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Issue No. 396 Sept. 28, 2020

BLOCK 93 ALLEY PROJECT HAS AREA BUSINESS OWNERS CONCERNED ABOUT IMPACTS, LOSS OF ACCESS

By Paul Arbogast

MONTROSE-For those who don't know, the temporary closure of the parking lot behind the 300 block of East Main (north side of the street) is the first part of a City of Montrose project referred to as the Block 93 Alley Project.

At the Aug. 4 City Council meeting Council approved Resolution 2020-16, which authorized the city to put in an application for a Department of Local Affairs (DOLA)

grant for \$150k for funding phase one. The funds would be used for seal coating, lighting, seating, artwork, and a food truck court with electrical hookups and other items. If the grant is awarded, the city will provide \$150K in matching dollars that will come from retail sales enhancement (RSE) and tourism promotion (TP) funds, according to Chelsea Rosty, City of Montrose Director of Business



The City of Montrose's proposed Block 93 Alley Project has area business owners concerned. Photo by Paul Arbogast.

[Continued pg 9](#)

RIBBON CUTTING FOR TESLA/CHARGE POINT EV CHARGING STATION TO BE OCT. 1



The City of Montrose is refurbishing the Public Parking area in the 500 block of North 1st in preparation for installation of the EV (electric vehicle) Charging Station. When asked how many EV chargers would be installed, Delta Montrose Electric Association Chief Power Supply Officer Jim Heneghan said, "There could be a single port, or multiple pedestals, as many as eight, ten or twelve."

A ribbon cutting for the Tesla and Charge Point EV Charging Station will be held Oct. 1. Photo by Gail Marvel.

By Gail Marvel

MONTROSE-The Sept. 22, 2020 Delta Montrose Electric Association (DMEA) Board of Directors meeting, a Zoom webinar, was called to order at 3 p.m. Members who wish to receive log-in information prior to meetings can contact Amy Taylor via e-mail at amy.taylor@dmea.com.

Practicing social distancing, the board and staff participated on computers from offices and homes and face masks were not required.

The call to order was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, the opening meeting prayer, determination of a quorum, and approval of the consent

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

COVID-19 TESTING @ EVENT CENTER

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE— COVID-19 testing for symptomatic people will relocate from Montrose Memorial Hospital to the Montrose County Event Center beginning Monday, Oct. 5. The move will allow for sample collection during months associated with harsh weather conditions. Currently, symptomatic COVID-19 testing is taking place at Montrose Memorial Hospital's designated drive-thru location at 800 S. 3rd St. As of Oct. 5, this site will cease and testing will only be available at the Montrose County Event Center, located at 1036 North 7th Street.

Individuals needing a COVID test can receive their test Monday-Saturday between the hours of 8 a.m. and 11 a.m. on a first-come, first-serve basis. Testing will only be done during this time frame. You must have a provider's order for the test. The relocated testing site will continue serve nasopharyngeal swab COVID tests for patients who are symptomatic or receiving an elective procedure. There is no charge for the nasopharyngeal swab at this time due to the current state-supported lab process. Testing will maintain a convenient drive-thru format. Those being tested need to follow signage, remain in their vehicle and enter the building off the southeast end. Individuals who do not have a provider's order - or need a test for travel or personal reasons - should contact their provider to receive a provider's order, or call Delta Public Health's testing site at (970) 874-2165. Tests may be available at this Delta site depending on availability and \$100 fee. Delta County Health Department will not bill your insurance.

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

RECALLING THE WORDS OF JOHN ADAMS, 2ND U.S. PRESIDENT

Editor:

This should be published often:

"There is nothing which I dread so much as a division of the republic into two great parties, each arranged under its leader, and concerting measures in opposition to each other. This, in my humble apprehension, is to be dreaded as the greatest political evil under our Constitution."

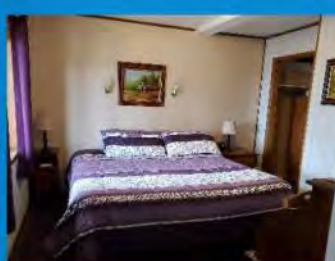
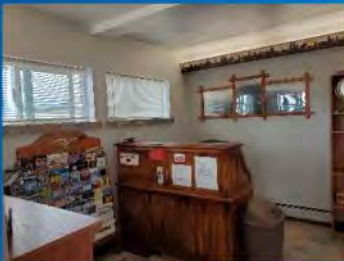
-John Adams, The Works Of John Adams, Second President Of The United States

Timothy Storrs, Montrose



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MONTROSE COUNTY RUNS LOGIC AND ACCURACY TEST

By Paul Arbogast

MONTROSE-In preparation for the upcoming election, Montrose County spent a day on Friday Sept. 25 running through a Logic and Accuracy Test. This checks all the ballots for errors, as well as ensures all systems used are functioning properly so when the results are in, they are 100 percent accurate.

Due to how the county is split into regions, some that overlap or mix, there are 44 different ballots that will be sent out for this election.

It is the duty of the county elections office to keep track of all of them. The LAT testing lets them run every possible sce-

nario from mis-marked ballots to under and over votes to ensure all votes are counted.

There are two registered voters, one from each major political party, that go over each potential issue with a ballot, from signatures to stray marks on ballots, to ensure there is no foul play. In addition they run through all the forms of voting to



At left, Election office employee runs two adjudicators through software to review the different issues that can arise on ballots. Above, citizen tallies from 44 different county ballots. These totals will be matched to electronic entry of the same ballots. Photos by Paul Arbogast.

make sure all results match up, from paper ballots to electronic voting, even using ADA equipment to ensure everything is functioning properly. It is a long and tedious process, but it is necessary to ensure that every vote counts and is counted properly.

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

DIANE MITSCH BUSH DEMONSTRATES EXTENSIVE KNOWLEDGE OF COMPLEX ISSUES, WILLINGNESS TO LISTEN AND LEARN FROM CONSTITUENTS

Dear editor,

Colorado ranchers and farmers would do well to listen to a recorded forum that Congressional candidate Diane Mitsch Bush presented on September 9. She led a discussion with Colorado ranchers from near Steamboat Springs, Carbondale, Rifle and Grand Junction, plus owners of a meat-packing plant near Durango. The discussion uncovered some things an astute congressperson could work on to make those businesses more equitable, make food and soil more healthy, and help us all to survive future droughts and downstream calls on water.

Mitsch Bush clearly demonstrated her extensive knowledge of complex issues,

both state and federal, and her willingness to listen and learn from constituents. If you missed the original forum, you can watch the video by searching the internet for "Virtual Ranching Roundtable, Diane Mitsch Bush".

An additional forum concerning education was held on September 19, also recorded, and others are scheduled later. Mitsch Bush has vast experience in making law and working with government agencies.

She is known for working across the aisle, sometimes in opposition to her own party, in order to get something accomplished for the good of her constituents. We don't need a congresswoman who would be against about every proposal made in Washington, thus continuing the stalemate of the last few years. Please do yourself a favor by joining me in voting for Diane Mitsch Bush!

Marv Ballantyne, Montrose

WE NEED TO ESCAPE OUR NARROW TRIBAL CORNERS, POLARIZATION

Editor:

As crazy as this may sound, you can be ardently "pro-choice" and not be pro-abortion. You can be outraged to see toddlers ripped from their parents and put into cages, and not condone open borders. You can enthusiastically participate in protests and demonstrations yet condemn violence and vandalism. You can strongly advocate for criminal justice reform to provide better equality under the law for the poor and minorities, and still promote your local police force. You can be a tree-hugging conservationist yet champion business development. And you can demand common-sense gun laws but also respect the second amendment.

We're experiencing an epidemic of myopic, partisan ignorance and we, as a civilization and a country, are suffering because of this skewed polarization. We need to escape our narrow tribal corners and embrace the yin-yang continuum of our opinions and beliefs.

Stephanie Gibert, Montrose



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By Carolyn Lane

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

PROPOSITION 113 DOES NOT CHANGE COLORADO'S WATER RIGHTS

Editor:

Water is a serious issue on the Western Slope, as it is in most of Colorado. Any idea or proposal that appears to threaten our water rights would get a lot of resistance, and rightly so!

Colorado's joining the National Popular Vote Interstate compact, Proposition 113, will appear on the ballot in November, and there seems to be some misinformation out about this proposition, linking it to the loss of water rights. The fact is, a water agreement between states would be obtained through an interstate compact, which requires each state to sign on and then receive approval by Congress. The National Popular Vote is about how we elect our President. The US Constitu-

tion grants the states the power to decide how we distribute our electoral votes to elect our President. In 2019, the Colorado legislature signed a bill joining the state with others in the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact, which is on this year's ballot for voters to approve. If and when it is approved and goes into effect, it will make sure that the presidential candidate earning the most popular votes nationwide always wins the election. Every voter will have an equal say in deciding who wins: One person, one vote.

The National Popular Vote does not change Congress or how we elect members of Congress. Nor does it change the process by which Colorado and any other state signs onto an interstate water com-

pact. There is no connection between Proposition 113 and any change in Colorado's water rights. NONE.

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization, which means we never support candidates or political parties. We do take positions on issues, based on extensive study and consensus by the membership. We work to make democracy work for all. As such, the League has supported a national popular vote for 50 years, as a more fair and representative way to elect the Nation's President. And as such, the League urges voters to vote "Yes" on Proposition 113.

Jan Edwards, President

Montrose County League of Women Voters, Serving also Delta County

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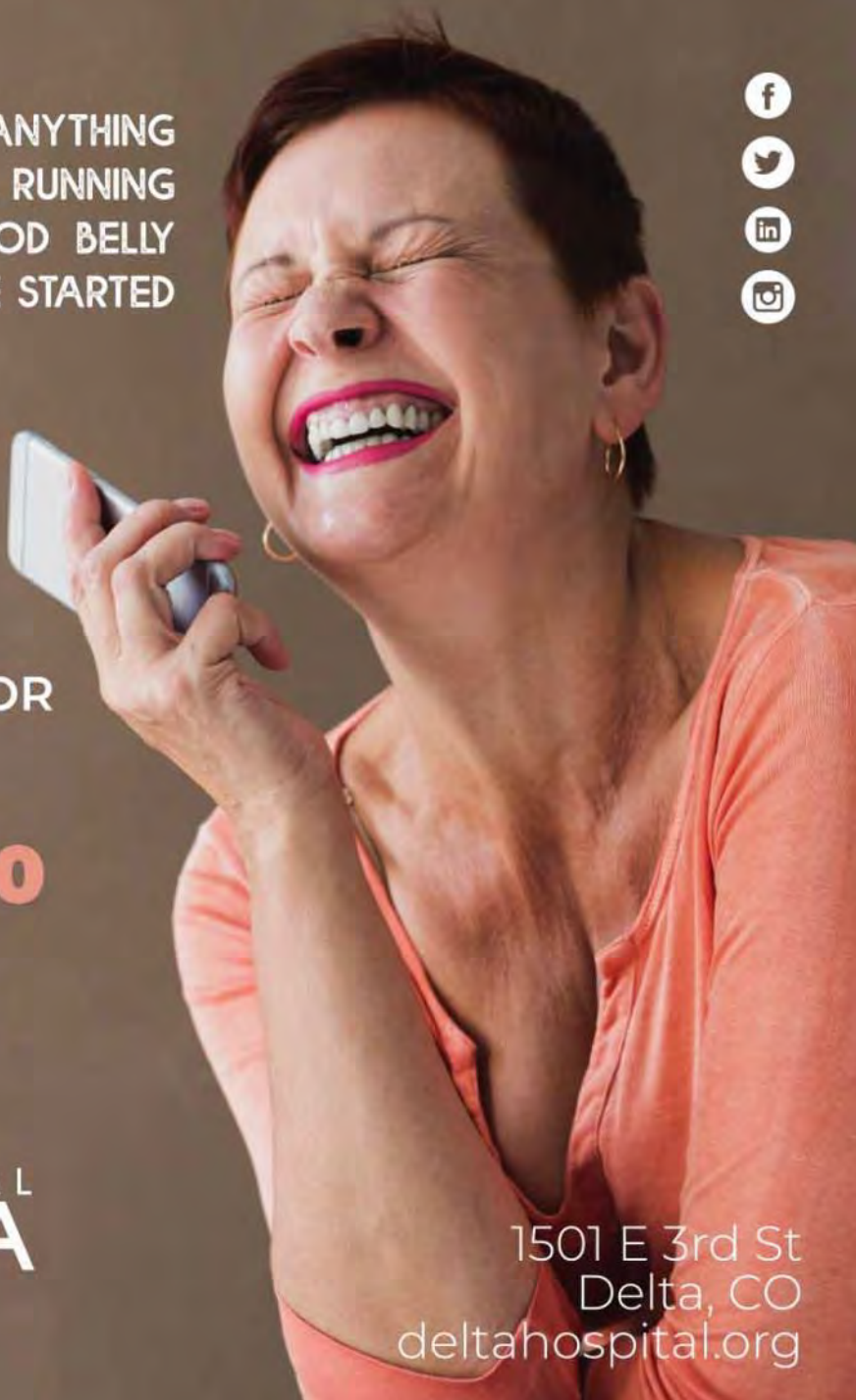
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BLOCK 93 ALLEY PROJECT HAS AREA BUSINESS OWNERS CONCERNED ABOUT IMPACTS, LOSS OF ACCESS From pg 1

Innovation & Tourism.

Resolution 2020-16 states, among other things, that the alley project would be a catalyst to fill empty storefronts in the area and retain current businesses, and that adjacent businesses will also widely benefit from this project. I met and talked to several business and building owners on that block; some think it could be a positive thing but have issues with the alley being closed permanently, however most are skeptical that this will help their businesses.

Usually the city has a work session where they discuss items and several weeks later vote on the item in a council meeting, giving time for the public to see what is coming and to comment. Looking at council records, Resolution 2020-16 was brought up in a city work session on Aug. 3. Still, I can find no notes, transcripts, or meeting minutes where this project was put out to the citizens of Montrose. Though the city did have a Block 93 owners open house to present this idea to them, very few were present.

The vision is a pedestrian-focused space where the city and others can hold different events. According to Rosty, "Ideally, we'd like to revive a once weekly Main in Motion event (seasonal) that creates gathering and entertainment downtown, while keeping Main Street open. Other events would be on an as-requested basis."

Several owners pointed out that re-starting a Main in Motion behind that block would leave out the majority of Downtown businesses.

Chuck's Glass stated they have several big trucks doing deliveries, and the only way to deliver is through the alley. Any closure of the alley directly effects their business, and the initial drawings show the alley as no longer open for anything other than pedestrians.

When asked if they did plan to close the alley to vehicles including deliveries, Rosty

said, "This has not yet been decided. We'd like the alley to be a place that promotes walkability. If cars and deliveries travel through the alley regularly, then the walkability diminishes and thus the experience and ambiance. We have some details to work out with deliveries and other considerations before we make a decision."

Deliveries are a big sticking point for other businesses on that block, as many load in and out through the alley. Kilbane's Cleaners not only loads up for deliveries, but on occasion replaces machinery that can weigh up to three tons. If the proposed 10-foot sidewalk with benches and planters is put along the back of his business, Kilbane's owner would have no access to his own business to replace equipment.

While Rosty says they did everything they could to contact all business owners on that block, Charlie Ponchak and his wife have owned and operated Kilbane's Cleaners for 31 years. Ponchak says he found out about the Block 93 Alley Project from an article in a local paper. He said he called the city, where he spoke to an employee who told him that it is a city parking lot so they will do what they want.

Ponchak is just one of several business owners on that block who say they may very well leave if the city follows through with all the things they want to do with this project.

Beyond current businesses, what effect would it have for potential future business that may need alley access for deliveries and unloading? Would that limitation as well as lost parking have a negative effect on filling the four currently empty storefronts on that block, or is the city correct that 'beautification' would help draw in businesses? Citizens can see the beautification that has been done downtown so far, look at the empty storefronts, and make their own decisions.

Ponchak suggested that if they wanted to

fill empty storefronts and help local businesses, as well as attract new businesses, government would lower the tax assessments on the commercial buildings downtown. He said over valuation is what has driven up rent prices to the point that most small business cannot afford to keep operating for long, or even move in.

Many businesses would have no problem if the city kept the alley open but had gates on each end and just closed them on weekends for the duration of special events, but several have been in touch with the city and feel the responses are slow and that they just do not care about business owners' concerns.

One mentioned that if officials continued these plans and closed off rear access, they would consider legal action against the city.

Cost projections for the whole project come to more than \$1.9 million dollars, but Rosty said it is unlikely they would spend that much.

"In 2020, DART budgeted \$35,000 for special projects and we also have an additional \$5,000 from Colorado Main Street. This money will pay for the work that is currently underway as well as some electrical and lighting in the parking lot," she said.

Other than the current work and money mentioned above, the master plan was done through a technical grant from Colorado Main Street, and cost about \$37K.

One business owner had just talked to a city worker who was doing cleanup work, and was told that what was going on back there was just resurfacing and rearranging the parking, and that it would be open again in October. There was a clear frustration that information differed depending on who they talked to from the city.

The City's master plan can be viewed here: <https://www.cityofmontrose.org/DocumentCenter/View/41867/Block-93-Alley-Project-Master-Plan>



OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

CORY GARDNER TRUMP'S RUBBER STAMP

Editor:

Cory Gardner may attempt to campaign as a moderate independent Republican. However his voting record in lock-step confirmation of Trump's cabinet members and judges places him clearly in Trump's corner.

Gardner voted for:

Interior Secretary Zinke: Shrunk Bear Ears National Monument by 85%, will Rocky Mountain National Park be next? Resigned under pressure amidst six federal investigations, expensive travel and policy violations.

EPA Secretary Pruitt: prior to nomination sued the EPA 14 times. Rejects climate change. Resigned under pressure with 15 federal investigations of his conduct from criminal record destruction to corrupt allocation of funds.

Homeland Security Secretary Nielson: implemented policy of separating over 2654 children from their parents at the US-Mexico border. Resigned under pressure.

Commerce Secretary Ross: banker worth 2.5 billion, failed to disclose financial interest in a Russian company. Violated Administrative Procedures Act by attempting to add a citizenship question to the census, which would cost Colorado millions in federal funding.

Treasury Secretary Mnuchin: banker worth 385 million, requested military aircraft for several personal trips costing taxpayers \$811,000. Designed Tax bill giving huge cuts to the wealthiest and corporations.

Secretary of State Pompeo: Trump fired the Inspector General who was investi-

gating Pompeo's role in the administration bypassing a congressional freeze on arms sales to Saudi Arabia, releasing \$8 billion in arms which are used in the war in Yemen.

HHS Secretary Price: worth \$10 million, reported spending over one million of taxpayer funds for private charter jets and military aircraft.

EPA Secretary Wheeler: former coal industry lobbyist. worked to undermine regulations which protect clean air and water.

Gardner voted to confirm the entire wealthy corrupt cabinet, proving himself to be a devoted foot soldier for the Trump agenda.

Like Trump said in Colorado Springs: "He's been with us 100%."

Scott Johnson MD, Loveland



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

NEW CHAMBER ANNOUNCES BOARD OF DIRECTORS LEADERSHIP

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE- The new business community lead chamber of commerce has announced the leadership for their inaugural year and launch year membership rate. The non-profit organization's board announced the following board leadership will serve from October 1, 2020 to December 31, 2021:

- President – Tonya Maddox, Our Town Matters
- Vice President/President Elect – Sue Frank, TEI Rock Drills
- Secretary – Jaimee Carnes, Elderado Financial
- Treasurer – Casey Payne, River Valley Family Health Centers
- Membership Chair – John Bullington, Rose Bowl

During their first board meeting this week, the board of directors also announced a Launch Year Membership promotion of \$300 for a 15 month membership beginning October 1, 2020 until December 31, 2021 and states the membership benefits and registration will be live on their website next week.

Last month, a group of local leaders announced the formation of the Greater Montrose Area Chamber of Commerce in response to a growing belief among business owners and professionals that business centric and pro-small business solutions and advocacy is needed in this area. The complete list of the board of directors:

- Tracy Baldwin, U.S. Bank
 - John Bullington, Rose Bowl Entertainment Center
 - Jaimee Carnes, Elderado Financial
 - Tony Driskill, Cherry Creek Media
 - Sue Frank, TEI Rock Drills
 - Theresa Leben, Welcome Western Colorado
 - Kathy McKie, DMEA
 - Tonya Maddox, Our Town Matters
 - Selvin Sandoval, Sandoval Construction
 - Bud Taylor, Black Canyon Boys & Girls Club
 - Sheree Wanner, Camelot Gardens
 - Megan Wilson, Shelter Insurance
- For more information about the Greater Montrose Chamber of Commerce, visit www.greatermontrorechamber.com.



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*In order to be reimbursed you must have an existing account or open a new account with Alpine Bank and currently be employed as a teacher with Montrose or Delta County School Districts. Reimbursement will be made within two weeks of presentation of valid receipts dated between 8/1/2020 – 11/1/2020.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

NEW VEHICLE DONATION TO HELP WESTERN COLORADO VETERANS

Special to the Mirror

REGIONAL-Veterans in Western Colorado will soon have a new resource to help ensure they can get to and from their medical appointments at no cost. DAV (Disabled American Veterans) Chapter 7 in Lakewood is donating a 2020 Ford Explorer to the VA Western Colorado Health Care System and is calling on local volunteers to give a few hours of their time to help drive DAV Transportation Network vehicles and aid veterans in need.

"COVID-19 has created new challenges for our nation's heroes. Not all medical

appointments can be handled through telehealth," said DAV National Voluntary Services Director John Kleindienst. "Many veterans are unable to drive and would not be able to get to their medical appointments without this essential service. DAV needs patriotic volunteer drivers to help veterans get the care they've earned. We've changed our operating procedures to make the experience safe for our drivers and the veterans they serve."

The vehicles are scheduled to arrive September 25, 2020, at 10:00am at the VA Western Colorado Health Care System.

Since the Transportation Network's inception in 1987, DAV, has donated more than 3,600 vehicles to VA medical centers across the country, including 231 that were donated by program partner Ford Motor Company. Thanks to these donated vehicles and the program's volunteer drivers, DAV provided more than 615,000 rides in 2019, while logging more than 20 million miles.

To become a volunteer driver, contact the Western Colorado VA Medical Center Voluntary Services Office or visit www.dav.org/volunteer.



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

WHERE IS THE FEASIBILITY STUDY ON HOUSING PROJECTS?

Editor:

There are houses being built all over Montrose and our city fathers and mothers want to build apartments at Colorado and 192 apartments next to Cobble Creek.

Meanwhile I see blocks and blocks of store fronts empty. Stover is gone. I will bet that Tri-State will minimize employment soon if not move. Penny's is gone for all purposes. What is next. Oh yes, the pet food store you just subsidized for \$100,000 will take up the slack.

Goodie goodie! Our City Manager will

promote building somewhere close to 300 family housing units with nowhere for daddy and mommy to work. More kids in school that need subsidies to eat.

Where is the feasibility study on this? We know, the same place the feasibility study and the cost-benefit analysis and business plans are for the Colorado Outdoors fiasco. NON-EXISTANT for sure. So we will get 300 hopeful families moving into our crazy city with some BS promise of jobs when stores and businesses are closing left and right.

The city is rich don't cha know? They are

getting all that extra Public Safety Money we all told you that that they did not need. And THEY WILL SPEND IT WHERE THEY WANT, NOT NECESSARILY ON COPS.

This, folks, means huge unemployment rolls with families on welfare contributing nothing to Montrose all because the development of these dwellings means employment for builders, who when the building is done will leave town for South Dakota (like the last time) and leave Montrose to suffer with the mess. Thank you Mr. Bell and your five puppets.

Bill Bennett, Montrose

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

1890 HOMESTEAD APTS TOO LARGE, 'BIG CITY' FOR SMALL TOWN MONTROSE

Dear Editor:

We wanted to share with you the below verbiage that we have emailed to: Mayor Barbara Bynum; Roy Anderson, District 3 Councilman; Doug Glaspell, Mayor Pro Tem; Dave Bowman, Council Member; and Dave Frank Council Member: My wife and I are residents of the Cobble Creek community.

We recently moved to Montrose from Denver because we fell in love with this beautiful small town coupled with the fact that we were very tired of the "Big City" with its never ending traffic jams, air and noise pollution and of course the yearly, exponential increase in the cost of living. Over the many decades we lived in Denver we have seen plenty of development, some good, but for the most part really bad land use creating impossibly dense developments that choked the local streets with thousands of additional car trips per day leading to the inevitable increase in air and noise pollution and local schools seeing classroom student populations double and triple. That's why we are so very concerned about the proposed 1890 Homestead Apartment Development project. We have seen the proposed plans and are absolutely shocked at the sheer scale of the project. This project is certainly deserving of the moniker "Big City Development"! This Big City Development is out of character for the town of Montrose on so many levels:

- This is an extremely high density development putting far too many people into a very cramped acreage. This density is not consistent with the surrounding communities of Cobble Creek and Spruce Point. In our opinion, more people will be living in this new development than in Cobble Creek and Spruce point combined!

- Cobble Drive and 6450 Road will see a massive increase of daily car trips all of which must funnel onto Chipeta Road, which is a minor two lane roadway that, in our opinion, was never designed to handle the volume of car trips that will be generated when this project is completed. One

begs an answer to the question "When and how much will it cost to widen and rebuild Chipeta Road to handle the massive amount of new traffic from this project?" An even more important question is it even possible to expand Chipeta Road given all of the private property along both sides of the road?

- This project will attract families with children, leading to an increase in the number of students causing our schools to become overcrowded. In our experience, we've never seen a developer held accountable for the impacts of their projects on the local schools. Once the project is completed the community is left to suffer through the turmoil of overcrowded schools and the prospect of spending tens of millions of dollars building new schools.

- We assume, through the permitting process, the developer will be paying tap and plant investment fees for potable water and wastewater treatment services from the City of Montrose.

- o Is this assumption correct? Or will these fees be waived as part of the \$2.3 million of developer subsidies the City of Montrose is considering?

- o This massive development will dramatically increase the volume of potable water required to service the new residents which we all know will eventually require expansion/upgrading of our water and wastewater treatment facilities.

- o Given that this project will require access to huge amounts of potable water and wastewater treatment, will the City of Montrose now be saddled with the cost to install all new infrastructure (i.e.: underground pipelines, etc.) to bring potable water from the treatment facility to the development and then to transport the wastewater back to the sanitary treatment facility?

- o Also, does the City of Montrose even own adequate water rights to supply the massive water demand for this new development? Will the City of Montrose now have to spend millions of dollars to acquire the water rights to service this development?

- Obviously, this large of a development will have well over 1,000 new residents generating millions of pounds of refuse every year.

- o Can our current county landfill handle this volume?

- o Will our county landfill need to be expanded much sooner than anticipated to handle this increased volume of refuse?

- o Maybe our county landfill cannot be expanded, thus Montrose County will incur future costs to build refuse transfer stations to literally compact the refuse and truck it to distant landfills?

- o If so, how much will those landfills charge for this "imported" refuse?

- o How much will it cost to truck the refuse long distances which will also result in large increases in air pollution due to multiple truck trips per day!

- o Will the City of Montrose have to buy additional refuse trucks to service this new development?

- It is painful for us to imagine why the City of Montrose is considering \$2.3 million of subsidies for the developer. This is absolutely egregious behavior on the City of Montrose's part and cannot be ignored. We feel the City of Montrose is selling us out to the developer in the name of more property and other tax collections.

- We've heard the developer say that Montrose needs more housing as the city grows. We know Montrose is growing but why concentrate the need for new housing in one, massively dense development? There are plenty of other and larger tracts of land, especially along Townsend Avenue and Woodgate Road, where this development could be more spread out and offer better access to the local streets and highways.

In conclusion, we beg you to see that this development is too large and inconsistent with the small town feel of Montrose. We left Denver to escape this type of "Big City Development"! Please don't allow this development to ever happen!

Thank you,

Frank & Sylvia Bernardi



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COUNTY REQUESTS RECLASSIFICATION TO SAFER AT HOME LEVEL 1

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE-All commissioners were present as Chair Keith Caddy opened a special meeting of the Montrose Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) at 4 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 22. All joined in the saying the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

No comments were heard from the public on non-agenda items.

COUNTY MANAGER

County Manager Ken Norris asked that Item D-2, consideration and action on the 2021 Employee Benefit Allowance, be removed from the agenda.

GENERAL BUSINESS & ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Commissioners heard from Public Health Director Jim Austin and from Dr. Joe Adragna, pandemic response specialist, regarding a letter to Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) requesting that Montrose County be reclassified from "Safer at Home Level 2" to "Safer at Home Level 1" based on applicable community metrics. Adragna gave background information as well as reasoning behind the request, "We felt Montrose County clearly met Safer Level 1 criteria...We've had 14 days of consistent, stable, or declining cases; we have a current 42.1 two-week cumulative incident rate per 100,000 population; and we have a percentage of tests returning back posi-



Dr. Joe Adragna, pandemic response specialist, spoke to the BOCC Sept. 22 about a letter to Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) requesting that Montrose County be reclassified from "Safer at Home Level 2" to "Safer at Home Level 1" based on applicable community metrics.

tive at three percent."

Austin said that venues greater than 30,000 square feet may request site specific variances through the County. "...The intent of the State was if you're less than that, you abide by the limitations of the order."

BOCC Vice Chair Roger Rash and Commissioner Sue Hansen thanked the Health Department and staff for their hard work. "Thank you for everything you're doing," Hansen said.


"It's always a pleasure having you guys work on these solutions for us," Rash said. "Thank your staff as well, we know they've worked very hard."

Said Caddy, "We are very lucky here in Montrose County to have a good public health department and doctors that are working on this with us too...I seen what's happening in other counties and it's not pretty." Commissioners unanimously approved the letter of request. With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

DELTA WOMAN SENTENCED IN FEDERAL COURT

Special to the Mirror

DELTA-A Delta resident, Maranda D. Frazee, 27, was sentenced Thursday in U.S. District Court to serve 4 years on probation and to pay \$194,210.05 in restitution to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) for theft of government property. Frazee, who initially pleaded not guilty, was charged last February with theft of government property by the U.S. Attorney's office in Denver in a complex scheme to defraud the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), an agency within the DOE, of government funds. Frazee, who changed

her plea to guilty in July as part of a plea deal with the government, is the first of eight defendants to face charges in the case, which was investigated by the DOE's Office of Inspector General based on tips from alert WAPA employees in Montrose. The fraud scheme was masterminded by a former WAPA contractor who enlisted Frazee and several others in a criminal enterprise that diverted nearly \$1 million intended for legitimate government purchases. Frazee, who was described by her attorney at sentencing as a "pawn," apologized for her actions and accepted full

responsibility for her part in the crime. According to the U.S. Probation Office's pre-sentencing report, she was manipulated by the much older, married WAPA contractor to commit the crime due to being involved in an intimate relationship with him.

The Court found that Frazee was not a danger to society and that probation was appropriate under the factual circumstances in the case. In addition to probation and restitution, Frazee is required to complete 50 hours of community service during her first year of probation.

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RIBBON CUTTING FOR TESLA/CHARGE POINT EV CHARGING STATION TO BE OCT. 1 From pg 1

agenda (Membership Report, Minutes from the regular August Board Meeting). All board members were present.

Board Committee Items

Finance – Audit – Rate Committee (FAR) – Brad Harding, Chair.

Harding said, “We had a meeting on August 5th. We have not met since, so nothing on the agenda for me.” The next FAR meeting is scheduled for Oct. 22 at 3 p.m.

Engineering – Construction – Renewable Energy Committee – Chris Hauck, Chair.

Hauck said, “No meetings the last two months. We have one scheduled for next month.” The next meeting will be Oct. 13.

Member Relations – Energy Services Committee – Kyle Martinez, Chair.

Martinez said, “We also did not meet.” The next scheduled meeting is Oct. 8 at 9:30 a.m.

Executive Committee – Bill Patterson, Chair.

Patterson said, “We did not meet.” There is no date for the next meeting.

Safety and Occupational Health Report – Virginia Harman, COO.

Harman said, “This is an uneventful month. No injuries and no accidents. There was one near miss. A TV in the lineman ready room fell from the wall. It was re-hung on studs, not just on the drywall. Training and practices with COVID continue.”

Financial Report with Variance Report – Wade Pynes, CFO.

Pynes said, “There were two significant items in August revenues. Large commercial lags behind the budget. Purchase power was quite a bit over budget. Transmission costs spiked. August had record prices because of record heat in the west.”

Board President Bill Patterson said, “The rate of transmission cost should [be] anticipated.”

Pynes said, “The number is largely variable, it’s hard to be accurate.”

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Jasen Bronec said, “It was a known factor. An event that doesn’t happen very often. Overall, the power supply cost is manageable.

We’re still working out a few kinks with Tri State. All in all, when we look at our cost savings it is what we anticipated and what we expected. We are on track. We’ll figure out how to budget and deal with it cleaner in the future.”

CEO Report – Jasen Bronec, CEO.

Bronec said, “The power supply updates, talking to FERC [Federal Energy Regulatory Commission], and open action with Tri State I’ll defer to executive session. The EV [electric vehicle] charging station is moving forward. There will be a ribbon cutting on October 1st for Tesla and Charge Point. It’s exciting to see. Tesla and Charge Point is a nice addition to the city. It showcases our support for electric vehicles. The charge station is located to the north of Main Street.”

Bronec continued, “The franchise agreement is on the ballot, Municipal Measure 2 A. We’re advocating for that and asking people to vote yes.” Information on the issue will be put out on social media and in the DMEA Newsletter.

Bronec said, “On Friday I got a call from [Montrose] County Manager Ken Norris. There have been outages at the Event Center and other county facilities. There have been an increased number of failures in the industrial park, over by 3M. When we replace cables, we cut cables. Some people in the public are not doing line locates before they dig, we also have aging cables. Forty-five percent of our outages are from cars hitting poles; 25 percent is due to trees.”

Reporting on customer service Bronec said, “In the front office our call answer rate is 83 percent answered when they ring in. We would like to have 90 percent. The CSR’s [Customer Service Representatives] are working from home and taking calls. We’ve had 13,680 in-bound calls; 4,203 out-bound calls. There are 18,000 calls a month reaching the front office.”

In the area of member relations Bronec said, “There is a DMEA member’s handbook available online. In Operation Round-Up there is a need for [volunteer] trustees, there are open seats. Elevate has just

reached 8,300 active internet customers. That was the target goal and we are well on track. The financial and growth targets are being met.”

Reporting on DMEA growth Bronec said, “There were 75 new services in August and the prior month there were 75. New service connected for the year is 278.”

August 2020 SAIDI (Systems Average Interruption Duration Index) Report.

Bronec said, “June, July and August were fairly flat, which is nice to see. We are still in Stage 1 fire restrictions. We are pleased with our outage levels. We’re well below industry standard levels.”

Legal Report – Jeff Hurd, Attorney.

Hurd said, “I’ll defer my report to executive session.”

Representative Board Reports

WUES Report (Western United Electrical Association) – Jock Fleming.

Fleming said, “I got the CEO addressing margins and compensations. He essentially said we are three times lower than industry standards. If we reduce prices to co-ops, everyone who is paying, the major customers, would increase what a co-op pays to the same amount as the customers. Western United is a small customer. That’s the answer they gave me on margins and prices.”

CREA Report (Colorado Rural Electric Association) – Damon Lockhart.

Lockhart reported on a DMEA Care Package that would be auctioned off online Oct. 17-24.

Reporting on items in rapid fire Lockhart said, “There is a two-megawatt solar south of Crested Butte that I hadn’t heard about. RUS [Rural Utilities Service] has some flexible financing, but DMEA has no RUS debt at this time. DMEA is one of 12 co-ops to receive CREA safety awards. We will receive credit for half of our CREA dues. Just gearing up to see what the legislative landscape looks like in the upcoming session.”

Review Unclaimed Capital Credit Fund Balance

As of August, the Unclaimed Capital Credit Fund Balance is \$11,900. Pynes

RIBBON CUTTING FOR TESLA/CHARGE POINT EV CHARGING STATION TO BE OCT. 1 From previous pg

said, "We are going through the process of finding people with unclaimed capital credits. The window closes the end of October, it's kind of a November/December time frame."

DMEA Board Policy Numbering and Format Changes

Attorney Hurd said, "There are a couple dozen policies to manage the company. We review them every year for style, number, fonts, logo. This is to revamp to make them consistent and cleaner by re-numbering. They will be cleaner and more organized. The substance is the same, just reorganized."

Next Meeting: The next meeting is scheduled for Oct. 27. To accommodate holidays, the November and December meetings will be pushed up to the third Tuesday of the month, rather than the fourth Tuesday of the month.

At 3:55 p.m. the board moved to executive session and returned to the regular session at 5 p.m. to hold a rate hearing and take public comments.

Rate Hearing/Member Comments re: EV (Electric Vehicle) Station Rate

The rate hearing was opened and Chief Power Supply Officer Jim Heneghan presented the need for establishing a rate for EV Charging Stations. There are three rate components: Grid Access (\$150/month); Demand (\$2/kW-month) and Energy (\$0.17/kWh). Currently there are no EV charging stations to which the rate applies. It is anticipated that the first commercial EV charging station will come

online in 2020. Heneghan said, "Tesla construction is getting underway."

During the hearing there were no comments from the public, nor were any written comments submitted.

Enno Heuscher said, "How is this different from a commercial rate structure?"

Heneghan said, "DC fast chargers have high demand, but they won't be sitting that long to charge. The average is about 30 minutes. High demand, but not a large number of kilowatt hours used."

Chris Hauck said, "In Colorado can they charge by the kilowatt?"

Heneghan said, "That's up to the station owner and operator."

Jock Fleming said, "Is there an income projection on what that would be?"

Heneghan said, "Our projections don't apply, we have not projected on this."

Bronc said, "This [rate] was established through [looking at] other charge stations across the country."

Heneghan said, "This is designed to recover our costs. We're not looking to make a major margin."

Stacia Cannon said, "How many EV charging stations will there be?"

Heneghan said, "There could be a single port, or multiple pedestals, as many as eight, ten or twelve."

A ribbon cutting for the Tesla and Charge Point EV Charging Station will be held on Oct. 1.

In an email Communications and Marketing Manager Becky Mashburn said, "We're keeping it to a small ceremony

with DMEA and the City, along with the partners.

Due to COVID, we didn't want to plan a large celebration. We do intend to host a public event at some point next year, if the pandemic allows, that will be far more exciting for the community."

The EV Station Rate was approved unanimously.

Member Comments

There were no member comments.

Executive Session

General Counsel Legal Update

Power Supply Update

DMEA Compliance Matters re: Wholly Owned Subsidiaries

Strategy Plan Updates Review (including Strategy Session Minutes)

DMEA Board Members

Dist 1 - Bill Patterson, 970-209-1449, bpatterson@montrose.net

Dist 2 - Kyle Martinez, 970-615-7124, kyle@touchofcarepcp.com

Dist 3 - Brad Harding, 970-270-3692, bharding@firstcoloradobank.com

Dist 4 - Ken Watson, 970-275-2100, ken-nethrwatson@gmail.com

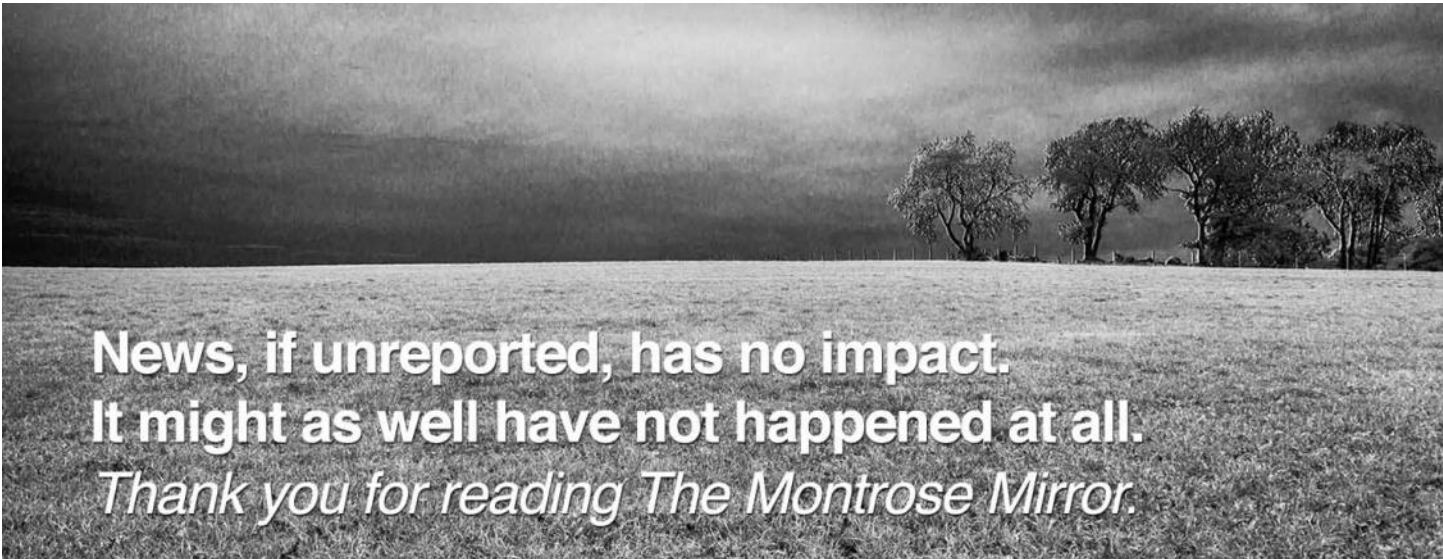
Dist 5 - Chris Hauck, 970-497-0900, lch@haucks.cc

Dist 6 - Damon Lockhart, 970-314-1071, damon.lockhart@dmea.com

Dist 7 - Enno Heuscher, 970-270-6523, enno.heuscher@dmea.com

Dist 8 - (North Region) Stacia Cannon, 920-207-8831, stacia.cannon@dmea.com

Dist 9 - (South Region) Jock Fleming, 970-275-1808, jock.fleming@dmea.com



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

D3 COLORADO HOSTS ONLINE CANDIDATE FORUM FOR OURAY BOCC

Special to the Mirror

RIDGWAY—There are fewer than 40 days until the November election. It's time to meet your candidates, ask the tough questions and learn how, if elected, your County Commissioners will stand up for you as a citizen of Ouray County.

D3 Colorado will host a candidate forum via Zoom on Thursday, October 8, 2020 from 6:30 to 8 pm. The event will be moderated by local Ouray County attorney, Roger Sagal and is open for questions from the public. In the interest of security, details for the online forum will not be released until the day of the event.

For access to the forum, Zoom meeting details will be released to the public by noon on Oct. 8 at this website: D3COLORADO.ORG/EVENTS/BOCC. Questions for the candidates are encouraged to be submitted in advance by October 7 at noon. Questions can be submitted at: D3COLORADO.ORG/FORUMS. Written

questions will also be accepted during the forum with directions for digital submission provided at the start of the event. All four candidates will discuss why they are the best fit for the two Ouray County Commissioner positions and will take questions from the public.

Ned Bosworth has more than 30 years of community involvement, direct interaction with the county and municipal governments, and has professional background in Landscape and Environmental Design.

Jake Niece is a lifelong Colorado resident, and southwest Colorado has been his home for over a decade. He has a degree in Aerospace Engineering, has been a wildland firefighter, and is passionate about clean energy and sustainability.

Lynn Padgett has been a full-time Ouray County Resident since 1999. She has 12 years of local government experience between her current position as a County Director of Govern-

ment Affairs and Natural Resources and as a two-term elected County Commissioner in Ouray County serving from 2009-2016. John Peters has served on the Ridgway Planning Commission, the county Board of Visual Appeals and currently on the county planning commission. He graduated from Utah State University with a degree in landscape architecture and environmental planning and moved to Ridgway in the mid-90's.

Ouray County Commissioners Forum
Thursday, October 8, 2020
6:30 to 8 pm via Zoom

In the interest of security, details for the online forum will be released the day of the event. Please visit D3COLORADO.ORG/EVENTS/BOCC after Noon, Oct. 8 to access the forum. Questions for the candidates may be submitted in advance at: D3COLORADO.ORG/FORUMS. Written questions will also be accepted during the forum with directions for digital submission provided at the start of the event.



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COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

INDEPENDENT REDISTRICTING COMMISSIONS CONTINUE TO SEEK APPLICATIONS

Special to the Mirror

COLORADO-September 25, 2020, marks the halfway point in the application period for Colorado's first Independent Congressional and Legislative Redistricting Commissions. The applications opened on Aug. 10 and will close on Nov. 10, 2020.

As of Sept. 22, the Independent Congressional Redistricting Commission has received 183 applications, and the Independent Legislative Redistricting Commission has received 109 applications. An overview document for each commission with demographic information about these applicants is attached, and posted on the commissions' website. Full listings of applicants for each commission are also available on the website at https://redistricting.colorado.gov/congressional_applicants/ and https://redistricting.colorado.gov/legislative_applicants/

The 12 members of each commission will be selected from their respective applicant pools by a combination of random draw and review by retired judges and legislative leadership, after vetting by nonpartisan staff to ensure minimum qualifications are met. This process will begin in January 2021, with the full congressional commission selected by March 1, 2021, and the full legislative commission selected by March 16, 2021.

Anyone interested in the redistricting process can sign up for our mailing list via a subscription link at the bottom of the website. Follow commission staff on Twitter @CORedistricting



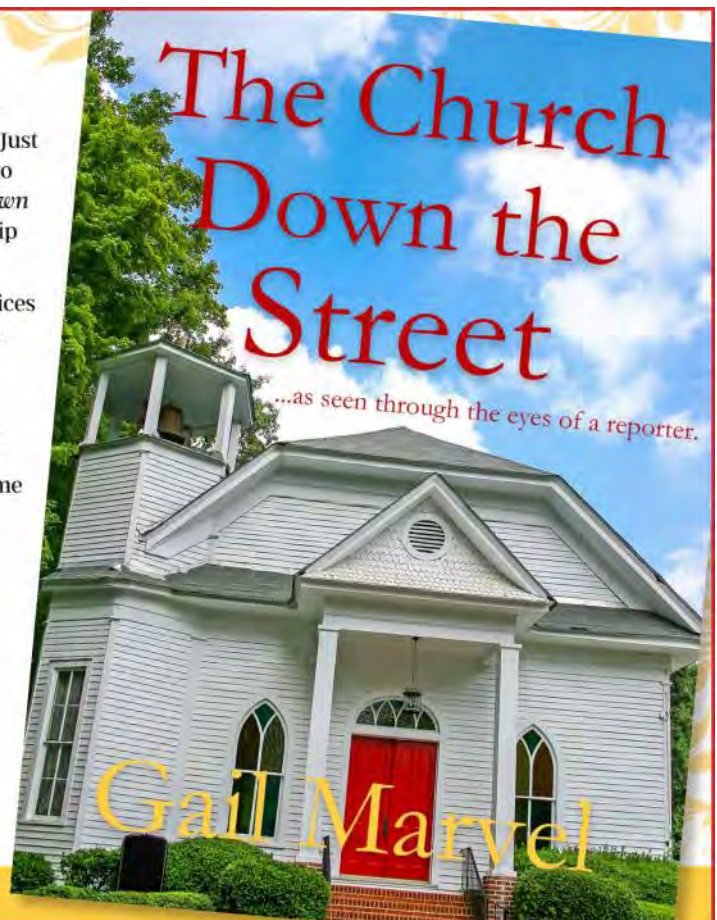
GAIL MARVEL
Montrose Author
& Reporter

It 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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OPEN HOUSE ON SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS TO HWY 50 IN LITTLE BLUE CREEK CANYON DRAWS A CROWD



On Monday, Sept. 21, a community meeting on the proposed Little Blue Creek Canyon Safety Improvements project was hosted by State Senator Don Coram and State Representative Marc Catlin. The meeting, which was held at the Montrose Events Center, had an attendance (in-person and virtual) of more than 125. In the spacious event center those participating virtually were difficult to hear and understand. Future meetings will be scheduled. Photo by Gail Marvel.

By Gail Marvel

REGIONAL-This Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) project is on US Highway 50 through the Little Blue Creek Canyon, which is located approximately 30 miles east of Montrose and 33 miles west of Gunnison, in Gunnison County, Colorado. The precise location is from mile marker 123 to 127.

The goal, as described by CDOT, is to provide more reliable travel times and improve driver safety on US Highway 50 through the canyon. The work will include wider shoulders, roadway alignment improvement, guardrail replacement, and sightline improvement.

Major stakeholders are CDOT, the Federal Highway Administration, Central Federal Lands Highway Division (FHWA-CFLHD), in cooperation with the US Forest Service (USFS), Grand Mesa Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests, US Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the National Park Service. Funds are provided by CDOT (\$20M) and the Federal Lands Access Program (\$20M), for a total of \$40M.

The project, which could take an estimated two to three years, is scheduled to break ground in the spring of 2021.

Of particular importance are the anticipated travel impacts on the communities of Montrose and Gunnison. The current CDOT proposal notes Highway 50 to be accessible for only short periods of time weekday (mornings, mid-day, and evenings), but fully open on weekends.

On Sept. 21, a three-hour community meeting, hosted by State Senator Don Coram and State Representative Marc Catlin, was held at the Montrose County Events Center. Following a CDOT presentation, elected officials and citizens weighed-in on the proposal.

A large contingent of citizens from Arrowhead accounted for almost half of the 108 attendees. More than a dozen officials joined the meeting virtually; however, the virtual portion of the meeting in the large event center was poor quality. Introductions and comments from those participants were not fully heard or understood.

More than 60 people, in person and virtually, spoke during the meeting. The *Mirror* apologizes for being unable to capture all the names, titles, and organizations of those speaking; however, their quotes will give readers a sense of the discussion and their concerns.

Opening statements for CDOT came from Region 3 Director Mike Goolsby, who then turned the PowerPoint presentation over to Program Engineer Jason Smith. Smith said, "This is a brief background of where we stand today. This corridor has been on the radar for years. US 50 has had a high priority for TPR [\[Transportation Planning Regions\]](#) for the past 15 years. This is the final phase. There is a reason it is the last phase, it's the most challenging, most costly, and most painful to get through. It's very costly to go to a new alignment [bridge, tunnel]. This is a very important roadway to bring up to current standards. We rank roadways for safety and this is a Level Four. It's a worst-case scenario for us and it has stood out for many years."

Through 2018 there have been 241

Continued next pg

OPEN HOUSE ON SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS TO HWY 50 IN LITTLE BLUE CREEK CANYON DRAWS A CROWD *From previous pg*

crashes and seven fatalities. Smith said, "There was yet another fatality yesterday. Eighty percent of the accidents occur on curves; 65 percent are bad weather related."

Smith continued, "How does CDOT come up with the money? It's very challenging for us to put together. The Federal Lands Access Program has given us \$20M for construction and CDOT will match the \$20M, for a \$40M total. It's only good for this project. The cheapest way is to shut the roadway down, but that's not good for the community and commuters. HWY 92 is an alternate route. This is at least a three-year project which could add another \$15M, meaning \$55M to \$56M for the three-year job." Smith noted that daytime road closures are needed to accommodate blasting and debris clean-up.

Following the CDOT presentation Senator Coram said, "Something that has not been addressed is the economic impact to Montrose and Gunnison counties. Everything that is produced or brought into this county, everything that leaves or arrives, comes on a truck. Plus, the extra traffic on I-70 [I-70 traffic diverted because of fire closure] affects this community. We're not here to pick a fight, but road closures for 19 hours a day is not practical. We have doctors who work at both hospitals. How do we transport them? By helicopter from one place to another?"

State Representative Marc Catlin said, "This is an indication of how serious this is to our community. Shipping cattle, sheep, and livestock out of the community. We're just coming out of COVID, but we're talking about closing the road. How important are our businesses to the State of Colorado? We saw what happened when a major highway closed [I-70 fire closure]."

Barbara (Durango elected official) said, "I'm worried when I saw what happened in Glenwood Canyon. Those roads could be closed again because of rockslides. There is a domino effect of what will happen if that road closes down again."

Jim (Durango elected official) said, "US 50 is one of our arterials. It is critical to



Citizens stood in line and signed up to speak during the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Little Blue Creek Canyon Safety Improvements meeting. During the three-hour meeting, comments and testimony (in-person and virtually) were given by more than 60 people. Photo by Gail Marvel.

tourists, but we depend on US 50. It's critical that we have access to move goods and services across this area."

Montrose County Commissioner Roger Rash said, "I worked for CDOT for many years. In 2006 we started working on this and it takes years to get money. If we don't do this now, we will lose the money. We looked at all options, it's an extensive process. We need to stick with the existing alignment. Here we are at the 11th hour and now people show up. I think we have to look at how many lives have been lost on that road."

Rash continued, "COVID brings more problems to Delta and Montrose counties. We are up 65 percent in applications for welfare. People are sick of the state government where they live and they are coming here. They have no jobs. I've worked on that road, eight-years as an engineer and five-years as a construction engineer. I know it's going to be an inconvenience, but I can't tell you how important it is to get this project done."

Ouray County Commissioner Ben Tisdell said, "I've known about this project since 2018. We recognize the project is necessary. Ouray County supports the project, but with a more tolerable [road closing] option."

Delta County Commissioner Don Suppes said, "We have had a lot of meetings on

the project. Inconvenience is a problem when it comes to transportation. HWY 92 is not the easiest road to travel, but we'd love to see people come through Delta. Delta County supports, we'll work with CDOT to make this project happen."

Christina (Club 20) said, "I think the road is extremely dangerous and the project is long overdue. Club 20's role is to support the project with as little disruption as possible."

Bill (Arrowhead resident) said, "I've been traveling that road since I was 14-years-old. I make it a point to go around Little Blue Creek to avoid pissing off a lot of people...pardon my French. If there is another rockslide on I-70 you have other [mountain] passes a long way around. Highway 92 would be taken to a 25 mile-an-hour zone. It would divert big rigs a long way. If you can build a tunnel on the Continental Divide [Eisenhower Tunnel], you can build one here and have back-up highway." Bill cautioned about enormous back-ups on the highway.

Gunnison County Commissioner Jonathan Houck said, "Gunnison County supports the project. This is the last piece of the puzzle. There will be impact, but long-term positive impact. We have a double whopper if Monarch [Pass] and Little Blue both close. This is a pinch-point. We need a framework that can be successful."

OPEN HOUSE ON SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS TO HWY 50 IN LITTLE BLUE CREEK CANYON DRAWS A CROWD *From previous pg*

Gunnison County Commissioner Roland Mason expressed concern for school kids who train for sports and lack of access if both Monarch and Little Blue experienced closures at the same time. He said, "From Gunnison we need a stable road for access to big-box stores [in Montrose]. The problem is going to get worse; be solution oriented."

Dr. Thomas Canfield said, "My concern is the lack of flexibility in the program. Physicians and patients taken back and forth on a regular basis between Montrose and Gunnison. I'm concerned about people not getting medical care. I'd like to see more flexibility in time [open road]."

Bill said, "Fifty-five years ago my dad said this road will never be right until you get it up out of the canyon. Make a bridge. Would solve a lot of problems. Take it across at the level. I encourage you to take a fresh look at the bridge option."

Montrose County Commissioner Keith Caddy said, "How is this going to affect the economy for the next three-years? There are 30 or 40 log trucks a week. The canyon is a dangerous road. Livestock [trucks] can't unload those steers for five hours. The economy has already taken a hit with COVID. Stretch out the time, move the economy through the canyon. Livestock, forest and AG are big economic drivers in the county."

Paul (Montrose/Arrowhead resident) gave a brief history on the road and then reminded the attendees, "There are portions of the road that do not see sunshine for several months out of the year. There is more maintenance required in those areas. What is the impact on the community for two or three years?"

Vince Rogalski (Gunnison Valley TPR) said, "TPR [Transportation Planning Regions] started in 1993. All the plans for us focus on safety, safety, safety. We have an opportunity here. Two years ago \$2M was dedicated to the project, it is important that we get it done. Last night, or yesterday, there was another death in the canyon."

Ray said, "For 11-years we've delivered medical gasses and medical products for hospitals. Liquid cryogenic gasses, these gasses can't last. This will add another three hours road trip. Critical travel time is while driving. Patients need oxygen."

Dwayne (Arrowhead resident) said, "I'd like everyone from Arrowhead to stand [a large contingent stood-up]. Accidents are almost always the result of speed. Simple speed control could be the solution... SLOW DOWN STUPID! Deaths in the canyon are people from outside Colorado. They don't understand the driving conditions. Take actions that will make sense and save us money [applause from the Arrowhead residents]."

Charles (Arrowhead resident) said, "Safety issues. I'm trying to visualize how the amount of traffic gets through in the time allotted. I know this is selfish, but I'd like a garage [built]. I'd like a garage in the next couple of years, but getting the materials, the builders..."

Steve said, "I hope CDOT gets a good traffic control company."

Alex (Arrowhead resident) said, "A tunnel is not being efficient. Just slow down."

Wally said, "I live at HYW 550 and Chipeta. We all talk about CDOT and federal grants, but what about businesses? What do we have? Government should start looking at the interests of the people. They work for us."

Greg said, "This needs to be dealt with, but my concern is the travel time flexibility. We need to come back with a plan that will take us into the future."

Gary said, "It seems like every time it comes to money. Seven-mile realignment with a bridge, or five-mile with no realignment." Gary favored a bridge option.

Rick said, "I'm the former sheriff and I think more thought needs to go into this. Two to three hundred vehicles can't get through in that amount of time. How can an emergency vehicle get through all that traffic? Traffic could be backed up on the Little Blue for miles."

Cindy said, "Traffic is now non-stop. Add

to that, when the road is open, they will be alternating lanes. Medical is a big issue. Daily commuters, if you have an eight-hour shift and then you have to add three-hours to your normal commute. Big rigs and RV's. Recreational people stuck in traffic."

Tim said, "We have log trucks, 30 to 40 a day from Gunnison to Montrose. Next year's contract 3,600 loads of logs. Beetle-kill trees have a shelf life and they [forest service] continue to sell logs. Seventy-five truckers can't figure out how to hit those windows of opportunity [road open]. We can't use Hwy 92 because of the length-limit [when loaded with logs]. We can go back empty on 92, but can't haul logs. Speed is an issue."

Jenny (Arrowhead) said, "We are effectively cut off from Hwy 92 and Montrose. If I don't get back at the right time I have to go back to Montrose and get a hotel room. I don't think that people understand what this does to a concrete truck setting in traffic for hours."

Glen (Arrowhead resident) said, "We have to go five miles three days a week to get mail. People need to slow down. This is a picturesque canyon and you are going to ruin it."

Doug (electric generation) said, "There is an impact for our crews. We serve two-thirds of the State out of Montrose. Response to Gunnison County when this is closed, and the alternate routes around, impact our communications. CDOT needs to continue with clear communication."

Bill said, "I advocate for slowing people down. Put more pressure on the State Patrol. You don't see the presence of the State Patrol. Educate people to slow down."

An unidentified speaker said, "Safety. There have been 200 some accidents and I'm two of them! I've had two rollovers with cattle loads. [Accidents] never would have been prevented by safety. There were rockslides up above the highway. I have ranches at Sapinero. We need two lanes on one side [of Blue Mesa] and two

OPEN HOUSE ON SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS TO HWY 50 IN LITTLE BLUE CREEK CANYON DRAWS A CROWD From previous pg

on the other side. It can be done. Beautiful creek? No. It's not been beautiful for years. And no one fishes in the creek."

Bonnie (Woolgrowers) said, "I don't think livestock have been given enough consideration. From an animal welfare standpoint, you cannot just leave livestock stopped. Changing hauling routes and realignment need to be considered. There needs to be staging for livestock haulers."

Leann (hospital) said, "Our biggest concern is for care and treatment of patients. Montrose is a Trauma 3 hospital. We can use a chopper only in good weather. This extends and delays care for patients who have radiation five days a week, the treatments last for five minutes. Very sick cancer patients do not want to be sitting in traffic. Economically, this is a substantial financial hit on us. Patients will choose to go somewhere else."

Patrick (Arrowhead lodge owner) said, "Our business and the money we put into it will be for naught. I pick up all our food; no one delivers to our area. I pick up raw chicken and pork in Gunnison. I can't have it sitting for five hours in the truck. If you don't make the window, the pork is now aged. There are students going to Western

State. Rethink the plan, slow people down."

Bill said, "From what we heard today, the main problem in the canyon is speed."

Bob said, "I've had a business on Main Street in Montrose. We need to emphasize the economic side. Everyone's economic viewpoint is at risk here. We have the same goals; with CDOT we want safer, better traffic. That money is impeding our good judgment. When you come to the point of bringing in the public you say it's about losing the money."

Todd (livestock growers) said, "Livestock operations in the Montrose, cattlemen is what I represent. This needs more consideration."

Emily said, "We need to manage traffic. Maybe appointments [scheduled appointments] to make sure they can be able to get through in time. It would be nice to know before you leave Montrose whether we can get through the window."

Dee said, "In my mind this would be like in Denver if we were saying we're closing I-25 or I-70. It wouldn't fly. This is the service area for our communities. A lot of people travel the corridor on a daily basis."

Tobe (truck stop) said, "We have 25 to 26 trucks every night. I thought someone from the Chamber would be here to talk about the importance to hotels and restaurants. Everyone needs to understand the impact on truckers."

Steve (CDOT) said, "I think we can address those emergency access issues. Emergency medical and oxygen would get through."

Concluding the meeting Senator Coram said, "We may be late to the game, but we do have our input. I get a little pissed-off when we talk about this and there is \$1B spent on two miles in Denver." Coram assured the audience that there would be more meetings.

Representative Marc Catlin said, "There is a rural urban divide in the State of Colorado that needs to be looked at. They need to look at the [whole] State of Colorado. We pay our share. We were called to this late. The jury is still out, we are not done yet."

Additional questions were raised from Arrowhead residents about the lack of cell service in their community.

A cell tower is in the process of being built.

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ANONYMOUS CALL

MONTROSE REGIONAL CRIME STOPPERS


 ISSUE 282 Sept. 28, 2020

ART & SOL

CENTER FOR THE ARTS TO HOST FIRST FRIDAY RECEPTION

Special to Art & Sol

MONTROSE-Montrose Center for the Arts will feature the unique and artistic photography of Bonnie Heidbrak of Ridgway. She has chosen a collection of her Black and White photographs for this exhibit. The theme that runs throughout this work is that of Lines and Curves in Structure and Nature. Bonnie is always trying to capture the dynamic tension between light, movement, texture and their interaction together.


There will also be another artist's show in the Columbine Room featuring the Native American art of Gary Emrick. Gary served our country and was honorably discharged under a medical disability. He started doing his art as therapy. With his emotional difficulties, he began working very hard to make his art real and expressive. His art has been a healer for his mind and heart. Gary has shown and sold his art in Aspen and Santa Fe, and also has paintings in three Colorado museums.

Both shows will run from Oct. 2 - 31. The Art Center's hours are 10am to 4pm, Tuesday through Saturday. Closed Sunday and Monday.

Join us for the First Friday reception, Oct. 2, 5 - 7pm, and meet our featured artists. We have also changed ALL the wall art in the gallery, so there will be new and exciting things to see. Masks are required.

Montrose Center for the Arts, 11 S. Park Ave., Montrose

Photo, right, by Bonnie Heidbrak of Ridgway.

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Stage 1 Fire Restrictions Fact Sheet



Allowed

Fires in permanent fire pits, fire rings in private residences, or within developed recreational sites such as a campground or picnic area.



Fire features, chimineas and tiki torches at private residences supervised by a responsible adult.



Fires contained within liquid fueled or gas fueled stoves, lanterns, or heating devices.



Target shooting in a safe manner is permitted.



NOT Allowed



The personal use of all fireworks is prohibited.

Any fire or campfire, not within a permanently constructed fire grate in a developed park, campground, private residence, or picnic area.



Smoking, EXCEPT within an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site, or while stopped in an area of at least six feet diameter that is barren or cleared of all combustible material.

Agricultural burning is not allowed.



Welding or operating acetylene or other torch with open flame EXCEPT in cleared areas of at least 10 ft in diameter and in possession of a chemical pressurized fire extinguisher.

Operating or using any internal combustion engine, such as chainsaws, without a spark-arresting device properly installed, maintained, and in effective working order.



Target shooting with explosive targets is not permitted.

COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

TELLURIDE HORROR SHOW RELEASES FIRST WAVE FOR 'SHELTER-IN-PLACE' EDITION Guest Writers, Feature Film Premieres & International Shorts Revealed for 2020 Virtual Festival



Special to the Mirror

TELLURIDE- Passes are now available for Telluride Horror Show, which has an-

nounced its first wave of films, events and guests for the 2020 Shelter-in-Place Edition, scheduled for October 15-18.

The first announcement includes 11 feature films, 40 short films from 13 countries, and some of the genre's most recognized authors, including Max Brooks, Daniel Kraus, Paul Tremblay, Alma

Katsu, Emily M. Danforth, and Jeremy Robert Johnson. In keeping with festival tradition, "Creepy Campfire Tales" will go

on, and while viewers will have the flexibility to enjoy most of the festival at their own pace, Telluride Horror Show is also excited to host a live virtual conversation with renowned authors Max Brooks and Daniel Kraus (event details and writer bios below). Passes for the 11th Annual event are now available on the **FESTIVAL PLATFORM**. The second wave and festival schedule will be announced in coming weeks.

GRAND OPENING CELEBRATION FOR TIMBERLINE BANK HEADQUARTERS



Special to the Mirror

GRAND JUNCTION-On Sept. 1, Timberline Bank Grand Junction location opened doors at their Headquarters building. The Grand Junction team moved locations from previous operations at 633 24 Rd. to half-a-mile across the street to, 649 Market St. The new building was designed to encompass unassigned workspace and team member collision points, facilitating in transforming the banking experience for our communities into a full-service modern-day financial center. Timberline Bank welcomes a new team mascot, Timber to the building. Timber will make a debut at the Grand Opening celebration. Timberline Bank invites the public to join in celebrating their Grand Opening Event on Oct. 1 from 9 am to 3 pm with a customer appreciation event (invitation only event) to follow. The Grand Opening event will take place at the Timberline Bank Headquarters location at 649 Market St. Grand Junction, CO 81505. The Community Coffee Bar will be serving free beverages throughout the day and local food trucks will be in attendance with meals provided by Timberline Bank.

At left, Timberline Bank welcomes a new team mascot, Timber to the building.

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Republican



Dr. Mayling Simpson
Democrat

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No RSVP required

Send your questions by noon on September 29

[State Board of Ed. Questions](#)

or by email to LWVLaPlata@gmail.com

or during the event via Q&A

Moderator: Deb Rodgers

The Forum will also be live-streamed for viewing on

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COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

CITY OF MONTROSE ANNOUNCES TIME CAPSULE OPENING

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE — The City of Montrose is excited to announce the opening of a 50-year-old time capsule located just outside City Hall. The removal of the capsule from its underground location will take place on Tuesday, Oct. 6, 2020, at 11 a.m.

The time capsule was buried in 1970 to commemorate the installation of the ship's bell from the USS Montrose and contains a glimpse of Montrose 50 years ago.

Some items known to be included in the capsule are a map of the city, local restaurant menu, cassette tapes featuring popu-

lar songs from 1970, stamps, coins, and a copy of the Montrose Daily Press' "Americanism" issue from the weekend of the capsule burial in April 1970.

To allow for proper social distancing and public safety in line with current COVID-19 response guidelines, a small public gathering in Centennial Plaza is planned to commemorate the capsule's opening. This gathering will feature remarks from Mayor Barbara Bynum and a special guest who was present at the initial capsule burial.

Following the ceremony, the capsule will be taken to the Centennial Meeting Room where its contents will be removed, cata-

logged, and preserved by a small group of city staff.

Photos and details about the items will be released to the public the following day and items will be put on display in glass cases at the Downtown Visitor Center located at 107 South Cascade Ave.

The USS Montrose was a Haskell-class attack transport of the U.S. Navy that was decommissioned in late 1969 following years of service in World War II and both the Korean and Vietnam Wars.

For more information regarding the time capsule, please contact Deputy City Clerk Mikayla Unruh at 970.240.1421.

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READER PHOTO SPOTLIGHT: FALL COLORS!



Above, Aspen gold by Harry Switzer (far left) and B. Switzer.



Below, Fall at Owl Creek, by Deb Reimann.



COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

LEAF PEEPING SEASON IN COLORADO IS ON; PLEASE PEEP RESPONSIBLY

Special to Art & Sol

DENVER - As fall officially begins and the aspens start putting on a spectacular show, Colorado's "leaf peeping" season also kicks into high gear. While the stunning display is worthy of the annual crowds drawn to some of the state's most scenic trails, Colorado Parks and Wildlife reminds those on the search for the state's specific autumn gold to keep trail etiquette and caring for Colorado top of mind.

"It's one of the busiest times of year at our park, as we head into peak 'Peeping Season,'" said Todd Farrow, Park Manager at Golden Gate Canyon State Park. "We ask that people plan ahead, be patient and understand that some parking areas will fill up quickly and that you may need to find another spot to explore."

When heading out to the vast outdoors to find the perfect view of colorful Colorado, it's important to note that many of the Care for Colorado principles apply before you make the drive.

Know Before You Go - Spend some time planning your trip and avoid any potential disappointment. Think about the following questions and do some research before heading out to our parks and trails.

Are the colors at their prime?

Where is the best spot for your abilities and available timeframes for viewing?

Will you need a daily vehicle pass or permit?

If the parking area is full, move on to the next designated parking area.

Ensure you've downloaded the Colorado Trail Explorer (COTREX) app to find a great Plan B if you need one!

Stick To Trails - While it's tempting to find a new and unique spot to photograph, or to move to areas with a few less people, it's important for our plants, trails and visitors that you stay the trail.

Help natural areas stay natural by sticking to designated trails.

Respect trails closed for maintenance, vegetation projects or wildlife reasons.

We all love our flora and fauna, so keep

them healthy for your family's future hikes!

Don't be tempted to take shortcuts - that extra time in nature is what you are there to enjoy.

Trash Your Trash - If you'll be spending time wandering through Colorado's colors, you're likely to need a drink, a snack or to tend to your pet's needs. Don't bring anything with you that you can't pack out.

Peeping for color doesn't include wrappers or bottles along the trail. Put litter, dog

waste, and even crumbs, peels and cores in the nearest waste/recycling bin - or pack it out until you can find one.

Bring an extra bag or two to help leave the area better than you found it.

Leave It As You Find It - In this busy season, it's especially important to only park in designated areas - undesignated parking destroys vegetation and encourages those coming up behind you to continue the trend. With over 40,000 miles of trails in Colorado, you can be sure to find the right spot by planning ahead.

Leave plants, rocks and historical items as you find them so others can experience the same joy of discovery.

Carving or hacking plants and trees may kill or disfigure them, and also impacts the experiences of your fellow hikers and leaf peepers for years to come!

Keep Wildlife Wild - While you may be hoping to spot the perfect cascade of yellow aspens, part of your experience may include seeing wildlife in their homes. Enjoy the moment by keeping your distance, using your zoom and letting our wildlife be wild!

Never feed wild animals - from the smallest chipmunk to the largest bear, feeding them human food alters natural behaviors and can make them sick or dependent.

Harassing wild animals may also increase the chance of a poor interaction including



The official start of Autumn brings all of the excitement of Colorado's leaf-peeping gold rush. Plan ahead to Care for Colorado, Leave No Trace and ensure you're peeping responsibly. Courtesy photo.

charges or attacks, feeding wildlife may expose animals to predators, and either case may even lead to euthanasia.

Share Our Trails and Parks - Please be courteous and patient when on your journey! This is one of the busiest times of the year on our trails, so please be patient with other visitors and the staff working to help everyone have a great experience outdoors.

You're out to mine gold, not to people watch, so try out some new or lesser-known paths and sites found on the CO-TREX app.

Be considerate when passing others on the trails and yield to the uphill hiker and biker - they need the momentum and good etiquette is always in season.

Remember to bring face coverings and hand sanitizer, and try to move to single file or take your time to leave 6' of space between hikers if possible.

"We want everyone to have a great time experiencing the colors and the natural resources our whole state has to offer," said Farrow. "No matter where you plan to peep, be respectful of those resources, the staff helping you have a great experience, and your fellow recreationists out searching for Colorado gold."

For additional tips on planning for fall's color changes in Colorado, visit cpw.state.co.us.



LUXURY COLLECTION



Come see this very well maintained, custom-built home in the Preserve Subdivision! Located just east of the Bridges Golf Course with no membership fees, this premier lot is overlooking the pond and open space. With a highly motivated seller, this beautiful 4-bedroom, 2.5 bath home is a must see! Stone and wood accents, crown molding, granite counter-tops, surround-sound, a well-appointed master bath, not to mention a peaceful setting...what more could you ask for?

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Bathrooms: 3.0
2,765 sq. ft.
Year Built: 2007**

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HomeServices

Western Colorado Properties



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FAITH COLUMN: DEACON SPEAKIN' WITH DWIGHT HARP



By Dwight Harp

MONTROSE-What is true? How can I be sure? Will the dictionary help?

True or truth takes more than one form according to Webster's

An example as an adjective would be: "That's a true story."

"Mark spoke the true information," is an example of adverb usage.

We are building a garage so this next example caught my eye. You don't often see True used as a verb but here's an example: "True your side up so the building will square." Interesting but not very helpful, huh? So I dug further. I bumped into the idea in philosophy of "t" truth and "T" Truth. "t" being a fact and capital "T" being the whole truth.

Is it true? That may have you thinking and asking yourself, "Does my thinking accord with fact or reality as I know it, or think I know it?" Where do I start? How do I know at any particular time that true is true and false is false?

The issue most bothersome to me concerning truth today is COVID-19 and it's medical and other unintended consequences. Here is an example--it is true that the corona virus is much smaller than the holes in any mask short of an N-95. But that does not mean that it is "T" true that masks don't help. Confused?

Five months ago Corona virus took the world's stage as the silent and unseen killer. It was compared to the Black Death of the mid -14th century. Hysteria and fear then! Hysteria and fear now!

First called Corona virus by the media we all gasped at its effects. The world shook to varying degrees at the many dire stories. Fourteen days of quarantine would fix it! My wife and I added a long weekend just to be sure. One month turned into two full of ventilators and personal protective equipment and other physical stop gaps. By now it had a new name-COVID-19. We started to re-ask..."what is true?" Corona virus is a family name. Six species of human corona viruses are known. This one is brand new, novel and unique. Human immune systems have never seen this strain before, we have no immunity. Are we doomed?

Month three brought more questions than answers. The news outlets bounced from one hypothesis to another. Masks helped. Masks didn't help. Hard surfaces had to be disinfected. No they didn't. Hysterical buying started to subside. Where did all that toilet paper go?

The economy came back as a part of this discussion. We were going to have to accept some of the bad things and re-open our businesses or other bad things were going to kill us.

There was a children's rhyme about the 1918 Flu epidemic that COVID has been compared with. "Open the window and in flew enza." Open the fourth month, November elections loom and COVID-19 takes on additional political trappings. All these statements come from really smart people; scientists, doctors, educators, statesmen, leaders. This is a unique bug but it's been studied by some really smart people for nearly half a year. The knowledgeable people change their tune with the passage of time. Masks?/No Masks? Social distancing?/Quarantine? Testing?/how valid? (never 100%). Non health questions arise; start businesses?, how?, 25%?, 50%?, inside dining?, haircuts?, re-open schools?, homeschool forever?

Just what does it mean to know the truth? First, it really has to be TRUE.

For a really long time scientists and doctors and educators proclaimed the earth was flat and the sun revolved around this flat thing. We get new knowledge every day. Do we label it truth or strong belief? As late as the middle ages some scholars believed in this flat earth. That was their truth!

What is the COVID - 19 truth? This is the "Big Gorilla" in many people's living room begging for resolution. I have to have some humility and say that while I know many things to be true concerning the virus it is very unlikely that I know the Truth about it.

COVID-19 affects me personally. It dictates how I worship. It tells me where and where not to go (regional and state travel restrictions). My grand-daughter now has no job as indoor dining has been halted in NM. When I leave the house I now check to see if I have my mask. Are the scholars "flat-earthier's" of 2020? What is COVID

truth and how do I incorporate it into my "new normal way of life?"

Many smart people hold differing views of COVID and its consequences. How do I resolve this?

I'm ordained, so? I'll take some of the advice I might give to others. Pray about it! Study! What does God's word say? Jesus declares in John's 8th Chapter, "...ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free..." Just what does it mean to know the truth? First, as I've opined before, it really has to be TRUE. That might be hard to prove. Pilate had a similar dilemma when he asked, as recorded in John 18:38-"What is truth?"

All Christians know of and revere God and His only Son Jesus, the Christ. The third person of our one true Triune God, The Holy Spirit, is not so universally known. I first met The Holy Spirit before I knew his name. You also may have similarly run into him. The Holy Spirit was promised by Christ as the Comforter He'd leave here on earth to help us through this life until He returns. The Holy Spirit transcends the knowledge He wants you to have in various ways:

-As a strong inner knowing. (I used to call that a 'gut feeling')

-Being lead to a particular scripture or verse. You might then be quickened as to how it applies.

-Leadings to action or inaction. Being aware of stop signs can be just as important as seeing green lights. These range from gentle nudging's to much more definitive directions.

The primary mission of this Comforter/ Holy Spirit is to be a resolver of issues. You have to be aware of Him to use Him; just like you have to put that fluffy comforter Grandma made on the bed when the night air chills. But, is it really the Holy Spirit? Here's an axiom, again, not well known: "The Holy Spirit will never tell me anything contrary to Holy Scripture." Research your favorite translation/s to see what God's Word reveals on the subject.

The more aware you are of Him, the more resolved will be your life. I eventually learned that my gut feeling was far more than intestinal distress. Christ left the Holy Spirit for us.

He is TRUE.



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SAVE THE DATE! UPCOMING REGIONAL EVENTS

ONGOING-

COMMUNITY BIBLE STUDY-Every Wednesday beginning Sept. 2, 2020, through April, 2021 - Community Bible Study live virtual meetings mornings and evenings: gospel of John. Classes for women and children. Call 720-635-0091 for more information or to register.

EVERY SATURDAY THROUGH OCTOBER-Ridgway Railroad Museum – free rides on RGS Motor 1 (Galloping Goose prototype) 9 am – noon. 200 N. Railroad Street, Ridgway.

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.

MONTROSE ALTRUSA-1st Tuesday of the month Program meeting; 2nd Tuesday of the month committee meeting; 3rd Tuesday of the month Business meeting. Meetings are held at the Hampton Inn conference room at Noon.

MONTHLY-

Oct. 1-11-The 3rd annual Original Thinkers Festival will take place virtually this year on Oct. 1-11, 2020, from Telluride, Colorado. With the digital version of the festival, Original Thinkers is excited to reach entirely new audiences this year who may not have been able to make it to Telluride in the past for the terrestrial event. Passes for the entire festival will be on sale at originalthinkers.com for \$50, and the dates of the event have expanded beyond the traditional four days to ten so that people can come and be part of Original Thinkers throughout this period. For additional information or to purchase festival passes, please visit originalthinkers.com.

Oct. 2-Montrose Center for the Arts will host the First Friday reception, Oct. 2, 5 -7pm. Come and meet our featured artists. We have also changed ALL the wall art in the gallery, so there will be new and exciting things to see. Masks are required. Montrose Center for the Arts, 11 S. Park Ave., Montrose

Oct. 6-City of Montrose City Hall 50-year time capsule opening, 11 a.m.

Oct. 7-Colorado State Patrol will host a community event "Meet your first responders" on Wednesday, Oct. 7, 2020 from noon to 4pm. The event will be held at The CO Parks & Wildlife office, 2300 S. Townsend Ave., Montrose, CO 81401. We will have troopers, dispatchers, wildlife officers, etc. on site to meet and greet our community members. We will also be handing out State Patrol swag.

Oct. 15-18-Telluride Horror Show 2020 Shelter-in-Place Edition, passes for the 11th Annual event available on the [festival platform](#).

Nov. 2--Montrose Women's Giving Club meets at Bridges, 5:30 p.m. Open to all women; each member donates \$100 per quarter at each meeting.



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READER PHOTO SPOTLIGHT: BY DEB REIMANN

*Aspen gold in the
Cimarrons by Deb
Reimann.*

A black bear is the central focus, sitting upright on a weathered wooden log. The bear is holding a tablet computer with its front paws and looking towards the camera. The background is a scenic mountain landscape with green forests and snow-capped peaks under a blue sky with white clouds. The entire advertisement is framed with a red border.

*Save a tree –
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