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# the Montrose Mirror

Fresh News for Free People...  
Issue No. 377 May 18, 2020

## SCHOOL YEAR UNCERTAIN; RE-1J IMPROVES FACILITIES

*Teacher Contracts Expire May 26; Board to Review compensation in June*

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE-With no Zoom link shared and with technical difficulties, the first 20 minutes of the Montrose County School District RE-1J Board of Education Regular virtual meeting on May 12 were not open to the public, though a recording has since been posted to the District's Facebook site.

RE-1J Board of Education President Gayle Johnson said the Pledge of Allegiance; the Board voted to accept the agenda as presented. All directors were present via Zoom link from home, or in the case of District A Director Jeff Bachman, from the Harvest Community Church in Olathe.

### PRESIDENTS' REPORT

Two donations were received by the District: the Colorado Health Foundation will offer an unrestricted donation of \$10,000 to help respond to students and families who are experiencing immense disruption and strain from the far-reaching impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis;

[Continued pg 38](#)



*MHS Principal James Barnhill directed cars Sunday, as the Class of 2020 celebrated the end of their high school years with a graduation caravan down Rio Grande Avenue. Photo by Paul Arbogast.*

## ANOTHER PRIMARY MONTROSE EMPLOYER CUTS JOBS



*A primary local employer, Montrose Memorial Hospital announced extensive job cuts last week. Photo by Gail Marvel.*

By Gail Marvel

MONTROSE-According to Montrose Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) 2019 data, the five largest employers in Montrose County are:

- RE-1J School District (1,050)
- Montrose Memorial Hospital (707)
- Russell Stover (450)
- Montrose County (378)
- Volunteers of America (370)

Prior to the economic problems associated with COVID-19, Russell Stover announced they would shutter the Montrose plant in the Spring of 2012. Although local leaders are working to lessen the impact, the loss of 450 jobs in the community cannot be understated.

Last week, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Montrose Memorial Hospital

[Continued pg 7](#)

in this  
issue

[Paul Arbogast visits  
Shooters Grill in Rifle!](#)

[Class of 2020  
Celebrates Graduation!](#)

[Gail Marvel Visits  
San Juan Gardens!](#)

[Reader Photo Spotlight:  
Deb Reimann!](#)

## COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

### MARTINEZ TO SERVE ON 2 GOVERNOR-APPOINTED COUNCILS

#### *Special to the Mirror*

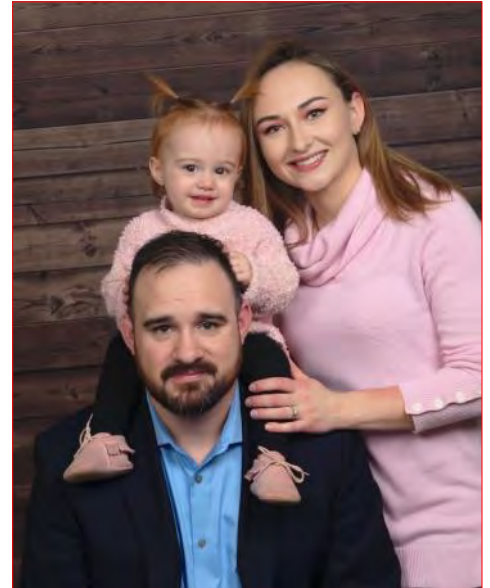
COLORADO-Olathe native Kyle Martinez may be best known as a jack-of-all-trades—he's a farmer and rancher, businessman, parent, and entrepreneur. Now, Martinez will take his diverse skill set statewide; he has been asked to serve on two state councils created to help Colorado recover from the repercussions of COVID-19.

"Kyle's appointment to not one, but two, statewide committees is a testament to the quality of board members our members elect to serve them. We know without a doubt, he will keep our members', and all rural citizens' for that matter, best interests at heart as he aids the state in COVID-19 recovery efforts," said Jasen Bronec, chief executive officer for Delta-Montrose Electric Association.

Kyle and his wife Kat grow hay and raise horses and cows on the family farm. Kyle works full-time at his family's home health agency, Touch of Care, where he manages several in-home support programs and serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the hospice division. Kyle and Kat also own Black Canyon Tickets, so chances are you've also seen him working the door at your favorite local event. Since 2015, Kyle has served the citizens of Montrose and Delta counties as a director for DMEA,

helping the co-op navigate the launch of a fiber internet company and transition to the future. "I've been blessed with a lot in this life—a healthy and happy family and the opportunity to live and work in a place I love. And now, I'm in a position where I can give back to my community," said Kyle. So, when Federico Pena, Chairman of the Governor's Council on Economic Stabilization and Growth, asked Kyle to join the council's energy committee, the answer was yes. The purpose of this council is to bring together the best and brightest minds from across the state and various industries to create strategies that will put people back to work and revitalize Colorado's economy. Kyle has been a voice for Western Colorado on this committee, helping craft both federal and state recommendations.

"I have worked hard to help members through these tough times and have been successful in some of my recommendations. The Governor accepted and implemented all of [the committee's] ideas submitted on our first report," said Kyle. Citing Kyle's diverse experience with home health care, hospice, and electric cooperatives—in addition to the Energy Committee—Chairman Pena then recommended Kyle also be appointed to the Governor's New Normal Advisory Board. The mission of this 14-member board is to advise the Governor and state health department on how to implement successful social distancing measures, put in place due to COVID-19, at a local level. "I hope my work and contributions to these committees help my fellow community members while aiding the state in moving through these troubling times," Kyle said.



*Kyle, Kat, and daughter Elizabeth Martinez  
Courtesy photo*

nor's New Normal Advisory Board. The mission of this 14-member board is to advise the Governor and state health department on how to implement successful social distancing measures, put in place due to COVID-19, at a local level. "I hope my work and contributions to these committees help my fellow community members while aiding the state in moving through these troubling times," Kyle said.

## THE MONTROSE MIRROR

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We encourage contributions and commentary. Content may not necessarily reflect the opinions of the publisher.

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## MIRROR IMAGES: PAUL ARBOGAST VISITS SHOOTERS GRILL IN RIFLE



*Above, Lauren working the phones.*

*Below, tape still on booths that was used to distance customers when they reopened to dine in on May 9.*



*Shooters Grill in Rifle. On May 15, the Garfield County Health Department suspended their food license. A virtual hearing is scheduled for May 18. Photos by Paul Arbogast.*

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at: [www.DeltaMontroseCountyRealEstate.com](http://www.DeltaMontroseCountyRealEstate.com)

## COUNTY DECLINES TO GRANT 'THROUGH THE FENCE' AIRPORT ACCESS

### Mirror staff report

MONTROSE- A vaccine development and testing operation planned by COVAXX for One Creative Place in Montrose has not been granted "through the fence" access to Montrose Regional Airport as requested by COVAXX CEO Lou Reese at the April 27 Montrose Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) work session.

Commissioners issued a letter to the company on May 13 denying the access request because required Federal agency review and approvals could not be obtained within the requested time frame. Under the original proposal, COVAXX

hoped to operate a facility to put together and distribute test kits out of the hangar facility, while working on vaccine development in a lab in the hangar as well.

There would have been roughly six flights a day coming and going, according to City Manager Bill Bell, who addressed the COVAXX proposal at a recent City Council meeting. Bell told Council last week that the property is correctly zoned for the proposed use, but the business will not come before City Council because there are no decisions for the City to make at this point. [Click to read the BOCC letter in full.](#)



*A vaccine development and testing operation planned for One Creative Place in Montrose (above) has not been granted "through the fence" access to Montrose Regional Airport as requested. Mirror file photo..*

(970) 249-3362 EXTENSION 1

# Vehicle Registration

WED & FRI 8am

TAKING  
APPOINTMENTS

In an effort to accommodate individuals in vulnerable or at risk populations, Vehicle Registration is now taking appointments on Wednesdays and Fridays at 8am for titling and vehicle registration. To make an appointment, please call (970) 249-3362 ext. 1.

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## ***ANOTHER PRIMARY MONTROSE EMPLOYER CUTS JOBS From pg 1***

(MMH) implemented a reduction in force of 19 employees.

MMH Chief Executive Officer (CEO) James Kiser said, "We engaged a firm to model potential [financial] loss and they projected \$5.5 M this year. As of March 23<sup>rd</sup>, the hospital could no longer do elective procedures, and those are the life blood of all hospitals. In March we lost \$1.5M. Our profit margin goal is to sustain ourselves."

The hospital considered cutting 74 to 111 positions. Kiser said, "We took a lot of action so jobs would not be lost. We implemented a hiring freeze, the administration took 20 percent pay cuts for April, senior leadership and department heads did not receive cost of living adjustments, there was no 401 (k) return match, and from May through December there is a 10 percent reduction in compensation [benefits]."

Both full-time and part-time employees

were included in the 19 positions terminated. The combined reduction is the equivalent of laying off 15.3 fulltime employees. The cost savings to MMH is \$600,000. Kiser said, "Unlike Russell Stover who is closing their doors, our goal has been to protect our people."

Currently MMH is not looking at a further reduction in force. Those who lost their jobs were given a severance package based on their years of service. Information about the hospital's support services, Employee Assistance Program and the Colorado Work Force Center was given to employees.

Information from the Mayo Clinic indicates hospitals can expect a dip in revenue for 22 weeks. Kiser said, "We could see a loss of \$8M. We've not seen 10-14 patients in the hospital, but COVID-19 comes in waves. Assuming we don't get a huge COVID swing, we can handle a small spike.

We have eight to 48 beds if there is an upward swing."

Kiser continued, "The big impact is the long-term sustainability. It's a positive for the community if we can sustain, then we will be here for the community."

MEDC Executive Director Sandy Head said, "The hospital has both primary and secondary jobs. All jobs are important, but every organization is having to restructure and retool their workforce. There are many rural hospitals across the nation that have closed. Our hospital is taking steps to keep the hospital open."

Head noted the tourism and hospitality industry has taken a huge hit; however, businesses such as home repair [Home Depot] and auto repair are maintaining a steady income. She said, "Some people who are now staying home have the time and the money to do repairs and catch up on things they have put off."

## **ELECTION REMINDER:**

**June 1st is the **LAST** day to  
change your party affiliation for  
the upcoming  
**June 30th Primary Election!****

**Please visit **govotecolorado.gov** to  
update your voter information**



**For assistance contact the Elections Office:**

**Phone: 970-249-3362 ext 3;**

**Email: [elections@montrosecounty.net](mailto:elections@montrosecounty.net)**



## REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

### CITY ADJUSTS EMERGENCY STATUS TO TIER 3

*Special to the Mirror*

**MONTROSE** —City of Montrose officials will lower the city's pandemic response status to Tier 3 beginning Monday, May 18. The move begins the incremental process of restoring some in-person city operations and services that were curtailed or suspended after the city enacted an emergency declaration on March 17.

Beginning Monday, May 18, limited in-person customer services will be available from a temporary location at the Downtown Visitor Center lobby (107 S Cascade Avenue), Monday through Thursday, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Service will be limited to two customers at a time. The city will also provide utility billing and Municipal Court services from the same location.

The Montrose Police Department will open its lobby to a limit of one person at a time, Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. VIN inspections will be available Monday through Thursday, 12 p.m. to 8 p.m. Police officers will continue to respond to all in-progress life safety situations and will be proactively patrolling the community. Code enforcement will operate at normal capacity. The animal shelter is now open by appointment only.

City officials urge Montrose residents to continue to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus by using online and virtual services whenever possible, wearing masks while in public, practicing social distancing, and taking other reasonable preventative measures. The State of Colorado remains under the governor's "Safer at Home" order, which places significant restrictions on businesses and individuals. Continued vigilance and responsible behavior are key to minimizing the impacts of the virus and reopening the local economy.

For more information and updates about the city's pandemic response measures, as well as resources for residents and businesses, visit [CityofMontrose.org/COVID19](https://CityofMontrose.org/COVID19).



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## REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

### BOSOM BUDDIES' MAY MAMMOGRAM EVENT CANCELLED *Financial Assistance Still Available*

*Special to the Mirror*

REGIONAL-Bosom Buddies announced that their May Free Mammogram event has been cancelled due to the current health crisis. "We want to make sure, though, that women in our service area know that financial assistance is available year-round for those who qualify," said Bosom Buddies President Phyllis Wiesner. Wiesner stated that the organization decided, due to current social distancing guidelines, it was best not to promote elective mammogram procedures in such

a concentrated time span. "But we still encourage women to get an annual mammogram and to apply to Bosom Buddies for financial assistance if needed," said Wiesner.

Financial assistance applications can be downloaded from the Bosom Buddies website at [www.bosombuddieswc.org](http://www.bosombuddieswc.org). "We review income levels and insurance status and, for those who qualify; we can cover part or all of the cost of a 3D mammogram at Montrose Memorial Hospital." "With so many women out of work, we











are expecting a higher than normal demand for financial assistance," added Wiesner. "Bosom Buddies is committed to helping and encourage all women to do their monthly self-exams and follow their doctors' recommendations for mammograms."

Bosom Buddies serves the residents of Montrose, Ouray and San Miguel counties. The group helps those dealing with breast cancer by providing counseling support and free hats, scarves, wigs, bras and prostheses. Bosom Buddies also provides financial assistance for mammograms and other related medical procedures to underserved women and men in southwestern Colorado. In addition, Bosom Buddies also awards scholarships to children of women and men diagnosed with breast cancer.


Bosom Buddies can be contacted via email at [info@bosombuddieswc.org](mailto:info@bosombuddieswc.org).


**MAY NATIONAL Women's HEALTH MONTH**

As a woman, you have unique health care needs. It only makes sense to seek health providers, who are uniquely equipped to meet your individual needs - through every stage.

 <b>RYAN MARLIN, MD</b> DCMH West Elk Clinic/Hutchinson	 <b>MICHELLE BARHAGHI, MD</b> Premier Women's Healthcare of Delta	 <b>HALEY CARLTON, PA</b> DCMH Family Medicine	 <b>MATTHEW LEBACK, MD</b> DCMH West Elk Clinic/Hutchinson	 <b>JONATHAN RICHMAN, MD</b> DCMH Family Medicine
 <b>AMBER ANGLES, MD</b> DCMH Family Medicine	 <b>HENRY LEWIS, III, MD</b> Premier Women's Healthcare of Delta	 <b>MICHELLE REED, DO</b> Internal Medicine Associates	 <b>SEAN REA, DO</b> DCMH Family Medicine	 <b>CHRISTI ANDERSON, NP</b> DCMH West Elk Clinic/Hutchinson

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

## REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

# RIDGWAY ADVANCES TO GRADUATE STATUS IN COLORADO MAIN STREET PROGRAM

### Special to the Mirror

RIDGWAY-The Town of Ridgway is excited to announce that it recently advanced to "Graduate" status in the Colorado Main Street Program. Ridgway now joins five other communities with Graduate status that are all working to bring to life the history and unique attributes of their downtowns. The Colorado Main Street Program's overarching mission is to strengthen Colorado communities by assisting them with implementing the Main Street Approach® and helping revitalize historic downtowns through preservation-based economic development and community-led revitalization, customized by each community.

The Town's exemplary work in the important strategic planning process that energizes stakeholders and volunteers, and leads to a more vibrant and healthy community, was cited as a main reason for the advancement to Graduate status. According to a letter submitted to the Town by Rick Garcia, Executive Director of

the Department of Local Affairs, "Ridgway has demonstrated a commitment to downtown revitalization, building partnerships, and collaboration."

The Town's Main Street initiative began in 2012 with a downtown assessment and recommendations for revitalization efforts. It moved from "Candidate" to "Designated" status in 2014. In 2015, Ridgway was named Main Street of the Year by Colorado Main Street, especially honoring its downtown design and im-

provement plans which soon became the Ramp Up Ridgway downtown infrastructure and streetscape project, completed in 2017. Ridgway's Main Street and Creative District initiatives function together as Ridgway Creative Main Street since both ultimately seek to increase the economic vitality of our town.

The Town would like to thank the Colorado Main Street Program for this recognition and for helping the Town to achieve its adopted goals.

## WATCH BOW WOW FILM FESTIVAL 'SAFER AT HOME'

### Special to the Mirror

RIDGWAY-From May 8-22-Bow Wow Film Festival Online. Watch in "Safer-at-Home" style from the comfort of your couch!

Bow Wow Film Festival celebrates, educates & inspires all things doggie via the art of short film. Only \$16 covers your entire household. Start watching from midnight on May 8th until midnight on May 22. Tickets at: <https://bit.ly/BWFF20>

A benefit for Second Chance Humane Society. Your support helps us achieve our mission of Connecting Pets, People & Community While Saving Lives. For more info about Second Chance, go to: [www.AdoptMountainPets.org](http://www.AdoptMountainPets.org)

My knowledge about nutrition really comes from hands-on experiences growing up with my aunt who did a lot of canning and would make everything from scratch. I always try to eat as clean as I can and I stay away from processed foods.

- Amanda Hasto  
Co-owner of Davito's Italian Restaurant in Delta, Colorado

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## OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

### KEEPING THE PUBLIC *FULLY* INFORMED AND INVOLVED ON COVID CLOSURES (*And the Long-Term Disasters of Not Doing So*)

Dear Editor,

Still trying to wrap my head around the total impact of the sweeping COVID pandemic related closures...

#### The Disclaimer

Before I even begin to explore any impacts, I'd first like to affirm that I believe the most important element of protection and safety lies **solely** in the hands of *every* individual. We are the ones who are deciding what circumstances are reasonable to leave our homes, perform essential tasks, and have (hopefully safe) social interactions. Governments and organizations can advise us (and under extreme circumstances) mandate us - but even mandates do not physically restrict an individual from putting themselves or others at risk.

Our public safety is a shared individual responsibility, and each person ought to be considering the impact of their own decisions. The things we can all do individually (good hygiene, social distancing, only essential travel and social interactions, etc.) we should make *every* effort to do.

#### The Concerns

Now, when it comes to organizational or government-mandated policies, I think there are a few critical concerns that need to be addressed by the individuals/organizations enacting their policies:

##### 1. Constitutional Integrity

The United States has a Constitution for a reason. It was designed to maintain as much personal and individual freedom and political power as possible, with the majority of amendments targeting specific controversial rights and protecting our individual rights from government infringement - not the other way around. Any policies or practices (for public health, state regulation, or national security) ought to be implemented with minimal impact to individual freedom and personal responsibility. Furthermore, any policies that *do* infringe on any constitutional right - no matter how minimal - must be termi-

nal (limited by time or public-authority).

##### 2. Economic & Religious Freedom

While the Constitution and its Amendments specify various liberties and freedoms, these two - in particular - deserve special care and caution:

Religious freedom allows Americans from any background, race, or cultural heritage to maintain their personal religious beliefs and practices (as long as they remain in line with the spirit of the Constitution itself: preserving individual liberty for not just yourself, but also others). Religious beliefs that constrain or impede other constitutionally protected freedoms will obviously have restrictions.

Economic freedom allows Americans from any background, race, or cultural heritage the right to pursue financial gains via employment equally and without bias according to their skills, abilities, knowledge, and ability to perform a task or run a business. Again, as long as those pursuits do not conflict with other constitutionally protected rights and freedoms.

##### The Real Rub

What we're experiencing right now is an incredibly impactful grey area. Where government entities and organizations are mandating policies that impact personal freedoms at the behest of public safety. The issue is that the transparency of the threat, dangers, and economic impacts are not being communicated clearly, concisely, or quickly and yet the population is being expected to follow these advisories and mandates without the knowledge to inform their own critical thinking to take the necessary actions personally (as I initially stated) to maintain good public health during this trying (but not unique) situation.

This isn't the first pandemic.

If history has anything to say, it also certainly won't be the last! Now is the time to address these issues and figure out the optimal balance of freedom, responsibility, and restrictive authority. Other states

and even entire nations have taken completely different and less restrictive approaches to maintaining public health and safety than Colorado (or the United States at large) and have had relatively equal or even more success. Others have done the same and not been as successful, sometimes disastrously.

I don't believe the level of restriction is the common denominator in this situation.

Personal responsibility has, and always will be, the lowest common denominator for these kinds of events. Public health is a public issue, and the power to maintain it still remains with the public at large. Organizations, and leaders of those organizations need to remind themselves that a policy or mandate is only as good as the people who actually follow it.

The primary danger and concern with failing to recognize this reality and take actions to increase, strengthen, and sustain personal responsibility in any given community is the tendency to *overreact* to non-compliance with stricter and more impactful policies and regulations. Right now, we are witnessing that on one of the largest and most impactful scales we have possibly ever seen in our current age of information and global interconnectivity.

##### The Solution

Overly restrictive advisories, mandates, and policies will always hurt first the people who *actually* follow them. People ignorant of the law, or who have no intention of complying are often the least impacted by them, initially. **Laws, mandates, and policies need to be designed and implemented with the *responsible individual* in mind.**

I don't believe that most states or even countries have taken this approach to protecting public safety during this pandemic. Granted, they may have arguably valid reasons for enforcing stricter policies that strip away individual freedom and responsibility, but that doesn't mean they

*Continued next pg*

## OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

### ***KEEPING THE PUBLIC FULLY INFORMED AND INVOLVED ON COVID CLOSURES (And the Long-Term Disasters of Not Doing So) From previous pg***

are the model we ought to follow. We should avoid those situations and also should avoid creating circumstances that would require them.

The United States (whether the shifts have been towards Democratic Socialism or Corporate Facism) has been slowly transforming from a nation of personal freedom and individual responsibility to a nation where people no longer have the time, ability, or want, to think critically anymore and take personal responsibility for their actions.

Government policy or Corporate policy - pick your poison here - both trend toward putting the responsibility on the policy-makers who "failed to imagine the potential for abuse, neglect, or violation of liberty" without holding the individual (who actually committed the abuse, neglect, or criminal activity) primarily responsible.

#### **The Bottom Line**

Human beings rarely take on larger and more difficult responsibilities because they "want to". They either have to, or an incentive exists that helps them desire to. This is just how most people operate. It is standard human programming.

We are going in the wrong direction.

The bottom line is that **we need to cultivate a culture of personal responsibility and integrity where mandates that infringe on personal freedoms and constitutional liberties (however minimal or temporary) are not necessary.**

Although that "utopia" is a practically impossible goal... it still *should be the GOAL* of a civilized and religiously-diverse society. We *must* have a common unifying goal to work towards as a collective society (whether that is your local town, state, country, or even the entire world as an interconnected human civilization).

If we don't... Well...

Human history is littered with ruins of civilizations that failed to stand and build

together on a common cause that was greater than themselves. All you have to do is refer to the past to see the results of our current trajectory.

In America at least, we could be witnessing the first of our final steps toward the extinction of the middle class and private, non-corporate enterprise. If you think that is extreme or an exaggeration of our current circumstances, you don't know someone that owns a small business and/or doesn't rely on government assistance outside of the wealthy upper class.

#### **The Not-So-Fun Fact**

There is *no guarantee* that our state and local governments will actually receive federal aid and assistance for COVID-19 closures; let alone the small businesses that don't have direct access to much (or any) interest-free aid which doesn't first go through the state or a local municipality.

I spent the morning reading through the eligibility and policies myself directly from FEMA and the Stafford Act (which determines FEMA fund eligibility).

*Every municipality in every single state* is being impacted by COVID closures right now, and thus potentially could qualify for FEMA funding (which is only a 75% reimbursement rate) - depending on how they follow federal and state policies; as the federal government authorizes FEMA reimbursements, and the parent State distributes those authorized reimbursements.

I don't personally know what FEMA's budget looks like, but I can't imagine they can afford to reimburse every municipality and business fully (even at 75%), *especially* since the revenue that fuels FEMA is likely tied to taxes and a budget that originates from a fully operational economy of production and consumption.

Long term economic closures *cannot* be a financially viable option for public safety.

At some point, we must hand over the responsibility of protecting public health and safety to the public individual and allow our local, state, and international economies to operate as fully (and safely) as possible.

The consequences of keeping large sections of our economy on lock-down will lead to far more destructive public health and safety concerns.

When people can't get by, criminal activity goes up, amenities that preserve personal health and public hygiene become "luxuries" when you first can't afford food, housing, and utilities; and if those two don't alarm you, imagine a condition where the average individual (who has not been acclimated to a culture of personal integrity and individual responsibility) no longer trusts its local, state, and federal authorities to advise them on the best policy and practices for public health safety...

I'm honestly concerned we're already dangerously close to that last and most serious of consequences.

Thanks for taking the time to read this. Please be **smart**, be **wise**, and take *every reasonable opportunity and effort* to **stay informed, assume personal responsibility, and ask the same from both those in authority above you, and those whom you are responsible for!**

Alexander Wall, Montrose

#### **SOURCES:**

##### **FEMA INFO:**

<https://www.fema.gov/news-release/2019/03/27/what-fema-public-assistance>

##### **STAFFORD ACT INFO:**

<https://www.astho.org/Programs/Preparedness/Public-Health-Emergency-Law/Emergency-Authority-and-Immunity-Toolkit/Robert-T--Stafford-Disaster-Relief-and-Emergency-Assistance-Act-Fact-Sheet/>



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Montrose, CO  
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Bedrooms: 3 | Bathrooms: 2.0  
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**Tbd Cedar Road**  
Delta, CO  
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**\$1,150,000** | MLS# 766932



**14847 6175 Road**  
Montrose, CO  
No Covenants!  
**\$179,000** | MLS# 767917  
Bedrooms: 3 | Bathrooms: 1.0  
1,100 sq. ft.



**Tbd Hwy 550**  
Montrose, CO  
So many Possibilities  
**\$550,000** | MLS# 769472  
Bedrooms: | Bathrooms:  
sq. ft.



**16989 6450 Road**  
Montrose, CO  
**\$485,000** | MLS# 767906  
Bedrooms: 3 | Bathrooms: 3.0  
2,014 sq. ft.



**19250 Highway 550**  
Montrose, CO  
Cute home with mature Landscape  
**\$239,990** | MLS# 768778  
Bedrooms: 2 | Bathrooms: 1.0  
891 sq. ft.



**2919 Outlook Road**  
Montrose, CO  
Immaculate home  
**\$529,990** | MLS# 762945  
Bedrooms: 4 | Bathrooms: 3.0  
2,765 sq. ft.



**Tbd One Bradley Way**  
Montrose, CO  
Area Description  
**\$135,000** | MLS# 769032  
Bedrooms: | Bathrooms:  
sq. ft.



**59215 Spring Creek Road**  
Montrose, CO  
Spring creek property!  
**\$109,000** | MLS# 766918



### Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Western Colorado Properties

**Jeff Keehuff**

Broker/Owner-970-209-3825

Jeff@MontroseColorado.com and www.montrosecolorado.com

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## REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

### INSURANCE COMMISSIONER SEEKS HEALTH INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY

*Special to the Mirror*

DENVER - Last week, Colorado Insurance Commissioner Michael Conway sent a letter to Colorado's Congressional delegation asking for support in the establishment of a federal reinsurance program and to provide additional federal support for people receiving financial assistance in the individual health insurance market. Commissioner Conway stated that it is "imperative" that the next COVID-19 relief package from Congress provide timely

and flexible funding that will allow our state to further strengthen its health insurance markets and give needed relief to Coloradans struggling to keep their coverage.

Like 11 other states, Colorado created its own reinsurance program that reduced premiums in the individual market this year by an average of more than 20 percent market across the state, with some counties seeing decreases of over 30 percent. However, to help continue Color-

ado's success, the Commissioner asked for the establishment of a federal reinsurance program.

"A federal reinsurance program can help provide funding to the twelve states that currently have their own reinsurance programs. A federal reinsurance program should also provide funding for the remaining thirty-eight states, as well as the territories, to establish their own reinsurance programs or have the federal government run a reinsurance program for them.

"As state budgets are impacted by the pandemic, federal funding to help support and establish reinsurance programs will allow states to prioritize other vital areas that need relief while utilizing federal funds for our reinsurance programs. That will become even more important as more people begin to turn to the individual market if they lose their employer-based coverage during this economic downturn."

In addition, Commissioner Conway asked for additional federal support for Coloradans eligible for federal financial assistance for premiums in individual insurance, pointing out that Coloradans earning between 200-300% of the Federal Poverty Limit (FPL) are the group most likely to be uninsured, even though they are likely eligible for premium assistance. Increasing assistance for those in the individual market will allow more people to access much needed health care during this critical time.

Both steps will help Coloradans that find themselves unemployed, furloughed or with reduced income due to COVID-19. Commissioner Conway emphasized the importance of these efforts.

"Ensuring as many people as possible have health insurance will be vital to combat this disease. And to do that, Colorado needs further federal support to strengthen the stability of the commercial health insurance market and provide needed relief to individuals struggling to retain their health coverage."



The poster features a background of diagonal stripes in orange, teal, and light blue. In the top left corner is the Montrose Colorado logo, which consists of a stylized 'M' and 'C' with the text 'MONTROSE • COLORADO' below it. The main text in the center reads 'CITY OF MONTROSE' in a small, white, sans-serif font, followed by 'Call for Artists' in a large, bold, white, sans-serif font. Below this, in a smaller white font, is 'FOR INFO + APPLICATION, VISIT CITYOFMONTROSE.ORG/MURAL'. In the bottom left corner, there is an orange, irregularly shaped badge with the text 'Applications due May 22!' in white. In the bottom right corner, there is a logo for 'DART' (Development and Revitalization Team) which includes a stylized lightbulb icon and the text 'MONTROSE DART Development and Revitalization Team'.

## REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

### AMERICAN HUMANE PRESENTS UPPER RIO GRANDE ANIMAL SOCIETY CONOUR ANIMAL SHELTER WITH FEED THE HUNGRY GRANT

WASHINGTON, D.C. — American Humane, the country's first national humane organization, today announced that Upper Rio Grande Animal Society Conour Animal Shelter is a recipient of American Humane's Feed the Hungry grant. Located in Monte Vista, Colorado, the Conour Animal Shelter is a no kill shelter for dogs directly serving Rio Grande County, Saguache County and Mineral County.

"The very sad reality for shelters and rescue organizations today is that they are struggling to keep kibble in food bowls and litter in boxes," said Dr. Robin Ganzert, president and CEO of American Humane. "We must take action to ensure organizations that are housing animals left by the wayside during this sweeping pandemic have the basic resources needed to ensure the safe and humane treatment of animals in their care. To stand by and do nothing during this time is unconscionable."

Like every other business or organization in America, rescue shelters are battling to maintain basic services and care for their animal residents in the face of the current worldwide pandemic. Thousands of animals are being left without homes and facilities are in desperate need of general supplies. In response to the overwhelming number of calls received from animal rescuers, shelters and first responders, American Humane launched the Feed the Hungry fund to feed and care for animals across the country who have been abandoned as a result of the coronavirus crisis. The fund seeks to raise much-needed resources to help shelters and rescue organizations that are not only fighting to keep the lights on, but also to keep critical sup-

plies like food stocked.

The Upper Rio Grande Animal Society Conour Animal Shelter provides a safe environment for the shelter and care of animals in need and is dedicated to preventing the cruelty and abuse of all animals. The organization aims to nourish the relationship between companion animals and humans through education, media exposure and readily available information and assistance. The shelter provides a

home to more than 300 dogs a year, including those who were abandoned, abused, neglected, lost or relinquished by their owners. The Feed the Hungry grant will provide much-needed food, toys and veterinary care to the homeless animals. To help shelters continue to save lives during this unprecedented crisis, consider donating today. Learn more at [www.americanhumane.org/feedthehungry](http://www.americanhumane.org/feedthehungry).



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ANNOUNCED MONTHLY**

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- Yard must be in city limits
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## OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

At Volunteers of America senior living and care communities, the health and safety of our residents, staff and extended community is of utmost importance. We're working around the clock to monitor the situation, following the current recommendations of the CDC and other state and local health officials on response efforts and reinforcing our policies and procedures.

We step forward.  
We take on the most difficult tasks.  
We are honored to serve you.

We are Volunteers of America.



### Senior Living



[voaseniorliving.org](https://voaseniorliving.org)



[VOAWesternSlope](https://www.facebook.com/VOAWesternSlope)



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## CITY COUNCIL TO DISCUSS POLICE DEPT. FACILITY FINANCING POST PRICING DETAILS @ MAY 18 WORK SESSION

### Mirror staff report

MONTROSE-Montrose City Council will convene for a virtual work session at 10 a.m. on Monday, May 18 and for a virtual regular meeting at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, May 19.

The City has announced as well that it will move to Tier 3 Emergency Status as of May 18.

### WORK SESSION

Discussion items include a Police Department Facility Financing - Post Pricing Details; a presentation by the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA) regarding Private Activity Bonds; Updates to the Youth Council manual; the Hilltop Addition Annexation; the River Crossing Addition Annexation; the Sinner Subdivision Combined Sketch Plan and Preliminary Plat; and the WestCO Amended and Restated Intergovernmental Agreement.

Items to come before Council in upcoming meetings or work sessions include: June 1-Estates at Stone Ridge Rezone Request

As yet unscheduled are the Montrose Dermatology Business Expansion Project, DMEA Update to City Council, and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Update to City Council.

The work session will be held electronically via Zoom: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_Kmsq4EIIIRm-jm23lyl\\_7pw](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Kmsq4EIIIRm-jm23lyl_7pw).

### REGULAR MEETING

#### Community Development Block grant hearing

A public hearing will be held to allow citizens to review and comment on the performance of the City of Montrose in carrying out their responsibilities with the Center for Mental Health project #19-507, which was financed with federal Community Development Block Grant funds provided by the State of Colorado.

#### Pavement Marking Contract Award

Council will consider awarding a contract for pavement marking to Stripe a Lot for the not-to-exceed amount of \$135,000.

#### Crack Seal Contract Award



*The City of Montrose has announced that it will move to Tier 3 Emergency Status as of May 18. Mirror file photo.*

Council will consider awarding a contract to Armor ProSeal to install crack seal materials on City streets for the not-to-exceed amount of \$120,000.

Following staff reports, Council will adjourn.

The meeting will be held electronically and can be accessed at: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_cfy-PIRyRISGrbXOMVCgLG](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_cfy-PIRyRISGrbXOMVCgLG).

# STAY APART IN PUBLIC

## 6 FEET SAVES LIVES



# SO WE CAN BE TOGETHER LATER



## REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

### CPW CONFIDENT IT HAS PLENTY OF WARM-WATER SPORT FISH FOR ANGLERS

DENVER – Thanks to a long-term commitment to spawning fish and aggressive trading of fish with other states, Colorado Parks and Wildlife aquatic officials say they have plenty of warm-water fish for anglers to pursue this summer.

There have been concerns expressed about warm-water fish populations in Colorado after CPW's annual walleye spawn was aborted due to the need for social distancing in the face of the COVID-19 virus.

Each year, CPW aquatic biologists spend the month of March catching and spawning walleye to produce nearly 130 million walleye and saugeye eggs. Most of the fertilized eggs are stocked into Colorado's waters as fry or fingerlings. The remaining eggs are traded to other states in exchange for other sportfish species.

The inability to spawn many walleye this year will indeed lead to the loss of a year class of walleye in most reservoirs that typically receive them – primarily on the Front Range and eastern plains. But anglers can still catch their limit of the popular warm-water sportfish at many Colorado reservoirs, thanks to aggressive trading by CPW hatchery staff with North Dakota. "We will receive enough fish from North Dakota to fully stock our walleye brood waters of Chatfield Reservoir, Cherry Creek Reservoir and Lake Pueblo State Park," said Matt Nicholl, CPW aquatic section manager. "North Dakota is giving Colorado priority on walleye and saugeye because Colorado has provided them with good numbers of largemouth bass fry over the past few years."

There are other factors that will keep walleye fishing productive in Colorado's warm water reservoirs.

"Walleye, saugeye and wipers are fairly long-lived species," Nicholl said. "They live up to eight or nine years, even longer. So missing one year class is not going to collapse the fishery."

Other warm-water fish – bass, perch, crappie, and sunfish species – naturally



*Colorado Parks and Wildlife aquatic biologist Paul Foutz displays a walleye caught at Lake Pueblo State Park. Photo courtesy Colorado Parks and Wildlife/Bill Vogrin.*

reproduce in Colorado's waters so there should be no impact from the aborted spawning this spring. Colorado's warm water fisheries feature many species popular with anglers including channel catfish, largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, yellow perch, black crappie, white crappie, bluegill, redear sunfish, green sunfish and hybrid sunfish.

Outside of the brood waters, no other waters in Colorado will receive walleye, saugeye or wiper this year. But Nicholl said the situation is not much different than other years when poor environmental conditions impact fish populations. "This is not the first year that some reservoirs are missing year-classes of walleye, saugeye or wiper," Nicholl said. "And there have been other years in which waters have not received full stocking requests."

Hatchery production of wipers – a cross between a white bass and a striped bass – has been hit hardest. It has been a number of years since CPW has been as successful at producing wiper and it is re-

building its striped bass brood stock following a series of weather-related fish kills. Thus, Colorado currently depends on out-of-state trades to receive wiper.

CPW's hatchery section has been working to acquire wiper through trades with other states, but wild spawning operations in other states were shut down, as well. As a result, Colorado will not receive any wiper to stock in 2020.

CPW aquatic biologists closely track fish populations, habitat and angler behavior. They use the data as the basis of spawning and stocking decisions. That process will be followed this year with the impact of COVID-19 on Colorado fisheries getting close attention.

Meanwhile, anglers can do their part to ensure their own positive fishing experience into the future by closely following established size, bag and possession limits for all species.

The statewide bag and possession limit for walleye, saugeye and sauger is five fish and 10 for white bass, striped bass and wiper.

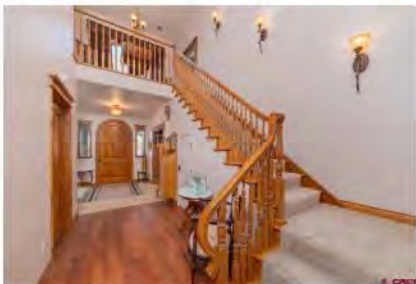
## Just Listed



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**\$885,000**

MLS# 769040



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## 16989 6450 Road, Montrose, CO

**Bedrooms: 3 | Bathrooms: 3.0 | 2,014 sq. ft**

**\$485,000 | MLS# 767906**

Are you ready to move into the perfect home before summer? Here it is. This 3-bedroom 3 bath Ranch level sits on an acre and a half. It is zoned county with the surrounding properties in the city! Custom built by Chris Sjoden. Feel welcomed just as soon as you enter the home. The kitchen is charming with its oak cabinetry, granite counters and a gas range. The separate dining room provides a space to sit and reflect on your day as you enjoy dinner. The bedrooms have ample space as well as storage. Just like the rest of this home, the interior as well as the exterior have been impeccably cared for. In fact, the pristine carpet has never even been walked on with shoes! The magnificent outdoor patio beacons entertaining. What a great space to gather with all those dear to you. Looking to relax? Relish the evening and take in breathtaking view of the mountains. This home is low maintenance and efficient with Pella triple pane windows as well as a no maintenance brick exterior. What a great space. Its the one you have been waiting for!

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## REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

### 2020 CENSUS FIELD OPERATIONS RESUME IN COLORADO *Census workers to wear PPE*

*Special to the Mirror*

DENVER - The U.S. Census Bureau is resuming 2020 Census field operations in Colorado this week. For the health and safety of Census employees and the public, field staff will observe social distancing protocols and will wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

U.S. Census Bureau field employees will begin dropping off 2020 Census invitation packets at front doors of households in areas that do not receive mail at their homes. This field operation follows current federal health and safety guidelines and does not require interaction between households and Census Bureau employees.

Households that receive the 2020 Census invitation packets are strongly encouraged to respond promptly - using the census ID included in the questionnaire packet. Coloradans can still respond online, by phone, or by completing and returning the paper form by mail. Responding online

with the Census ID or completing and returning the paper questionnaire helps ensure an accurate count of Colorado communities.

ABOUT THE 2020 CENSUS

It has never been easier to respond to the #2020Census on your own - all without having to meet a census taker. Respond today and make Colorado the state with the highest #2020Census self-response rate in the nation! Go

to [2020census.gov](https://2020census.gov) or call 1-844-330-2020.

The 2020 Census is a short questionnaire that asks about who lives in your household as of April 1, 2020.

The 2020 Census requires counting a diverse and growing population in the United States and the five U.S. territories.

The 2020 Census is important because it will determine the number of seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives, inform hundreds of billions of dollars in federal funding, and provide data that

will impact communities for the next decade.

Responding to the 2020 Census is safe and secure. Individual responses are confidential and protected by law.

The current deadline to respond to the 2020 Census is October 31, 2020.

The Census Bureau is also resuming fingerprinting for new census takers to keep applicants moving through the hiring process.

Census staff will also return to Colorado's four Area Census Offices to support the field operation.

Check HERE For updates on field operations by location.

This webpage will be updated weekly as field operations resume in phases across the United States.

Later this year, the U.S. Census Bureau plans to send census takers to visit Colorado households that have not responded to the 2020 Census to help them complete questionnaires.



**SEE SOMETHING - SAY SOMETHING**

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ANONYMOUS CALL

**MONTROSE REGIONAL  
CRIME STOPPERS**

## REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

### DMEA BOARD CANDIDATES RUN UNOPPOSED

#### *Candidate Forums Canceled, Changes coming to Annual Meeting*

*Special to the Mirror*

REGIONAL-Three Delta-Montrose Electric Association (DMEA) members have completed the self-nomination process for DMEA's 2020 Board of Directors Election and will run unopposed in their respective districts. For this reason, along with COVID-19 precautions, DMEA has canceled the upcoming Candidate Forums and will not be sending mail-in ballots to members. The official candidates are as follows: District 6 – Damon Lockhart, *incumbent* District 7 – Enno Heuscher, *new candidate* North Region – Stacia Cannon, *incumbent* Per the cooperative bylaws, in the event only one candidate has been nominated for election in each district, members can elect the candidates "by voice vote [...] at the Annual Member Meeting." Therefore, no ballots will be mailed to DMEA mem-

bers for the 2020 Director Elections. Instead, members in attendance at the Annual Meeting will be asked to participate in a voice vote during the meeting.

"Although members won't need to choose between candidates this year, we still encourage them to get to know the candidates and attend the Annual Meeting on June 18," said Jasen Bronec, DMEA CEO. "I want to congratulate and thank the candidates for making the commitment to DMEA and its members."

DMEA members are encouraged to visit <https://www.dmea.com/2020-dmea-board-candidates> to read the candidate interviews. Questions can also be submitted to the candidates by phone or email.

Slated for June 18, 2020, planning for DMEA's Annual Meeting was suspended

as Colorado began responding to COVID-19. To continue minimizing exposure to both DMEA essential employees and members and comply with social gathering restrictions, the cooperative is pursuing virtual options for the event. Additional details are not yet available.

"The board is considering a virtual solution for our Annual Meeting that will allow members to attend online or by phone. It may be vastly different from the traditional meeting we're used to, but the purpose will remain the same. We'll review our major accomplishments in 2019, answer member questions, and conclude the 2020 elections," said Bronec.

More details about DMEA's Annual Meeting will be available later this month. Visit [www.dmea.com](http://www.dmea.com) for more information.

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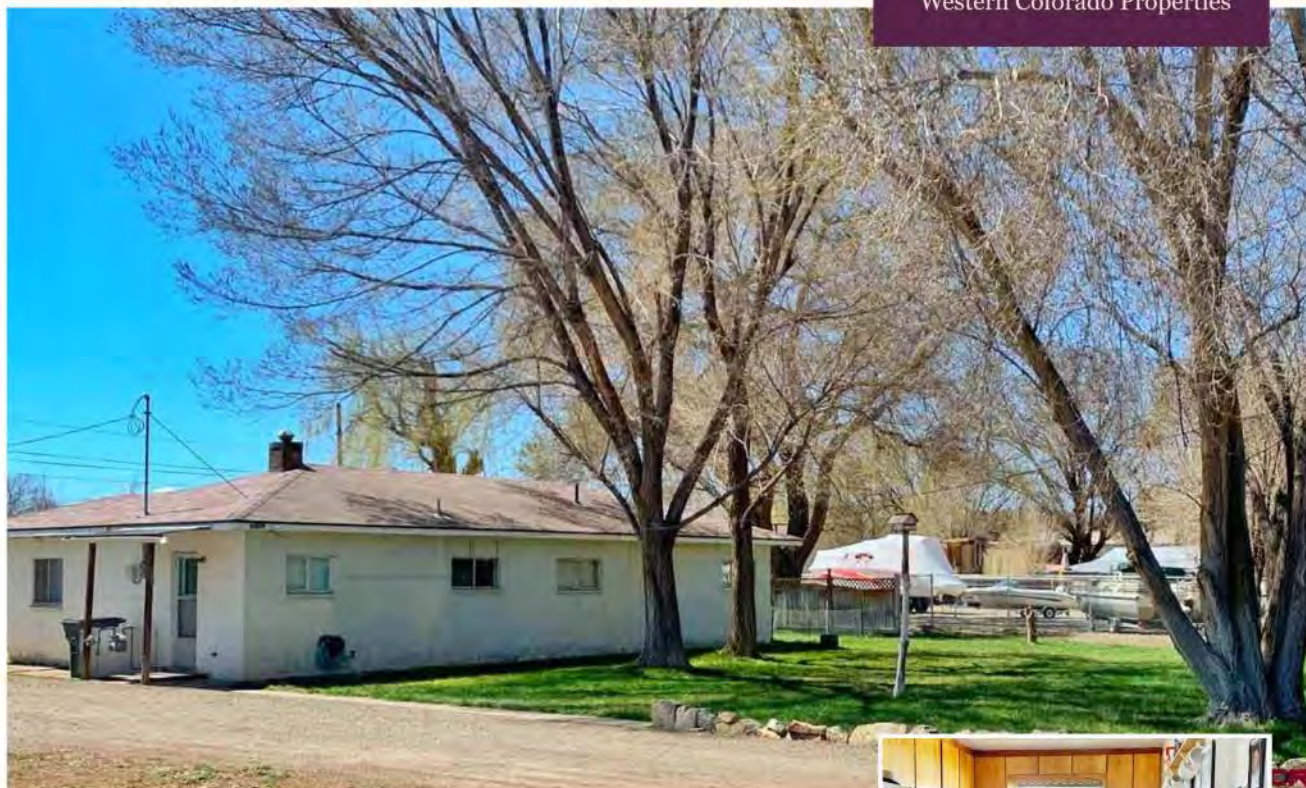
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## Just Listed!

Cozy family home on quiet cul-de-sac.



### 606 Spring Creek Rd- Montrose, Co 81403

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**1075 sq. ft. on .34 acres | Year Built: 1945**

**\$230,000** MLS# 768265

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**Betsy Fernandez**  
Associate Broker  
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betsyfernandez2018@gmail.com  
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4882 Colorow Rd Olathe, Co 81425  
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## REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

# COVID-19 PANDEMIC FORCES DIFFICULT DECISIONS FOR MONTROSE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

*Special to the Mirror*

MONTROSE, CO – Montrose Memorial Hospital has realized a substantial financial setback due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With the cancellation of elective procedures and surgeries throughout the organization and the temporary closure or dramatic reduction of specific services, we are estimating a \$4-5 million loss for the month of April. Leadership along with many employees have taken pay cuts, we have made some significant changes and reductions to employee benefits and budgets are being reviewed and severely cut. As a result of this pandemic, our team and the Board of Directors are working together to make difficult decisions to restructure to help ensure the long-term sustainability of the hospital so we can continue to be the healthcare safety net for Montrose and our surrounding communities.

As surgical services and outpatient visits decreased, we formed a resource pool for

our employees and re-allocated staff to areas in greatest need. We opened the COVID specific care unit, added screeners at all patient, visitor and employee entrances, and increased housekeeping sterilization efforts in all areas of the hospital. Our top priority has always been the safety and care of our Friends and Family. MMH is the second largest employer in Montrose County with more than 700 employees. The difficult plan to initiate a reduction in force of nineteen employees was implemented today. The employees affected by the layoff were given information about assistance through the Colorado Workforce Center, counseling and other support services provided by the hospital's Employee Assistance Program and severance pay based on their years of service. "These decisions are very difficult and not made without angst and sadness," said MMH CEO James Kiser. "We are doing all we can to recover from the financial losses due to COVID-19 and to ensure that

MMH will be here to care for our communities in the future."

Surgeries and elective procedures are the primary source of revenue for hospitals. By following the American College of Surgeons guidelines during this pandemic, and closing down these services, the hospital sustained a major hit to our bottom line.

Board Chair, Dr. Kjersten Davis added, "The hospital is working hard to secure funding from several sources, including a line of credit. We received \$7.4 million from the CARE funds which covers only 23 days of hospital operations. In addition, we received \$15.6 million from CMS through the Medicare Accelerated and Advance Payment Program. These funds will have to be repaid beginning 121 days after receipt of the funds. The Board members are also agonizing over the decisions that have to be made and know it is our responsibility to do all we can to keep MMH viable and here for the future."



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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

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HANDS!**



COVID-19 INFO AT [WWW.MONTROSECOUNTYJIC.COM](http://WWW.MONTROSECOUNTYJIC.COM)

## COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

### CREWS OPEN ROADS OVER UNCOMPAHGRE PLATEAU

*Special to the Mirror*

MONTROSE—Montrose County and the USDA Forest Service Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison (GMUG) National Forests officially opened 90 Road (National Forest System Road #540) and Divide Road (NSFR #402) for the summer and fall recreation seasons. Crews have been working to remove the snow over the past few weeks and allowed time for the road to dry to mitigate road damage. "This is welcome news," said Commissioner Sue Hansen. "Unfortunately our snow pack was not nearly to the level of last year, but the early opening is great news for summer recreation. We live in the most beautiful part of the state and I'm grateful that some of our seasonally-limited public lands are now accessible.

It's a great time to fish, explore, hike, and camp on the Uncompahgre Plateau."

"Conditions are dryer than last year, which made opening up the high country roads easier to do ahead of schedule," said Road and Bridge Superintendent Brandon Wallace. "West End Superintendent Bo Andrews and his crew have secured the historic slide area on 90 Road and will continue to keep an eye on conditions moving forward. Please continue to use caution when traveling high country roads during or after precipitation."

At this time, all major roads are open across the Uncompahgre Plateau to include 90 Road, Dave Wood Road, Divide Road, Transfer Road, and 25 Mesa Road in Montrose County. There is still snow at the top of the plateau and several side

trails are not accessible. Please be advised that dispersed camping options are limited at higher elevations as snow is still present. The Forest Service and county encourages residents and visitors to "know before you go" and make sure to check conditions, be aware of fire restrictions ([westslopefireinfo.com](https://westslopefireinfo.com)), and practice leave no trace when recreating on public lands. The roads are drying out, but the public is encouraged to seek alternate routes if there are large amounts of rain. Travel on muddy roads not only increases the chances of getting a vehicle stuck, but it is also damaging to the road itself. For more information about the GMUG including camping information, please visit <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/gmug>.

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## 2020 GRADUATING CLASS ROLLS INTO HISTORY



*Photos by Paul Arbogast. Clockwise from top, The MHS Parade of graduates heads down Rio Grande Avenue on Sunday, May 17; the OHS graduate procession shows up to receive their diplomas; MHS Principal James Barnhill presented diplomas to all graduates.*

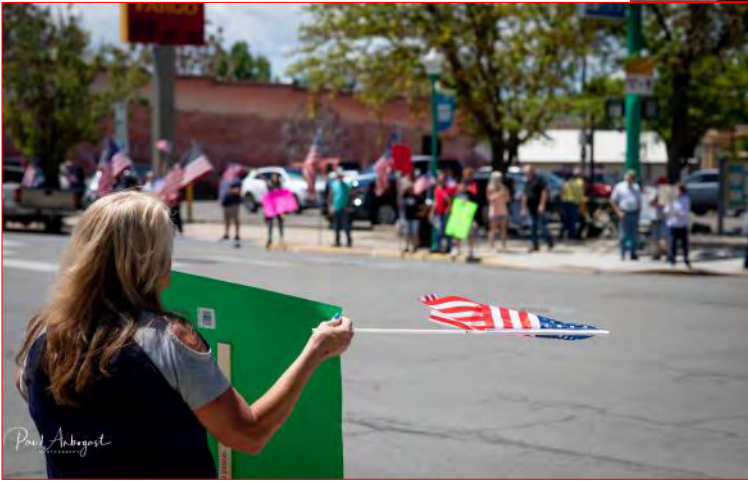


## DELTA SHOWS UP TO SUPPORT BUSINESS



*Photos by Paul Arbogast*

*DELTA-Many citizens of Delta came out Saturday, May 16 and spread across two intersections to show their support for reopening businesses in Delta. While Delta County has put in for a variance to the Governor's orders, many feel that is too little too late. They said businesses are suffering and even another two weeks wait may cause some to have to shut their doors forever.*



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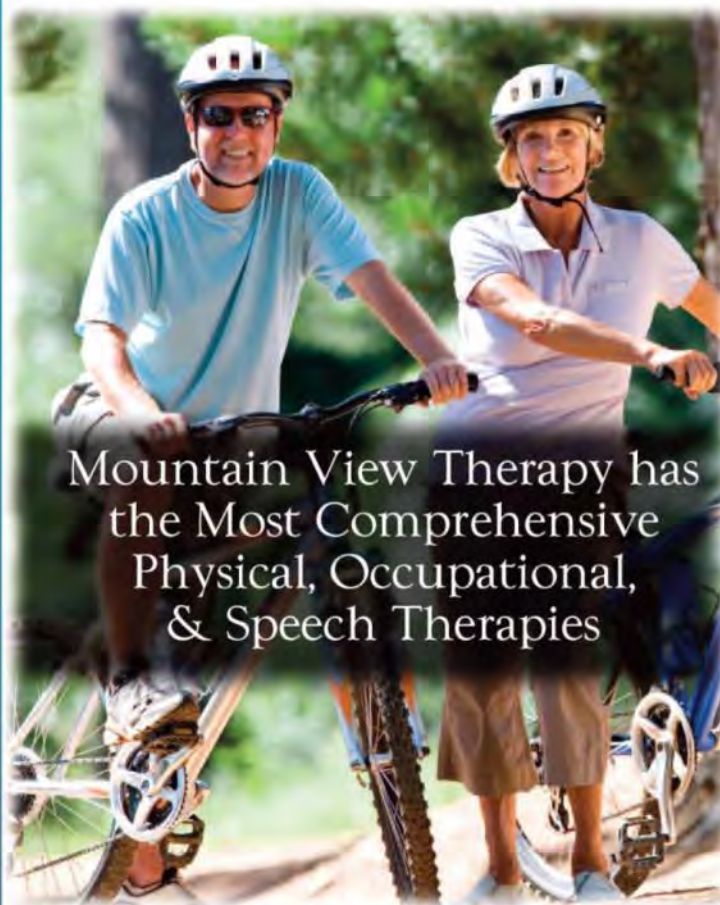
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Mountain View Therapy  
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Mountain View Therapy  
at Montrose Community  
Recreation Center  
16350 Woodgate Road Ste 100  
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## CITY VOTES TO TAKE PART AS MONTROSE COUNTY APPLIES FOR VARIANCE FROM COLORADO GOVERNOR JARED POLIS' 'SAFER AT HOME ORDER'

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE—On May 13, officials from Montrose County and the City of Montrose joined forces in seeking a variance application from Colorado Governor Jared Polis' "Safer at home" order.

### CITY COUNCIL

On May 13, all City councilors were present as Montrose City Council held a special virtual meeting to consider taking part in Montrose County's Request for Variance to the Governor's "Safer at Home" Restrictions.

Following a detailed update by Montrose County Medical Advisor Dr. Joe Adragna, Council discussed the request, which is specific to restaurants, gyms, and churches. Mayor Barbara Bynum called for public comment and reviewed the guidelines; citizen Kevin Kunz addressed Council.

"I don't think anybody--almost anybody—in town doesn't want to see small businesses open, doesn't want to see anybody go out of business, understands the jobs and everything out there," Kunz said. "But what I heard a lot in the presentation today...good judgment and common sense. Those are all great. Except for as we've seen, that isn't being observed on a daily basis throughout this whole shutdown.

"My concern is...of course I'm always wearing a mask...I can't understand for the life of me how I can walk into a business and the six people in there are not wearing a mask," Kunz. "To me that is outrageous.

"As we go through opening up and trying to give people more flexibility," Kunz said, "Isn't there a way that we can ask businesses, if you want to be in business...that your employees should be in masks period...is that something we can do?"

The proposed variance request requires that restaurant servers wear masks, Mayor Bynum said. Dr. Adragna said that customers will be required to wear masks to enter the restaurant and until seated at their table.

Matthew Gallegos addressed Council to ask about the possible re-opening of the Montrose Elks Club Bingo; Dr. Adragna



*Montrose County Medical Advisor Dr. Joe Adragna discusses the COVID-19 pandemic with County Commissioners on Wednesday, May 13. Montrose County and the City of Montrose have joined forces in seeking a variance application from Colorado Governor Jared Polis' "Safer at home" order.*

said that the matter was under review by Public Health.

Adragna took time to answer detailed questions for several citizens, and after further discussion and Council voted unanimously to participate in Montrose County's Request for Variance to the Governor's "Safer at Home" Restrictions.

Mayor Pro Tem Doug Glaspell reminded the community that citizens are still vulnerable to COVID-19. "It's upon all of us to respect others...be careful out there."

With two graduates in her own family this spring, Mayor Bynum took a final moment to recognize the graduating class of 2020 with a round of applause. "My hat is off to you."

With no further business, Council was adjourned.

### MONTROSE COUNTY

At 4 p.m. also on May 13, the Montrose Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) convened for a special meeting with the Board of Health to consider a variance application for Montrose County from statewide orders. All commissioners were present for the meeting.

As he had done earlier for City Council, Adragna presented a detailed update on the COVID-19 public health experience in Montrose County since restrictions began

more than eight weeks ago.

"What is the greatest concern?" Commissioner Sue Hansen asked. "...what happens if we surge and what is the plan in that event?"

A surge would mean the hospital's capacity to care for the community would be overwhelmed.

"Like we have done for decades, we would pull upon our resources in other hospitals to transfer patients to those facilities," Adragna said. In the event of greater need, plans are in place for Tier 1, 2, and 3 expansion along with non-congregate shelter. "We are still asking (people) to follow the public health interventions that we've talked so much about."

"This is an application for a waiver, this is not the waiver," BOCC Chair Keith Caddy said. "We're applying to the state...we can't do any of this until we get the waiver approved by the State of Colorado."

Commissioner Roger Rash thanked Dr. Adragna, County Emergency Manager Scott Hawkins and other county staff for leadership throughout. "...There was a lot of unknowns when we started this process," he said. "...it really took a huge team effort, and I want to thank everybody for that...what I am requesting is for

*Continued next pg*

## ***CITY VOTES TO TAKE PART AS MONTROSE COUNTY REQUESTS VARIANCE APPLICATION*** ***From previous pg***

is for the public, please don't take this as just a free-for-all.

"We're not out of the woods yet," Rash said. "We need to be diligent. I know our masks are not comfortable; they're a pain, but they do help. And we don't want to see a surge, we don't want to see people congregating and spreading this virus--it's still here. We absolutely know it's here. And it is for some people very, very, deadly...our citizens need to really work with us and try to help keep this thing stamped down so it doesn't flare up and we end up having to go backwards."

BOCC Chair Keith Caddy spoke. "I would

like to say a special thanks to Commissioner Hansen for the hard work that she has done for our team...representing us on everything out there. You have done an amazing job. Thank you so much." Caddy also thanked County Media Relations Manager Katie Yergensen and Digital Communications Project Manager Erika Story for their superb communication efforts through the pandemic. He thanked Dr. Adragna, as well the numerous County staff and community partners who have worked together throughout the public health emergency.

"I am so proud to be a member of this

community, how everybody stepped up to the plate to help us weather this storm," Caddy said. "...Everybody has pulled together to make this successful...I would like to thank the people of Montrose County for everything they've done."

Said Rash to Hansen, "Sue, you have done a phenomenal job."

Commissioners voted unanimously to accept the variance application as presented.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

No word has yet been received on the State's response to the application.

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## OPINION/EDITORIAL: COMMENTARY

### IS IT TIME FOR RECREATIONAL WEED IN MONTROSE?



**Mirror Correspondent**  
**Paul Arbogast.** *Courtesy photo.*

*By Paul Arbogast*  
MONTROSE-I was watching the most recent 'Ask Me Anything,' with members of the City and County answering questions from the public. One of the answers

that City Manager Bill Bell gave to a question about the potential of COVAXX opening a lab here rang a bell in my head.

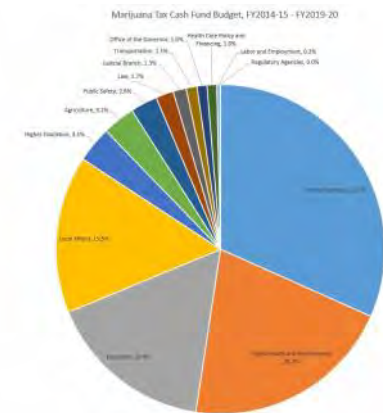
"Can we dictate what businesses come into Montrose? And the answer to that is no," Bell said. "I think we would not want government to come in and dictate who we want to come into our community. It's not legal to do that."

While running for the at-large seat for City Council I had hundreds of people ask about my position on allowing recreational marijuana in the city (and county). As I said then, I fully support it. To me it is about freedom, and while it is legal statewide, there is no reason for any city or county to not allow at least sales. Currently, a large number of Montrose citizens drive to Ridgway and spend their money there.

The reality is that since the beginning in

2014 to May of 2019, Colorado hit the \$1,000,000,000 mark in tax revenues from legal Marijuana sales. That's no small amount of money, and it is put back into Colorado education, public health, human services, and much more. In addition, it has provided more than 41 thousand jobs that we otherwise would not have statewide. (See graphic provided by Colorado Department of Revenue)

Why is legal marijuana not allowed in Montrose? Tracking records is not real easy with the online systems our local governments use, but it seems it was based on voting done prior to the statewide legalization of marijuana. Montrose County has its most recent Ordinance 2017-01, which continued its "prohibition on the operation of Marijuana cultivation facilities, marijuana product manufacturing facility, marijuana testing facilities, retail marijuana stores and medical marijuana centers." The city has Ordinance # 2321 which is just the city's version of the county's ordinance. Both the city and county say that it is about the 'health, safety and welfare of the public.' There are probably statistics out there they would continue to use to promote such a stance, but the reality is that it's not the evil and horrible thing old propaganda films have portrayed. To be quite frank, a lot of people in this community, in every industry, from the bottom to CEO level,



*Colorado Dept. of Revenue courtesy graphic.*

partake. Don't be fooled otherwise.

Even Gov. Jared Polis has said in a press release, "This industry is helping grow our economy by creating jobs and generating valuable revenue that is going towards preventing youth consumption, protecting public health and safety and investing in public school construction."

So in a time where local tax revenues are going to be down quite a bit, and there has been a renewed discussion about liberty and freedom, perhaps it's time to revisit these decisions, starting with ballot measures for the city and county to remove these ordinances, and get government out of the job of deciding what types of businesses are allowed in the city and county.



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*see something, say something*

## BUCKING THE SYSTEM-A VISIT TO SHOOTERS GRILL IN RIFLE

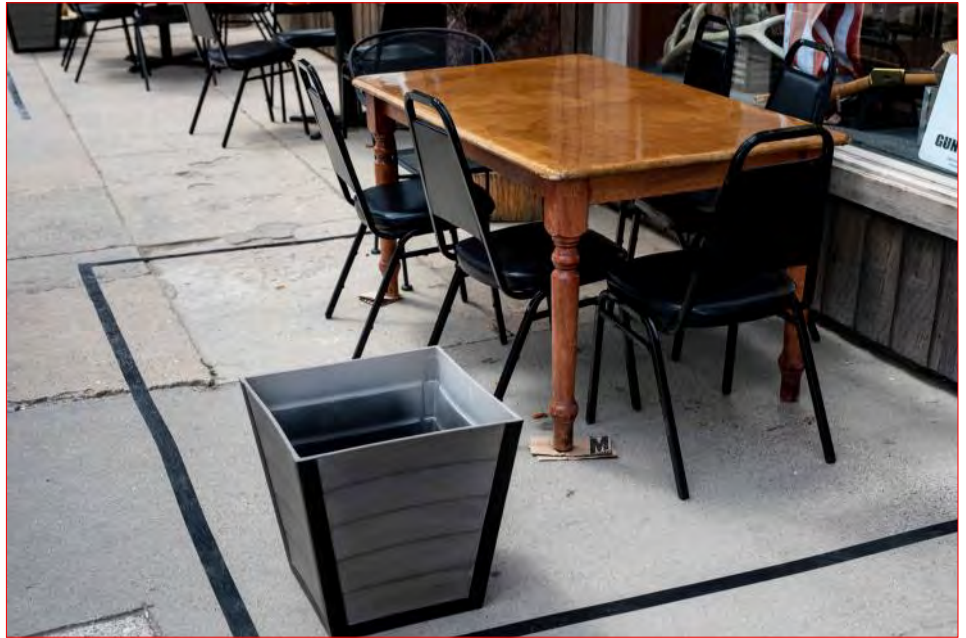
By Paul Arbogast

RIFLE-While the common belief is that the shut downs are easing, there are a lot of businesses that are not part of that because they will not be allowed to open, or will have to operate at a very reduced capacity. Even across states, who can be open is a mixed bag of what seem to have been random decisions.

By now most of us have seen national news stories of businesses that have gone against the executive orders and opened up. Their reasons range from their rights, to needing to pay bills, to simply being on the edge of losing their business forever. The nation has shown how widely we are divided just in response to these stories alone. Some say they are law breakers and deserve what they get, some wish harm on them and any customers that go there, some applaud them for standing up for themselves, some applaud them for standing up against what they see as an out of control government.

One of those places, right in our backyard, is Shooters Grill in Rifle (120 East 3<sup>rd</sup> Street). Already a place that some consider controversial because the waitstaff open carries and they are proud supporters of the Second Amendment. Well they made news again when they reopened on May 9, prior to city, county or state permission to do so.

After waiting for Garfield County to put in a variance, and working every legal channel they could, they decided to reopen, following all the state guidelines for restaurants: 30 percent capacity, distancing, masks, disinfecting and more. To the owner, Lauren Boebert, it was a matter of making sure her staff would get paid and being able to keep the doors open rather than having to close their doors forever after seven years of building the business. "Which poison do I take? 'Fall in line' and abide by an arbitrary re-open date? Suspend dine-in services only to return to a slow, financially forced closing? Or continue to operate reasonably at 30 percent capacity, following GCPH's procedures and lose my food service license. Either way, I lose the business I have spent seven years building and my employees are out of work. So much energy has been put into preventing this scenario for months."



Outdoor tables with tape set up for distancing per city requirements. Photo by Paul Arbogast.

A hard decision to make as a business owner, not one taken lightly. And outside of opening 'against orders,' she has played by the rules the entire time. Time will tell in Colorado, and in every other state, if this was a proper use of governmental power. The Wisconsin Supreme Court recently ruled the orders there were unconstitutional; that may spread as more frustrated business owners take their grievances to the courts.

Boebert expressed gratitude for the City of Rifle, according to her they have been working with her to figure out how to keep her and other local businesses going. Unfortunately, she finds that the city is the only government entity that she can say that about. As she announced on social media, "Around the same time yesterday that my restaurant was served a cease and desist, Governor Polis was bragging to President Trump about Colorado opening for business."

She did shut down dine in service in compliance with the order, and now they are operating with tables out on the sidewalk in front of her place, and with permission from her neighboring businesses, in front of them as well. Pretty much a 'to-go' situation, there just happen to be tables outside. They are working on permits to rope off the parking out front and expand out there, with the help and support of the

City of Rifle.

Differing polling and studies on small business in America have shown that depending on the length of shutdowns anywhere from 30 to 55 percent of small businesses may have to permanently close, even businesses that have been allowed to be partly open with takeout service.

Considering that small business comprises more than 47 percent of the nation's workers, that's potentially more than 30 million jobs lost forever. In the industry of 'live events' alone, which includes concerts, theater, conferences and any other big gathering of people, they estimate more than 12 million people are completely out of work for the foreseeable future as there has been zero guidance or information on when such things will be allowed to happen again.

These are staggering numbers that may be hard to come back from and should not be pushed aside as unimportant. While many people have already, or will lose loved ones to COVID-19, this virus is also going to leave a deep and lasting scar on the world that has nothing to do with the virus itself.

(Editor's note-for detailed data on the impacts to small business in Colorado and elsewhere during the pandemic visit <https://portal.census.gov/pulse/data/>.)

## Recent activity in your neighborhood...

The real estate market in western Colorado is alive and well. Increasing property values and low interest rates are creating a vibrant atmosphere for both sellers and buyers. Here are a few properties that may be of great interest to you.



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Build your dream home here!

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**SALE  
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**539 S 3rd Street, Montrose**

Beautifully remodeled bungalow!  
Undeniably Charming!

**\$245,000**

**SALE  
PENDING**



**1776 S Apple Drive, Delta**

3 Bedroom, 1 Bath, Irrigation Water  
Meticulous! Views of Grand Mesa!

**\$200,000**

**JUST  
LISTED!**



**620 Main Street, Ouray**

Investor Opportunity!  
Only one tenant since the 1960's!  
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**\$925,000**

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**734 Main Street, Ouray**

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## COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

### STATE LABOR DEPARTMENT: MORE THAN 31,000 UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS FILED MAY 3 - MAY 9\*

#### *Special to the Mirror*

DENVER -- Thursday the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) announced there were 22,483 initial regular unemployment claims filed the week ending May 9. This is compared to 28,164 the week prior (week ending May 2). This is the fourth week in a row of gradual declines in regular unemployment claims.

In addition, there were 9,125 Federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) initial unemployment claims (gig worker, self-employed) filed May 3 - 9. Over the past eight weeks a total of 387,975 regular unemployment initial claims have been filed and a grand total of 451,155 claims including federal PUA benefits.\*

#### **Claims by industry and benefits paid**

Top 5 industries with highest claims:\*\*

Accommodation and Food Services:	4,624
Retail Trade:	4,010
Healthcare and Social Service:	3,009
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services:***	1,944
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation:	1,550

#### **Benefits paid: Regular UI**

Week ending May 9:	\$96.0 Million
Week ending May 2:	\$84.8 Million
Week ending April 25:	\$86.1 Million
Week ending April 18:	\$74.1 Million
Week ending April 11:	\$62.0 Million
Week ending April 4:	\$29.8 Million
Average 2020 weekly benefits paid for weeks prior:	\$8.7 Million

#### **Benefits paid and claims filed April 20 - May 9:**

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (gig workers/self employed)	\$101.8 Million
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#### **Pandemic Unemployment Assistance**

initial claims since April 20:	63,180
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#### **Recession comparison of regular UI benefits paid:**

During the height of the Great Recession (2009-10), \$19 million in regular UI benefits were paid out on an average weekly basis. \$102.8 million in benefits were paid out in May 2009, the previous highest monthly total on record. Approximately \$315 million in regular UI benefits were paid out in April 2020.

\* Initial claims are those claims filed to establish benefit eligibility. Initial claims are considered a reliable leading indicator of economic activity. All applications filed are those applications for benefits filed with the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment and may not have been through various eligibility determination e.g. wage verification, etc.

\*\* Most recent industry-level claims data is for the week ending April 25th.

\*\*\* Administrative and support and waste management and remediation services include temporary help services, telemarketing centers, janitorial and landscaping services, etc.

**The Mirror:**  
Coverage with vision for the future.



# ***SCHOOL YEAR UNCERTAIN; RE-1J IMPROVES FACILITIES***

## ***From pg 1***

and the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence (CSPV) at the University of Colorado Boulder will award Olathe High School the Botvin LifeSkills Training High School Program grant. The grant will provide training, technical assistance, curriculum materials, fidelity monitoring, and sustainability resources for the LifeSkills Training (LST) program for a period of two years, beginning in Fall 2020.

### **BOARD ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATES**

Bachman gave an update on the Olathe track project; Property Services Manager Philip Bailey has done a great job using available resources, Bachman said, and has been able to drop the price significantly. Stands will go up in a week or so; the foundation is being laid.

### **COMMUNITY INPUT**

There was no community input.

### **JUUL LITIGATION UPDATE**

Attorney William Shinoff of California's Frantz Law Group updated the Board of Education on multi-district litigation that his firm is putting together.

"I currently represent 80 school districts across the country in litigation against Juul Labs," Shinoff said. Lawsuits are being filed individually on behalf of each school district based on the legal theory of public nuisance, he noted. Juul products were marketed directly to minors, without advising of potential harm, through ads on Cartoon Network and Nickelodeon and have disrupted the educational system. Colorado has the highest numbers in the nation when it comes to vaping, and communities like Montrose have the highest rates in the State, Shinoff said. Juul products contain 10 times as much nicotine as cigarettes.

There is no financial harm to the district, no potential for countersuit, and very little staff time required to take part in the lawsuit. If successful, funds generated by the suit could be used for vape detection systems and appropriate educational materials.

No action was required at this time; Board of Education President Gayle Johnson asked directors if there was consensus to move forward, and there was. Additional materials are included in the meeting

packet.

### **DR. CARRIE STEPHENSON**

Newly-hired Superintendent Carrie Stephenson said she has been able to meet several times with retiring Superintendent Schiell and other District staff virtually as she begins the transition to Montrose and prepares for the next school year.

"...I know you'll hear more about that soon--Mr. Schiell, thank you so much for all of your help and accommodation," Stephenson said, "... We're going to have more conversation and communication coming out about the plan for next year and what the future will entail.

"I Just wanted to let you know that I am involved and collaborating with the team and look forward at some point to being over there and not remote," she said.

### **REMOTE & IN-PERSON PLANNING UPDATE**

Director of Instructional Services Jessica Beller and Director of Safety & Security James Pavlich presented a planning update with Powerpoint presentation.

Said Pavlich, "As most of you know or may not know, I've been working since we got this whole thing kicked off with the emergency operations center here in town. I am on the Public Health call every day and have been interacting with public health...what's our likely reality going to be in August?"

There are some common assumptions among public health and safety officials, he noted.

"Number one, COVID's still going to be here," he said. "...whether there's a surge or it flattens out, we're going to likely see throughout the next 12 months to 24 months, until there is a viable vaccine or treatment course...spikes or outbreaks over our next school year. It's likely we're going to have potential for school closures or periods where we are not going to be able to deliver...bottom line, it's still going to be here, it's not going away."

There will likely be "spikes" or outbreaks in local schools, Pavlich said. "We've done some analysis...the bottom line for all that is, for next year, in-person instruction--even when we're able to do it, which I think we're going to end up doing in-

person instruction--it's going to look different than normal."

He said, "We're going to have social distancing requirements, we're going to have PPE requirements, we're going to be in constant consultation with the public health officials here locally, and we're going to have guidance I suspect from CDPHE and the CDC on how to modify our school to function in this pandemic, which is gonna limit the amount of people we can have in the classroom.

"So, our normal school start next year is likely not going to be possible," Pavlich said.

Beller said that staff and directors have worked to build a plan that supports in-person as well as remote learning. "Right now, we're focusing primarily on remote," Beller said. "...we're working to really build that remote learning plan...we want have a better plan than we had this year. Even though we put our best foot forward and did the best that we could, we know that we could do better."

Each Building will take the plans and assess the systems needed for remote learning, she said.

Planning for in-person learning will take place in June and July, she said. "We don't really know right now what the social distancing guidelines are going to be, or any sort of direction from the CDC or the Health department. We're delaying that just a little bit so we can get more information but also so that we can have a great remote learning plan for next year."

A remote learning plan should be published for the community by May 15, she said. Families will have the choice between hybrid or online work.

"We're learning a lot more about COVID every week," Pavlich said. "...We know that we're going to get social distancing requirements that are more informed than the drafts they have put together now...they're not giving us that opening guidance yet.

"...Right now the picture is not good enough on local conditions to be making a solid, in-person plan for the fall," he said.

For local families, remote learning is all they have heard, Superintendent Schiell

***Continued next pg***

## ***SCHOOL YEAR UNCERTAIN; RE-1J IMPROVES FACILITIES***

***From previous pg***

said.

"...I don't want that impression tonight at all," Schiell said. "Keep this in mind. Our community needs to remember. In-person learning, we've been doing that for hundreds of years, okay."

"We know how to do that, and we do it very, very well," Schiell said, "The remote learning is a big challenge for all of us. We are pretty confident somewhere, sometime, part of our school, or a whole school, or just one school or the district is going to have remote learning next year, unless we get really lucky."

In June and July the District will work on variations of plans to bring everyone back. "We may only be able to bring kids in every other day," Schiell said, "We may only bring 'em in every third day, we're gonna have to stagger when the students come, we're gonna have to stagger when they leave."

Congregate meals will be impacted; students may eat in the classroom, and self-serve options will no longer be offered.

Still, "I don't want the wrong perception out there in the community that we're not going to try to get our kids back," Schiell said. "...We're going to get it organized, we're going to be prepared, depending on what all happens...if you're not into wearing face masks parents, you're going need have to start backing that up or your kid won't be admitted into school."

"Because this is just not going to go away...our community needs to understand that if we're going to get our kids back in schools and our teachers, we all need to do this together, and be together, support each other and do it right."

"Because we want our kids back and we want 'em back this fall at all possible."

District A Director Jeff Bachman asked about the district's plan to train teachers to do online teaching.

A request has been made to add a couple of days to the beginning of the school year to provide that training for teachers, Beller said. "We're still developing the exact topics for that, because we're still investigating whether we're going to adopt a full curriculum or if we're going to adopt sup-

plemental curriculum or require teachers to create their own," she said. Timing remains uncertain.

"We absolutely have been thinking through that need and also trying to build in some continuous training next school year throughout each week," she said, "when we have either early release Wednesdays or time during the day to give that specific training to teachers."

Board President Gayle Johnson asked whether school would be extended this year or next because students have lost so much time.

Pavlich said that students across the country and around the world are in the same boat. "Everybody is going to have make up this time...they're still engaging in learning now, it's just not what we're used to."

District G Director Stephen Bush asked about participation levels in online learning. "How are we actually doing at this at this time?" Participation for secondary students has been above 80 percent. For elementary students, the average is around 40 percent, District Director of Technology Steve McEwin said. Younger students have worked with packets, which will be collected this week.

District B Director Jacob Suppes said, "I have a big concern when parents start going back to work. If we don't have school and they're doing this from home or if they're at a babysitter's, how can we work with that?"

The District includes working families and many teachers are parents as well, Beller said. "That's why when we build out the plan we need to keep families at the center of it," she said, "...how do we balance the expectations of the classroom with the fact that there are so many different family variables to consider?"

Following further discussion, Board of Education Vice President Sarah Fishing thanked district staff for their work and spoke about her own experience.

"I really appreciate the reflection that's going on right now to try and build a plan, not knowing what's going to happen for the next school year...I'm a parent of a

child that should be starting Kindergarten in the fall," Fishing said, "and I never imagined that we would be in a situation where we wouldn't know what that was going to look like at this point in the year that that was going to be happening."

"We were expecting to go to Kindergarten Carnival," Fishing said. "And she is excited about joining her classmates in her classroom next year. I think it's just important for people to understand that there are people on the school board who are going through this with you and who are experiencing this very difficult time."

"...these are really, really tricky times and it's really, really hard to plan not knowing what's going to happen next," she said. "That's the situation we're in."

"So thank you all for your hard work, I really do appreciate it," Fishing said, "Even in my frustrated situation as a parent who wants to see her child start Kindergarten as normal."

The District heard from Exceptional Student Services Director Wendy Dawson, who said that she and her team have worked hard to turn special education into remote learning, "which it was never meant to be." While her staff has done an amazing job of rising to the challenge, there are ESS students who have not been able to access online learning in any meaningful way and have likely suffered regression away from their goals, Dawson said.

Property Services Manager Philip Bailey provided a facilities update. "There's a lot going on right now in the district."

Though school facilities are closed to students indefinitely, "We've actually got roofing started on Centennial Middle School...we have contractors on site at Olathe Middle/High School...we're touching just about every school just as early as we can, we'll be working on 'em through summer break."

There will be improvements at Columbine Middle School, Pomona Elementary, and Oak Grove Elementary, he said. A Request for Proposals is being issued for multi-campus infrastructure improvements, and at Centennial Middle School work has

***Continued next pg***

## ***SCHOOL YEAR UNCERTAIN; RE-1J IMPROVES FACILITIES***

***From previous pg***

has started on the Adaptive Sports Playground that is being funded through a grant.

"We're looking at doing a bus loop in Olathe if possible."

Bleachers will be delivered for the Olathe Track Project, the press box will be set on Monday.

"...We're just hoping to get the grass on the field and get it green here so that we'll be ready," Bailey said, "I wanna see football."

RE-1J Human Resources Director Michelle Pottorff provided an update. "Part of what we're doing is keeping up with the changes...the legalities of much of this is changing week by week."

A personnel report is included in the meeting packet. The hiring process has

slowed, she said.

According to the Personnel Report, among those leaving the District are Montrose High School Band Director Josiah St. Peter and FFA Advisor Bret Saunders.

Scheill discussed details of the planned graduation caravans in Montrose and Olathe and reminded the Board of Education that they will need to consider in June whether to keep paying teachers full-time salaries. Teacher contracts expire May 26; "Not everybody is working eight hours."

### **INFORMATIONAL UPDATES**

RE-1J Finance Director Emily Imus provided a third-quarter financial report and budget forecast.

Fishing commented, "I don't want the community to be disheartened...It's hard

to hold onto any kind of positivity when we see numbers like that, but we have to soldier on."

Early Childhood Center Director Penny Harris provided an update and data dashboard as well.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Items 8 (Approval of the revised 2020-2021 school year calendar) and 13 (approval of the purchase of 1 Collins 2020 14-passenger activity bus not to exceed \$61,000 to replace one of the oldest buses in the district's current fleet.) were pulled for further discussion; Item 13 was tabled until next month. Consent Agenda items were approved without Item 13.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned. "Let's hope our next meeting can be in person," Johnson said.



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# OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

## RULE OF LAW RUINED YEARS AGO BY OBAMA, NOT TRUMP

*Editor:*

It seems attorney Gen. Bill Barr wacked a Democrat hornet's nest when he dropped charges against former White House security advisor Michael Flynn. Barack Obama stormed out of one of his multi-million dollar mansions to condemn Barr and held a private meeting with ex-members of his past administration. He expressed concern that the "rule of law is at risk" in wake of what he called an "unprecedented" move by the Justice Department to drop charges against Michael Flynn. Barack said "there is no precedent that anybody can find for someone who has been charged with "perjury" just getting off scot-free. He said that makes our basic understanding of the rule of law at risk! Oh really? Barack's own Attorney General Eric Holder set the precedent 11 years ago when there was prosecutorial misconduct by Holder against Republican Alaska Sen. Ted Stevens. In that case Holder admitted that he didn't provide information for the defense for use at trial. Judge Sullivan, after dismissing the case said in nearly 25 years on the bench, "I have never seen anything approaching the mishandling and misconduct I have seen in this case". And there was definitely misconduct by prosecution in the Flynn case also. Without surprise Barack misstated the charge to which Flynn pleaded guilty. Flynn was charged with false statements to the FBI, not perjury as Barack stated. And those statements were the result of a trap laid by the FBI and coerced by none other than Trump haters Peter Strzok and Joe Pientka who lied saying he didn't need a lawyer because the questions were not for prosecution of any crime. Obama himself was the threat to the "rule of law". He routinely violated the Constitution's separation of powers, challenging America's constitutional foundation in a way no president before him had done in peacetime. The Flynn investigation itself undermined the "rule of law" by targeting an American the government knew was innocent of any

crime. Lets look at some more of Obama breaking the "rule of law":

- 1- He illegally armed Mexican drug cartels and ISIS militants in the failed Operation Fast and Furious.
- 2- He illegally authorized shipment of guns to ISIS-linked militants.
- 3- He illegally attempted to shut down gun stores outside of the law.
- 4- He illegally spent your tax dollars to "re-settle" illegals inside U.S. U.S. Customs and Border patrol had to purchase bus tickets to ship them deeper into the U.S.
- 5- He illegally used executive action to restrict the Second Amendment. (remember him bragging, "I gotta pen and I gotta phone"?)
- 6- He illegally targeted conservative groups via IRS.
- 7- He illegally secretly obtained phone records from Associated Press journalists.
- 8- He illegally carried out military interventionism in Libya without Congressional approval.
- 9- He illegally supported unconstitutional warrantless wiretapping
- 10- He illegally ordered four U.S. citizens killed without judicial process.
- 11- He illegally ordered Boeing closed down in S. Carolina because it was non-union.
- 12- He illegally lied about letting people keep their health insurance.
- 13- He illegally lied about the cost of Obamacare. Said everyone would save \$2500 on premiums.
- 14- He illegally gave tax dollars to campaign contributors and falsely claimed it went for "green energy".
- 15- He illegally had off the record meetings with lobbyists to avoid disclosure requirements.
- 16- He illegally had SWAT agents raid a law-abiding guitar factory because it was owned by a Republican!
- 17- He illegally tried to outlaw family farms by trying to prohibit their children under 18 from working at farm-related activities.

- 18- He illegally gave Obamacare exemptions to unions that supported the passage of Obamacare.
  - 19- He illegally made recess appointments when Congress was not in recess in Jan. 2012
  - 20- He illegally approved giving 20 F-16 fighter jets to a Sharia dictatorship.
  - 21- He illegally accepted campaign contributions from foreign citizens.
  - 22- He illegally refused to submit a budget on time during four of his first five years.
  - 23- He illegally added 20,000 extra pages to Obamacare without Congressional approval
  - 24- He illegally asked contractors to disclose their political donations before bidding on government contracts.
  - 25- He illegally solicited donations from health insurers.
  - 26- He illegally refused to fire or prosecute more than 1,000 IRS employees who illegally used their IRS credit cards for personal use.
  - 27- He illegally had the IRS grant special, illegal favors for his brother's so-called "charity".
  - 28- He illegally gave 23,994 tax refunds worth \$46,378,040 of your money to illegal aliens who all used the same address.
  - 29- He illegally refused to submit the Iran deal to the Senate for ratification.
  - 30- He illegally defied courts when told to renew oil and gas activity in the Gulf of Mexico
  - 31- He illegally altered Obamacare's statutory deadline unilaterally
  - 32- He illegally created the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) after admitting it was unconstitutional
- And this list is not nearly complete! Where was Obama's worry about the rule of law then? Joe Biden participated in all of this illegal activity as Vice President. He was so excited about the Obamacare rollout that was ripe with illegal demands on Americans that he was heard on an open mike bragging, "This is a big f----- deal! And since then he has been recorded

## OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

### ***RULE OF LAW RUINED YEARS AGO BY OBAMA, NOT TRUMP***

then he has been recorded on the campaign trail cussing out his own supporters, calling them filthy names and even challenging them to go out to the alley supposedly to fight! What childish and immature behavior! That would be hilarious watching Biden searching for his broken false teeth in an alley! Is this the kind of childish immaturity America needs to deal with China, N. Korea, and Russia? What a

pitiful choice for president, but expected from the Democrat party. They have spent all their time in Congress trying to get rid of President Trump with their horrid, phony scams instead of helping to fix the nation's problems created by the previous eight years of the Democrat regime. Republicans would accept their apology if they had the character to do so. The real threat to America is the Democrat party

with their Marxist agenda. Lord have mercy on our great nation if Biden or any other Democrat gets elected!! And Barack says he is going to actively campaign for Biden!

Maybe Barack will teach Biden all about the "rule of law" he is so dedicated to! Ha! What a joke. What a phony! They say birds of a feather flock together.  
*Jerry Bartholome, Montrose*

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## MIRROR IMAGES: SAN JUAN GARDENS



*Mirror Reporter Gail Marvel visited one of our favorite places last week, Gayle Goodhue's San Juan Gardens. Happy Spring!*



*San Juan Gardens is located at 12225 6530 Rd Montrose. The phone number is 970-249-2052.*

## MONTROSE COUNTY APPLIES FOR VARIANCE FROM SAFER AT HOME ORDER

*Special to the Mirror*

MONTROSE— The Montrose Board of County Commissioners approved a variance application requesting permission to follow different guidelines than the state's Safer at Home Order.

The application approval came May 13 in a joint Board of County Commissioners and Board of Health meeting.

Following the meeting, the application was submitted to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and the Governor of the State of Colorado. The variance application seeks to allow limited capacity operations for restaurants (in-person dining), churches, and gyms.

"This is a data-driven decision. Montrose County has been continually tracking local and statewide data since March. Our hospital and public health team have done an exceptional job of testing and our rate of testing has remained well above the state average for the duration of this event," said Commissioner Sue Hansen. "We've invested in bringing on a Pandemic Response Specialist in Dr. Adragna and he has been phenomenal in tracking and modeling data and remaining in constant contact with the medical community. We've coordinated extensively with our partners and we know where we are at as a community. It was a group decision to apply for this waiver and it is one that is

supported by the Board, hospital, public health and the community at large."

"It's time to allow people to make their own decisions about where they feel comfortable. We don't have a steady increase in cases in our community. People need to get back to work, church, and life on their terms," said Commissioner Roger Rash. "I absolutely don't want to see innocent people subject to fines and penalties for doing things that have always been their right. I don't take this lightly. My wife is just finishing another course of maintenance treatment for cancer. She and I are going to continue to be vigilant about where we go and how we interact. You're not going to see us sitting in a restaurant or at the gym next week. That's our reality and a reality for many others. That doesn't mean that the world should shut down on our behalf. This board supports safety and we support business and individual choice. We think this waiver is a big step towards restoring individual choices in this community."

The variance application received support from the following: Montrose Memorial Hospital; Montrose County Pandemic Specialist and Public Health Medical Adviser Dr. Joe Adragna, MD, MHA, MGH, FFAFP; local law enforcement; the City of Montrose, and state legislators.

The variance application is similar to Me-

sa County's approved application and Delta County's pending application, which (if approved), will help alleviate regional confusion in regard to public health orders.

Chair Keith Caddy voiced his support as he stated, "The state set standards for variances in anticipation that local conditions may warrant fewer restrictions. We feel that we've absolutely proven that Montrose can safely resume some normalcy without causing a threat to public health. The businesses that have been shut down deserve a chance to reopen as soon as possible because they have a tough road ahead. I want to remind people that if you are uncomfortable going somewhere, don't go. This isn't a mandate to do anything. We're all going to have to make choices in the weeks and months ahead about how we protect ourselves. In the meantime, we don't want to the business community and the public to suffer any further adverse impact when our hospital and public health experts don't think the full weight of the Safer at Home order is necessary."

As a reminder, it is an application for a variance and still requires approval from the state. Businesses and residents should continue to follow state guidelines.

For more information on COVID-19 in Montrose County, please visit [www.montrosecountyjic.com](http://www.montrosecountyjic.com).



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ISSUE 263 May 18, 2020

## ART &amp; SOL

## MONTROSE EDUCATION FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES 2020 TEACHER OF THE YEAR RECIPIENTS



*Above center, MHS Band Director Josiah St. Peter, whose resignation was announced this week, is the High School Teacher of the year for RE-1J schools. Courtesy photo.*

MONTROSE-The Montrose Education Foundation, Inc. have selected the Montrose County School District 2020 Teachers of the Year. The Montrose Education Foundation Teacher of the Year Program recognizes licensed classroom teachers for the significant contributions they make to their schools, district and their community. Nominations are submitted by parents, students, colleagues or community members and are accepted in October through

mid-November.

Fifty-five teachers were nominated and were introduced during the American Education Week Reception which was held on November 21, 2019. Eighteen outstanding educators completed the Candidate Essay Questionnaire, which is based on the Colorado Teacher of the Year Standards and were eligible for consideration. The 3 level recipients; Elementary, Middle & High School Teachers were awarded a \$500

check by Alpine Bank to use in their classrooms. They are also eligible to apply for the Montrose Education Foundation \$10,000 Impact Award.

Congratulations to the following recipients.

**Elementary School Recipient – Stephanie Pietrick - Johnson Elementary – Kindergarten Teacher**

Stephanie Pietrick has been a teacher for Montrose County School District for 5 years teaching kindergarten at Johnson Elementary School. She is a mother of 3 plus the new addition of an energetic puppy. Stephanie has a Masters in English Language Learning, a Bachelor's in Early Childhood Education, and an Associates in Liberal Arts. A Colorado native, but Montrose transplant, she is originally from the Craig/Steamboat Springs area. They moved to Montrose to be closer to her husband's family and pursue exciting new opportunities.

**Middle School Recipient – Jessica Blacker – Centennial Middle – Reading Teacher**

Jessica Dooley Blacker has been educating young minds in the Montrose County School district since 1998. However, her history in the district started long before that. Jessica Dooley was first a student in the Olathe schools from her kindergarten year, with Micki Keller, through graduation as an OHS Pirate in 1993. With aspirations

*Continued next pg*

## ***MONTROSE EDUCATION FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES 2020 TEACHER OF THE YEAR RECIPIENTS From previous pg***



***Middle School Teacher of the Year Jessica Blacker. Courtesy photo.***

to become a teacher, she attended the University of Northern Colorado. In 1998 she completed her student teaching at Northside Elementary School under mentor teacher, Karen Ortiz in a 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> combination class. After graduating, with an elementary teaching degree and BA in Communications, Jessica became a substitute teacher by day and was a server at a local restaurant at night.

Then in 1999, Jessica was hired by principal Gordon "Gordie" Gibson at Pomona Elementary School. Pomona was considered her home-away-from-home where she learned valuable lessons and experience from professional development, her colleagues, administrators, students, and her students' guardians. Here she spent the next 18 years building relationships and educating 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. As time progressed, she mentored three teachers new to the profession. She also earned a master's degree in Creative Arts and Curriculum Development from



***Elementary School Teacher of the Year Stephanie Pietrick. Courtesy photo.***

Lesley University, married another teacher, Jeff Blacker, and had two kids: Brandon and Aubrey, now 11 and 9 years old. Along with forming lasting relationships, she feels her biggest accomplishment during her years at Pomona was to take on the role of lead coordinator to continue the tradition of the school/community-wide event, "Camp Read-more".

As part of her long-term professional goal, in 2017, Jessica decided to continue her own love of learning by applying for and being welcomed into a 6<sup>th</sup> grade reading position at Centennial Middle School, working again with an amazing team of educators and school leaders. It is here that she is actively passionate about her teaching and her students, striving to foster an environment that is safe, engaging, encouraging, collaborative, and challenging for each student's own unique abilities. Is this easy for Ms. Blacker? She says, "Definitely not." Is it rewarding? Her response, "Absolutely! You know you've made a difference when a

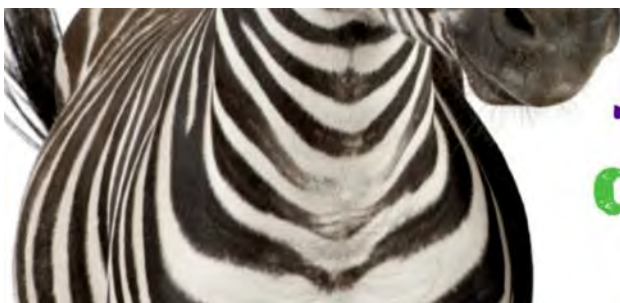
student goes out of his or her way to tell you, 'At the beginning of this year, I used to not like reading, but now I LOVE it!' When students become excited about something they've learned, that's the best reward there is."

**High School Recipient – Josiah St. Peter –  
Montrose High – Band Director**

Josiah St. Peter graduated from Mesa State College in the fall of 2006 with a B.A. in Music Education. In the spring of 2007, Mr. St. Peter began his teaching career as the band director at Delta High School. While in Delta, the band won three back to back state championships in marching band in 2007, 2008, and 2009. He also led the Wind Ensemble to the school's first appearance at the Colorado Bandmasters Association's State Concert Band Festival in the spring of 2010.

Mr. St. Peter began teaching instrumental music at Montrose High School in the fall of 2010. Over the past 10 years, the band program has received several superior ratings and awards at music festivals all over the state and has become the largest student organization in the Montrose County School District. The "Pride of Montrose" Marching Band is a 7-time state championship finalist and placed 5th for the first time in school history in 2020. In 2013, Mr. St. Peter received his M.M. in Instrumental Conducting from Sam Houston State University.

He is also a member of the Colorado Bandmasters Association, National Association for Music Education, Colorado Music Educators Association, Phi Beta Mu music fraternity, and the American School Band Directors Association. In his spare time, Mr. St. Peter loves to fly fish, ride his ATV, and spend time with his wife Chelsea and daughter Londyn.



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## COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

### RIDGWAY FARMERS MARKET OPENS MAY 22

#### *Special to Art & Sol*

RIDGWAY-Ridgway Farmers Market will kick off the opening of the 2020 season on Friday, May 22. Opening bell rings at 10am and the market will be open til 3pm. This is the 20th season of the Farmers Market, which began as a small group in 2000. The opportunity to bring fresh food to our local community is a wonderful service we look forward to providing. The market will be open every Friday until the middle of October.

For the 20th season the market will be operating a little differently due to the COVID-19 situation. For the first few weeks of the market, the focus will be on essential food vendors only. As we navigate the situation this may shift later in the season. We hope to provide as many local options as possible.

The market asks all shoppers to adhere to safe shopping practices including wearing masks, giving physical space to other shoppers, allowing vendors to handle their items, and careful use of reusable bags. Please note the directional assistance guidance in the park. We will be offering priority shopping to our senior and immune compromised shoppers during the first hour. We welcome you to the market and look forward to a great season.



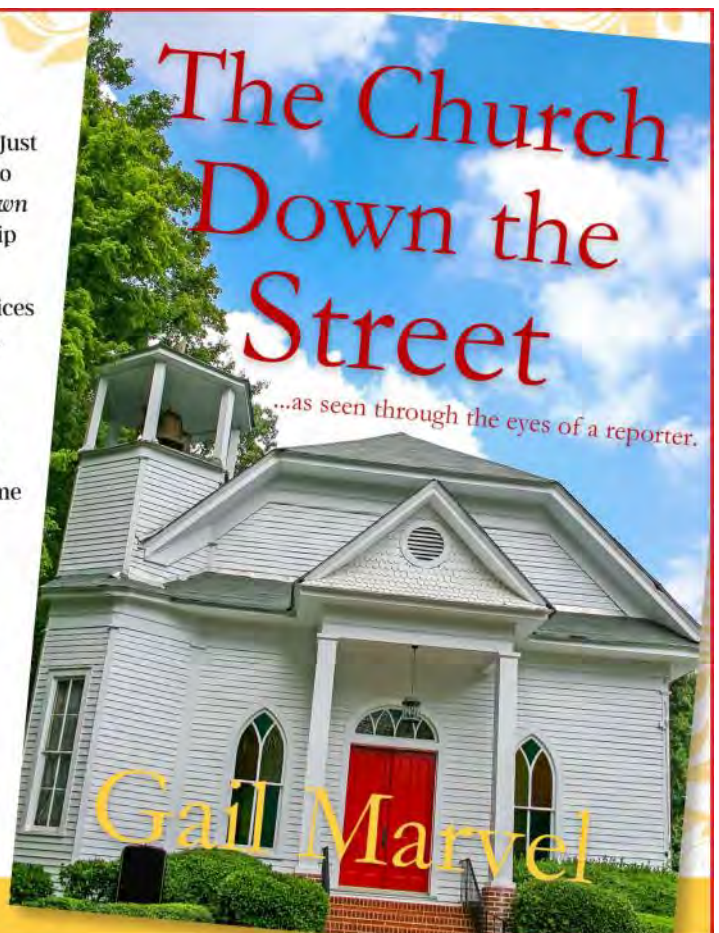
**GAIL MARVEL**  
Montrose Author  
& Reporter

**I**t is human nature to compare ourselves with others, and the church is no different. Just as Paul's Epistles allowed the early church to peer into the lives of each other, *The Church Down the Street* allows readers to peer into the worship services of other churches.

The presence of a reporter in the worship services produced mixed reactions. While many church leaders were grateful for the publicity and exposure for their congregation, others were uneasy. One pastor said, "The minute I saw you

I knew this wasn't my best sermon!" Another pastor said, "We didn't like everything you wrote...but we've made some changes." One elder defended his congregation's lack of friendliness, "Maybe no one spoke to you because of the perfume you were wearing."

Excerpts and anecdotes from approximately 120 church visits are organized in a topical format (Hospitality, Program and Source Material, Music, Meditations and Invitations, and Sermons) and include mainstream denominations, as well as Mormon, Jehovah's Witness, Christian Science, New Age, and Quaker Silent Worship. *The Church Down the Street* is unbiased and reports on the worship experience, not on the denomination.



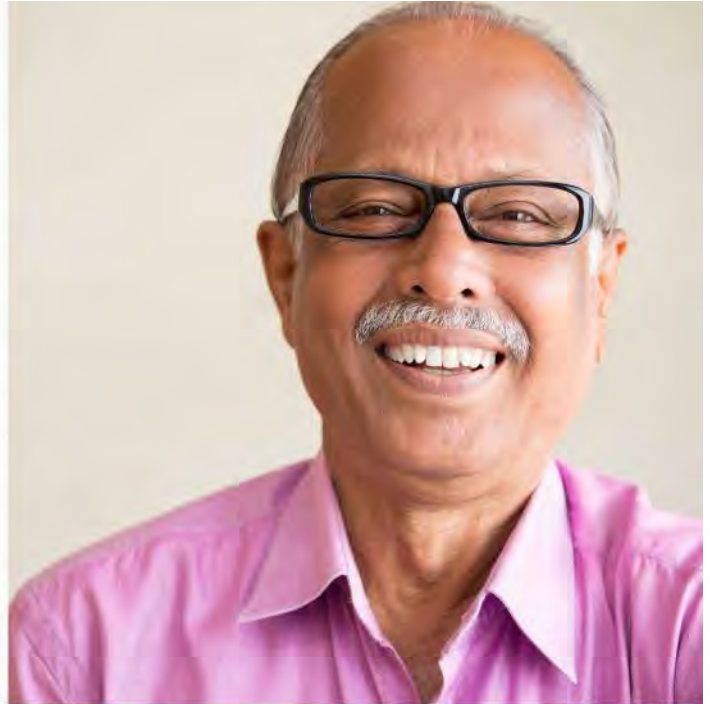
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## REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

### MONTROSE FARMERS' MARKET OPEN SATURDAYS IN CENTENNIAL PLAZA

*Special to the Mirror*

MONTROSE-The Montrose Farmers' Market is a weekly gathering of vendors selling local fruit, vegetables, meat, crafts, and more, on Saturdays from 9 am-1 pm, May 9 – Oct. 31 at Centennial Plaza, 433 S 1st St. in Montrose.



## WE ALL NEED HELP FROM TIME TO TIME

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## COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

### BOW WOW FILM FESTIVAL EXTENDED ANOTHER WEEK

#### *Special to Art & Sol*

RIDGWAY-Due to popular demand, Second Chance Humane Society is extending their online Bow Wow Film Festival through May 22. Bow Wow is an innovative, traveling dog-themed film festival in its 5th year that will now be available from the comfort and safety of your own home, snuggling with your pets on the couch.

Bow Wow celebrates the human-canine bond and the marvelous ways these beloved creatures inspire us, care for us, and bring us joy through the art of short film.

Second Chance hosted the 2019-2020 Bow Wow Film Fest debut in Telluride last July and the films were scheduled to be shown again this past March in Ridgway as part of Second Chance's Furry Flicks and

Fashion, prior to that event's COVID-19-related cancellation.

Bow Wow has partnered with animal welfare organizations across the country to enthusiastic audiences in cities that include Austin, TX, Minneapolis, MN, Denver, CO & San Francisco, CA to raise money and awareness for animal welfare organizations. The films are crafted by filmmakers who are amazing storytellers, animators, and artists, as seen in the 90 minutes of award winning, funny, and poignant shorts.

2019-20 highlights include the return of the hysterical Ask Frank - Advice for Dogs, the moving story of a man who lost everything then found it again with a shelter pup and the ocean, a delightful story

about a rescued foster pup, and a crowd pleaser involving Italy, dogs, and mountain bikes, need we say more?

All proceeds from the online viewing of Bow Wow Film Festival will directly benefit the broad range of life-saving programs and services Second Chance Humane Society has been providing Ouray, Montrose & San Miguel counties for the past 26 years.

Bow Wow Film Festival tickets are available now for only \$16 for the entire household to view and the access pass can be used at any time from May 8th – 22nd.

Purchase tickets and view the Bow Wow Film Festival trailer at <https://bit.ly/BWFF20>. Contact Second Chance Humane Society for details at 970.626.2273 or visit [adoptmountainpets.org](http://adoptmountainpets.org).

## My Mask Protects You



## Your Mask Protects Me



MONTROSE COUNTY COVID-19 INFORMATION AT [WWW.MONTROSECOUNTYJIC.COM](http://WWW.MONTROSECOUNTYJIC.COM)

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## COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

# FISHERS PEAK PROPERTY ACQUIRED BY STATE IN CELEBRATION OF COLORADO PUBLIC LANDS DAY



*The 9,633-foot summit of Fishers Peak looms over Trinidad. Photo courtesy of Colorado Parks and Wildlife / Bill Vogrin.*

### *Special to the Mirror*

COLORADO—More than a year after entering a partnership to acquire a 19,200-acre ranch that includes the towering landmark known as Fishers Peak, Colorado Parks and Wildlife has completed the purchase, clearing the way for creation of the state's 42nd state park. The acquisition is especially significant as Coloradans prepare to celebrate Colorado Public Lands Day on Saturday, May 16.

In February 2019, CPW partnered with the City of Trinidad, The Nature Conservancy, The Trust for Public Land and Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) to purchase the mostly undeveloped property, prized for its variety of habitat, wildlife and the linkage it provides between grasslands to the east with foothills and mountains to

the west.

The property includes the 9,633-foot summit of Fishers Peak, an iconic outcropping of ancient horizontal lava flows atop Raton Mesa, which has served as a landmark for Native Americans, a beacon for pioneers moving west and a waypoint along the historic Santa Fe Trail connecting the Eastern U.S. to New Mexico and the Southwest.

The Fishers Peak property also is valued for the wildlife it shelters, including native species like elk, mule deer, white-tailed deer, mountain lion and black bear. And it preserves important migration corridors between their populations in the mountains and those on the prairies.

On April 2, the partners signed over ownership of the property to CPW. With the

deed in hand, CPW leadership and the partners immediately ramped up master-planning efforts to create a new state park that will protect the natural treasures and wildlife found there while welcoming visitors, including hunters, campers, hikers, mountain bikers, wildlife watchers, rock climbers and other outdoor enthusiasts.

"We are grateful to our partners for all their work securing the property for future generations of Coloradans and visitors," said Brett Ackerman, CPW Southeast Region Manager. "Great teamwork has gotten us to this point. We at CPW look forward to completing the master-planning process and meeting the governor's goal of opening Colorado's next state park."

"GOCO is a proud partner in this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," said GOCO Executive Director Chris Castilian, whose agency provided the bulk of the funding, \$17.25 million, toward the acquisition. "It's been our honor to be a proponent and primary funder of this amazing project to date, and we look forward to supporting our partners at CPW to bring a vision for this state park to fruition."

"The City of Trinidad strongly supports Colorado Parks and Wildlife's acquisition of the Fishers Peak property and the partnership that made this new state park a reality for our city and Las Animas County," said Trinidad Mayor Phil Rico.

For now, the property remains closed to public access.

But CPW intends a phased approach to opening that will allow limited public access to the property while the master-planning process proceeds and a full state park is developed.

The public can follow the park's progress and get updates on participating in the planning process at [cpw.state.co.us](http://cpw.state.co.us).

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## SAVE THE DATE! UPCOMING REGIONAL EVENTS

**ONGOING**-The Montrose Farmers' Market is a weekly gathering of vendors selling local fruit, vegetables, meat, crafts, and more, on Saturdays from 9 am-1 pm, May 9 – Oct. 31 at Centennial Plaza, 433 S 1st St. in Montrose.

### MONTHLY-

**May 8-22**-Bow Wow Film Festival Online. Watch in "Safer-at-Home" style from the comfort of your couch! Bow Wow Film Festival celebrates, educates & inspires all things doggie via the art of short film. Only \$16 covers your entire household. Start watching from midnight on May 8th until midnight on May 15. Tickets at: <https://bit.ly/BWFF20> A benefit for Second Chance Humane Society. Your support helps us achieve our mission of Connecting Pets, People & Community While Saving Lives. For more info about Second Chance, go to: [www.AdoptMountainPets.org](http://www.AdoptMountainPets.org)

**June 13**-Adopt-A-Park Clean Up at Rollans Park, Ridgway, Saturday, June 13, 2020 @ 9 a.m. – 12 noon. Join UWP for a volunteer work morning at Rollans Park, picking up litter and branches along the Uncompahgre River, to make it a great place to visit. Contact to sign up: Tanya, [uwpcommunications@gmail.com](mailto:uwpcommunications@gmail.com), 970-325-3010 Information: <http://www.uncompahgrewatershed.org/events/>

**July 25**-San Juan Mountains Guided Wildflower Walk, Saturday, July 25, 2020 @ 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Walk among the native plants of the subalpine vegetation zone with guide Mary Menz. Co-author of *Common Wildflowers of the San Juan Mountains*, Mary will identify wildflowers, share historical uses of native plants, and talk about the role native plants play in the ecosystem—including areas with acid mine runoff. Contact to sign up: Tanya, [uwpcommunications@gmail.com](mailto:uwpcommunications@gmail.com), 970-325-3010 Information: <http://www.uncompahgrewatershed.org/events/>

**Sept. 12**-Love Your Gorge-Sat., Sept. 12, 2020, Uncompahgre River Gorge. Volunteer with the Ouray Ice Park and Uncompahgre Watershed Partnership to make improvements to the riparian areas of the Uncompahgre River Gorge in Ouray. Then, enjoy a picnic and party to celebrate our efforts. Funded by the Frank L. Massard Trust. Contact to sign up: Tanya, [uwpcommunications@gmail.com](mailto:uwpcommunications@gmail.com), 970-325-3010 Information: <http://www.uncompahgrewatershed.org/events/>

**Sept. 25-27**-The Ridgway Old West Fest will be Sept 25-27, 2020



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## **READER PHOTO SPOTLIGHT: BY DEB REIMANN**



*Above, Photographer Deb Reimann captured this image of mushrooms in an old tree stump at Silverjack.*

*At left, a cairn at the Middle Fork of the Cimarron River.*

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