no symptoms of whirling disease.

"We found the highest number of rainbow fry we've ever seen since the 1990s and they were spread over multiple sites in the canyon," said Eric Gardunio, aquatic biologist for CPW in Montrose. "We're seeing natural reproduction throughout the canyon and survival of wild fish in the life stage where they can be affected by whirling disease. It's very encouraging."

For adult fish, the survey found 630 rainbow trout per mile in the survey sections.

That's significantly fewer than the 1,500-2,000 rainbows found per mile in the days before whirling disease; but improvement from the last few years is evident. In 2014, surveys found just 173 fish per mile; 489 fish per mile in 2016; and 522 fish per mile in 2017.

By comparison, brown trout now number about 5,000 fish per mile.

"It's a very healthy river, but for rainbows we have a long way to go before we'll be comfortable saying they are fully recovered," Gardunio said.

CPW continues to stock whirling-disease resistant rainbows in that section of the Gunnison and at other rivers throughout the state.

The recovery plan for the fish started tentatively in 2003 when CPW obtained a whirling-disease resistant strain of rainbows from a hatchery in Germany. The fish, however, had been hatchery-raised for decades and were "domesticated", meaning they had no experience in the wild. CPW researchers crossed the spawn of these fish, known as Hofers, with several other strains of rainbow trout. The crosses showed significant resistance to whirling disease and exhibited a "flight response" when placed in reservoirs.

In the spring of 2007, biologists started stocking the Hofer-cross fry in rivers and reservoirs statewide. Results were mixed throughout the state, but biologists found that the new strains did best in the East Portal section of the Gunnison River where CPW had, for many years, spawned wild trout to supply state hatcheries. That



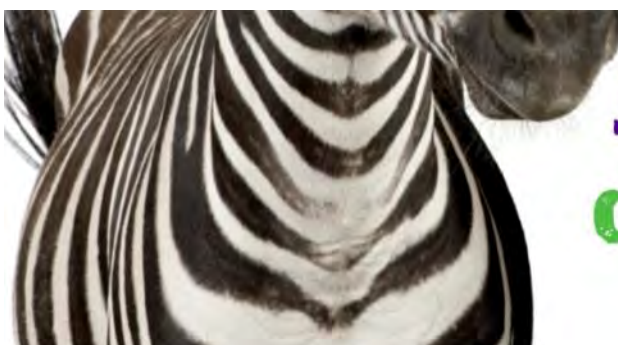
A tiny rainbow trout fry is giving CPW biologists hope that wild fish are reproducing naturally in the Gunnison River Gorge and that will eventually help to restore wild rainbows to rivers throughout the state. Courtesy photo.

spot continues to be a productive area and rainbows are spawned there every year. They've even been given their own name – Gunnison River Rainbows.

Finding the young wild fish downstream in the Gunnison Gorge provides another encouraging sign that the 20-year journey to recover rainbow trout has been worth the effort. The abundance of brown trout, predators that feast on small fish, are perhaps the biggest challenge in the Gunnison and other rivers.

"The wild fry are the best thing for us to see down there," Gardunio said. "As those fish grow into adults we'll have more and more fish and hopefully, a self-sustaining population. We hope to see a continuing gradual increase."

And if they thrive in the Gunnison, biologists are confident they'll eventually take hold in big rivers throughout the state.



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COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

MONTROSE LIBRARY RECRUITING FOR TEEN ADVISORY BOARD

Special to Art & Sol

MONTROSE-Montrose Regional Library is excited to announce that we are recruiting for our Teen Advisory Board (TAB)! What exactly is a Teen Advisory Board, you ask? Fun, pizza, and helping re-design the teen space. Teens 13 to 18 years old are welcome to join us on Thursday, Jan. 16 in the Library Meeting Room for our first meeting! Get here any time between 3:30 and 5 p.m. A presentation will start at 4 p.m.

WIENERSCHNITZEL LOCATIONS SERVE 2,200 FREE HOT DOGS

Special to Art & Sol

REGIONAL-On Christmas Day, Dec. 25, five participating Wienerschnitzel locations served up 1,100 free meals to members of the Grand Junction community. Not only were 2,200 hot dogs served during the two-hour event, but Santa and his helpers were also in attendance passing out gifts to chil-



COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

COLORADO'S STATE PARKS WILL MOVE TO CAMPING RESERVATION SYSTEM IN JANUARY

Special to Art & Sol

DENVER- Starting in 2020, it will be easier than ever for visitors to reserve a campsite, cabin, yurt, picnic area, or other facilities at Colorado's 41 state parks. Effective Jan. 1, all of Colorado's state parks will require campers to book campsites within the Colorado Parks and Wildlife purchasing system which now provides the flexibility to book anywhere from six months in advance up until the moment they arrive at the park and find an available site.

This program was tested successfully at five parks in 2018 and 17 more parks in 2019. Using the system, campers can reserve a site 24/7 and no longer have a closed window that prevents them from reserving a site in the three days ahead of a planned stay. Reserving a site is now as easy as logging into cpwshop.com from your computer or smartphone, or by calling 800-244-5613.

Park managers already using the booking system reported success with eliminating the three-day reservation window and switching to a system where campers can reserve their own spots via phone or online the day they plan to arrive at the park or up to six months in advance.

The ability to reserve a site on the same day eliminates the need for campers to



Colorado's state parks are moving to camping reservation system in January. CPW Courtesy photo.

gamble on a first-come, first-served spot, only to arrive at the park and find that there aren't any spots available.

What if someone occupies a site they haven't reserved?

Campers who occupy a campsite without a reservation will be subject to a citation and/or eviction.

All campers must reserve a campsite prior to occupying the site. This can be done

24/7 at cpwshop.com or by calling 1-800-244-5613.

Please note: Cellular coverage at some state parks (like Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area, Golden Gate Canyon, State Forest and Highline) can range from spotty to non-existent.

CPW advises those interested in camping at these parks to make their reservations online or by phone before arrival.

DISCOVER HISTORY OF SKI DALLAS JAN. 1

Special to Art & Sol

MONTROSE-On Wednesday, Jan. 1st, 7 p.m. *Montrose County Historical Society Presents:* Karen Tessman Slater, long-time resident and daughter of early owners, as she shares "The History of Ski Dallas." Learn how Montrose families used to enjoy friendly, economical winter sports close to home. Admission is free and the public is welcome. Held in the Pioneer Room of Friendship Hall, Montrose County Fairgrounds, 1001 N. 2nd St. For information call 970-323-6466.

The Mirror:
Coverage with vision for the future.



SAVE THE DATE! UPCOMING REGIONAL EVENTS

CURRENT/ONGOING-

READING LITE STORYTIME-Every Wednesday, Jan. 15 - May 6, 10am - 10:30am. Enjoy Singing, playing, reading, and a craft all in about 30 minutes. Ages 2-6.

READING TO ROVER-Montrose Regional Library, Every Tuesday, Jan. 14 - May 5, 3:30 - 4:30pm. Read to a Morningstar Therapy Dog. Call 970.249.9656 option 2 or visit the children's desk to sign up for a 15-minute reading time.

MONTROSE LIBRARY-CHESS CLUB Every Tuesday, Jan. 14 - May 5, 4pm - 5pm. Join us in the library meeting room for once monthly chess club, chess boards and pieces provided. Children under age 7 must have an adult with them, no sign-ups required.

MONTROSE FREE THINKERS meet the first Sunday of each month. Call 417-4183 for more information & location.

MONTROSE CENTER FOR THE ARTS welcomes FIRST FRIDAY STROLL on Main Street in Montrose. Montrose Center for the Arts is exhibiting a *WINTER themed Members Art Show* for the month of December. Also, check out the Christmas Store at the Art Center. Appetizers and beverages available for your enjoyment. The Art Center is at the corner of Main and Park Ave., 11 Park Ave., Montrose.

BOSOM BUDDIES OF SOUTHWESTERN COLORADO BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP meets every Wednesday from noon till 1 pm at 645 South 5th Street in Montrose. For more info email info@bosombuddiesswc.org.

MONTROSE COUNTY NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH meets the second Friday of every month at the Montrose Regional Library, Room 102 from 1:30 PM – 3 PM. Contact Chris Hebert with questions at [970-901-5876](tel:970-901-5876).

ALPINE PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB MEETING-second Tuesday of the month, @ 7 p.m., Community Meeting Room, Montrose Library, 320 S 2nd St. Includes: Presentations, photo sharing & critiques. All are welcome to attend.

AMERICAN LEGION POST 24 hosts Bingo every Saturday and Sunday at 7pm, at the Bingo Connection, 2075 East Main Montrose. Its open to the Public. Doors open at 5:30 p.m.. For more info call Tom at 260-8298.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS meeting every 3rd Thursday at 6 p.m. at Friendship Hall in Montrose. All veterans with at least a 10 percent service connected disability are welcome. For more information call (970)964-4375.

MONTROSE TOASTMASTERS

Montrose Toastmasters meets every Monday at 6 pm with official meetings on the 2nd and 4th Mondays. The other Mondays will be "working" meetings. They are held at Brookdale Sunrise Creek, 1968 Sunrise Drive, Montrose, Second Floor, Media Room.

MONTROSE HISTORICAL MUSEUM-“Montrose County Historical Society Presents” is held at 7 pm on the first Wednesday of each month in the Pioneer Room of Friendship Hall, 1001 N. 2nd St. The public is invited to free programs based on topics of regional history. For more information please call 249-2085.

MONTROSE COUNTY GOP MEETING 6:30 p.m. second Wednesday of each month. Montrose County School District Office- 930 Colorado Ave. Information 970-209-8173.

MONTROSE COUNTY REPUBLICAN WOMEN MEETING

Noon - third Fridays. Hampton Inn, 1980 North Townsend Ave. Information: Dianna 970-249-0724

MONTHLY-

Dec. 31: Ouray Elks New Years' Eve party, 6 - 12:30, Karaoke starts at 7 pm. Open to the public.

Jan. 1-At 7 p.m. on Jan. 1, *Montrose County Historical Society Presents:* Karen Tessman Slater, long-time resident and daughter of early owners, as she shares “The History of Ski Dallas.” Learn how Montrose families used to enjoy friendly, economical winter sports close to home. Admission is free and the public is welcome. Held in the Pioneer Room of Friendship Hall, Montrose County Fairgrounds, 1001 N. 2nd St. For information call 970-323-6466.

Jan.3-Feb.3-Montrose Center for the Arts will present an art exhibition by Loretta Casler of Ridgway from January 3 through February 3, 2020. Loretta works in a variety of media, including watercolor, oil, colored pencil and pen and ink. There will be an artist reception January 3 from 5-7pm at the Art Center, 11 S. Park Ave., Montrose. Join us for refreshments and a chance to meet Loretta and enjoy her artwork.

Jan. 4-Lorrie Morgan and Aaron Tippin in concert at the Montrose County Event Center. For tickets and info visit: <https://www.blackcanyontickets.com/tc-events/jan4/>.

Jan. 4-Montrose Regional Library-Play and Learn, Jan. 4 10am – Noon. Join us for an early literacy playdate! Stations and activities to promote early literacy. Designed for ages 0-6.

Jan. 4-Ouray Elks charity breakfast, 8 - 10:30 am. \$12 adults, \$5 students, proceeds go to our charity fund. Open to the public.

Jan. 7-Historical Adventures on the Colorado Plateau, Montrose Pavilion Senior Center, 1 p.m. Explore travel and the multitude of ways horses were used to overcome travel obstacles on the Colorado Plateau. Author: Bob Silbernagel.

Jan. 9-Power Players Luncheon Series, The Best Plan for Your Business. Bridges Banquet Room, Noon to 1 p.m. Register 970-293-7929.

Jan. 10-All cattlemen and women are invited to attend the 2020 Western Slope Beef Cow Symposium held Friday, Jan. 10, 2020, beginning at 9 a.m. at Friendship Hall located at the Montrose County Fairgrounds. For more information about the 2020 Western Slope Beef Cow Symposium, please visit <http://2020bcs.eventbrite.com> or call 970-249-3935. Online or phone registration is required by Jan. 3, 2020, to attend this event.

Jan. 10-Montrose County Neighborhood Watch meets Jan.10 with speaker Jennifer Lujan of Montrose Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, who will discuss how this martial art form can be used for self-defense. Neighborhood Watch meets the second Friday of every month at the Montrose Regional Library, Room 102 from 1:30 PM – 3 PM. Contact Chris Hebert with questions at [970-901-5876](tel:970-901-5876).

Jan. 11-Photography & Pottery Exhibit Opening Reception, featuring works by Denise Bush Photography & Joan Gibson Pottery. Ridgway Library, 300 Charles St., 4-7pm. (Exhibit runs through March 13.)

Jan. 13-Monday January 13 ,6:30 Montrose Library mtg rm -National Geographic "Years of Living Dangerously " next episode presented by citizensclimatelobby.org ,nonpartisan. all welcome. ? call 240-9146.

Jan. 16-Montrose Library Teen Advisory Board. Montrose Regional Library is excited to announce that we are recruiting for our Teen Advisory Board (TAB)! What exactly is a Teen Advisory Board, you ask? Fun, pizza, and helping re-design the teen space. Teens 13 to 18 years old are welcome to join us on Thursday, Jan. 16 in the Library Meeting Room for our first meeting! Get here any time between 3:30 and 5 p.m. A presentation will start at 4 p.m.

Contact the Montrose Mirror:

970-275-0646

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READER PHOTO SPOTLIGHT: DEB REIMANN



"Fire in the Sky" ...Photographer Deb Reimann snapped this photo near Ouray.

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