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the Montrose Mirror

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Issue No. 400 Oct. 26 2020

MONTROSE COUNTY APPROVES RECREATION LEASE WITH BLM



Zilla May Brown (2nd from left) of the Montrose County Historical Landmark Advisory Board presented the BOCC with a Montrose County Historic Landmark designation plaque for the Old Court House. Courtesy photo.

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE-The Montrose Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) convened for a regular meeting on Wednesday, Oct. 21; all commissioners were present in the County meeting room. Citizens and the media were welcome to attend in person with social distancing measures in place, and the meeting could be viewed online as well.

"Welcome everybody, we've got a great crowd out today," BOCC Chair Keith Caddy said. "Thank you so much for coming." Pastor Buddy Cook of First Church of the Nazarene delivered the Invocation, "...I thank you that we live in a country where we can choose our leaders...I thank you Lord for the leaders today who lead us through this county...more than anything else, may you give us peace..."

Continued pg 6

COUNCIL HEARS UPDATE ON 347 MAIN INCENTIVES; POSSIBLE 'AUDUBON' WETLANDS BOARDWALK AREA

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE-All councilors were present as the City of Montrose met for a work session at 10 a.m. on Monday, Oct. 19. The session was held in chambers, with only Council and staff present, with masks, plexiglass dividers, and social distancing measures in place. Several participants joined by Zoom call. The public and media were able to view the session via livestream, Zoom link, and cable television.

Mayor Barbara Bynum welcomed all to the work session.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW EMPLOYEES

Joining the City team are Trash & Recycle Operator Ray Martinez; Community Marketing Specialist Shannon McDonnell; Wastewater Treatment Plant Lead Operator Hyrum Webb, and Assistant Golf Pro Erik Lundberg.

Retired from a first career as a **Continued pg 24**



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MONTROSE WOMEN'S GIVING CLUB TO MEET NOV. 2

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-The Montrose Women's Giving Club meets at the Bridges Golf & Country Club at 5:30 p.m. Open to all women; each member donates \$100 per quarter at each meeting. Organizer Phoebe Benziger said, "We will be following social distancing precautions. We ask that participants come with masks! They can call me at 209-9598 with questions."

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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CITY OF MONTROSE TO LET DIVOT'S CONTRACT EXPIRE

'City has decided to take a different approach to providing restaurant services'



The City of Montrose has informed Divot's Owner Janece Culver that they will let the contract for her restaurant, above, expire. Photo by Paul Arbogast.

By Paul Arbogast

MONTROSE-This past Tuesday, Divot's Restaurant owner Janece Culver found a letter from the City of Montrose in her mailbox--it was a "Notice of Contract 'Non-Renewal.'" The letter said the City of Montrose was opting to let the contract

expire for Culver's restaurant at the City's Black Canyon Golf Course.

"As I understood, this contract as it was written was up for renegotiation for up to four years," Culver said, "I was planning on putting a new bid together for the next year based on how things have gone with expenses but I didn't get that chance."

The letter did not come from the contract administrator, it came from the City's Finance Director,

Shani Wittenberg. I contacted Wittenberg to ask what the reasoning for this was and was told, "The City has decided to take a different approach to providing restaurant services in 2021."

In response, I asked what the 'different approach' was, and my question was

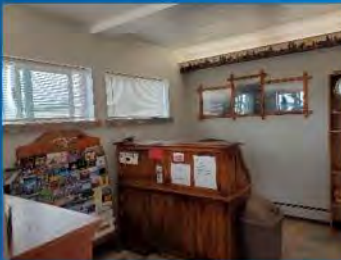
passed on to the City Manager, Bill Bell, for response:

"At this point, we believe it will be most effective to hire a full-time restaurant manager as a city employee who has experience," Bell responded, "This will give us the most flexibility to accommodate the ever-changing schedules of golf leagues, golf tournaments, etc., which has always been difficult for our private contractors. We can also set a permanent working schedule for that employee that works better for the golf course. The City already owns all of the restaurant furniture and equipment and therefore the change should not cost us much at all."

Despite my questions, I never found out who made the decision to let this contract expire. It was not a discussion item in any open city council meetings, yet they are the ones that need to approve new contracts, and thus should be the ones to end any contracts the city has made with their approval.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

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Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE – The City of Montrose will begin its annual fall leaf cleanup on Monday, Nov. 9. Starting Monday, Nov. 2, the city will begin selling bundles of leaf bags for the annual cleanup. The bundles, which contain four leaf bags each, are available for \$1 at City Hall, located at 433 South First Street. Please note that any brand of leaf bag that is clear is acceptable.

Contact Public Works at 970.240.1480 to schedule a pick-up. This free pickup service is available to all City of Montrose utility customers. For more information contact City Hall at 240.1400, or visit:

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MONTROSE COUNTY APPROVES RECREATION LEASE WITH BLM

From pg 1

County Planner Talmadge Richmond led all in saying the Pledge of Allegiance.

"Thank you, Talmadge," Caddy said, and "Thank you for the kind and calming words Pastor, appreciate it."

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

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

COUNTY MANAGER

County Manager Ken Norris had no changes to the agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

Consent Agenda items were unanimously approved as presented.

GENERAL BUSINESS & ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Deputy County Manager Jon Waschbusch presented an overview of a Recreation or Public Purposes Lease with the United States Department of Interior Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The agreement formalizes a lease of approximately 44 acres from Interior/Bureau of Land Management to Montrose County to be used for recreation purposes as outlined in the Development and Management Plan.

A number of proposed projects were combined into one proposal, Waschbusch noted. Discussions began in 2015, and various stakeholders came together and worked to blend separate visions into a

project design. "When we had a general concept of what we were up to, the County was able to secure a \$25,000 planning grant from Colorado Department of Local Affairs, and that helped fund the design of the parking area, with the county providing the cash match," Waschbusch said.

Also speaking to the BOCC was Uncompahgre Field Office Manager Greg Larson. "...It's been a pleasure to work with this board and with the County managers," Larson said. "BLM relies on partnerships to get things done; we're a small agency with a large land base...I think's going to be terrific for the community, and I applaud all of you for your visions and leadership on this."

Said BOCC Vice Chair Roger Rash, "... I think this is outstanding... we're going to need more outdoor areas. This is a perfect example of the County working with the Federal government and our local partners to really improve an area...for outdoor recreation, which is very important right now."

"...That's just great...I'm very pleased," Caddy said.

Said Commissioner Sue Hansen, "...As people move in and want to recreate, we're going to need to have accommodations for them."

Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the lease.

Zilla May Brown, Chair of the Montrose County Historical Landmark Advisory Board, presented the BOCC with a Montrose County Historic Landmark designation plaque for the Old Court House, which was approved and designated as a landmark on July 15.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

County Planner Talmadge Richmond presented two items, which were unanimously approved: a request for a waiver from lot frontage requirement to allow residential development in Riverwood Estates; and a proposal to amend a plat note at 10686 6200 Road.

MONTROSE COUNTY LOCAL LIQUOR LICENSING AUTHORITY

Commissioners closed the regular session and reconvened as the Montrose County Local Liquor Licensing Authority, approving renewal of a tavern license for the Cedar Bowl Three Coins in Nucla, and approving a Special Event Permit for Magic Circle Players to be held at Lock, Stock and Barrel, 5328 Hwy 348, Olathe, CO 81425 on Oct. 31.

The BOCC returned to regular session; with no further business, the meeting was adjourned.



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Chris Menz

Exciting Changes in the Works for our Service Department!

We are pleased to welcome Chris Menz as our new Service Manager. Chris comes in at an exciting time, as we are about to break ground on a shop expansion that will increase our capacity by 80%. This shop expansion will enable Montrose Ford Nissan to serve our customer base better, with faster turnaround times & more flexible scheduling. We are building to serve you!



Chris and his wife, Kimberly moved to Montrose in August, 2020, from Rochester, NY, along with two of their five children. Chris looks forward to meeting all of Montrose Ford – Nissan's customers and continuing to provide the top-notch service you have come to expect.



Jack Weyers

We would like to thank our outgoing Service Manager, Jack Weyers for his stellar service over the last 23 years. Jack retired in March, and we wish him the very best in the next chapter of life!

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

BLM CELEBRATES MCINNIS CANYON 20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Special to the Mirror

GRAND JUNCTION— On Oct. 24, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) honored the 20-year anniversary of the establishment of the McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area, a 123,000-acre jewel in the high desert of western Colorado and eastern Utah, designated for its scenic, recreational, natural, and multiple-use purposes. The McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area is located 15 miles from the Robert F. Burford BLM headquarters. Established by Public Law 106-353 on Oct. 24, 2000, and renamed by Public Law 108-400 on Jan. 1, 2005, in honor of Rep. Scott McInnis, the national conservation area is home to threatened and endangered species and dramatic views and holds significant cultural and paleontological resources. For information about McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area, please visit: <https://www.blm.gov/programs/national-conservation-lands/colorado/mcinnis-canyons>

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OPINION/EDITORIAL:COMMENTARY

WHEN MY BELOVED GERMAN SHEPHERD WAS SHOT BY THE POLICE, A SHERIFF'S K9 OFFICER HELPED ME HEAL



Me, with Zeus in happier times.

By Christopher Larsen

MONTROSE—We can probably all agree that 2020 has been an absolute American disaster. Bad news hits us every day, like mighty waves pounding on a beleaguered wharf. Last week the hits kept coming, with the heartbreaking news that Delta County Sheriff's Sgt. Keith Sanders' cherished K9 Oxx has perished from an aggressive form of cancer. I could give you statistics and stories of drug bust glory that Oxx participated in, but I was hoping you would indulge me instead in a personal story about my dear friend Oxx, who ended his career with the Delta County Sheriff's Office after years of service to Montrose County.

It was spring of 2016 when tragedy unfortunately visited my world. My beloved Zeus, my big beautiful German Shepherd, was severely injured by three gunshots delivered by a Montrose police officer while I was working to restore the old Rose Funeral Home Downtown. Zeus would perish 37 minutes later. The grounds for and use of deadly force is still to this day hotly contested. As I write this, the grief and anger riled and boiled within me; I can barely think or speak of those memories that to this day color my world in a dark shade of grey.

The morning after the shooting, I did my best to hold it together. I went outside to work in the sunshine and get out of that accursed funeral home for a while. It was then, either by chance or holy intervention, that Montrose County Sheriff's Sgt. Sanders showed up at the Funeral Home



Delta County Sheriff's Sgt. Keith Sanders, with his partner, K9 Oxx. Courtesy photo.

to serve legal paperwork on my then employer. I guardedly approached the officer, expecting the worst, when Oxx poked his head up from his puppy den in the back seat of the pickup. Sergeant Sanders did not know who I was, but I swear to Jesus that Oxx knew exactly who he came to see. I tried so hard to fight the tears as I explained to Keith that I was Zeus' daddy. I could feel how upset they both were and I am still astounded by the depth of compassion the pair showed me when I needed it most. God sent me two angels that day. With my history of severe Bipolar illness, I was in crisis until Oxx arrived. To these two law enforcement professionals, I owe my humble life.

We live in a time when "We the People" and our political apparatus have become dangerously disconnected. This situation has been going on for a long time and law enforcement is caught right in the middle. Yet, there is hope. Montrose has a new Police Chief, Blaine Hall, who has implemented measures to help ease tensions, especially with the mentally ill and im-



The next generation—Sanders' new partner-in-training, K9 Teg. Courtesy photo.

paired. Today, the Montrose Police Department works with a social worker, and a beautiful therapy dog named Apple. I cannot overstate how calming a friendly K9 is to a person in crisis. The addition of a full-time mental health professional to the Montrose Police Department has reduced the probability of tragedy befalling our little hamlet again. Chief Hall has also "trained up" his officers on how to deal with family pets, including the scary breeds like Zeus. As the rest of the country distances themselves from law enforcement, Montrose and the Western Slope have reason for hopeful optimism and civic unity.

If our town can solve law enforcement and improve contacts with people who suffer from a mental illness, think what else we can accomplish. I am comforted seeing a little bit of Zeus and Oxx in Teg, Sergeant Keith Sanders' new doggy. If you ever see these two, wave--and if you have the opportunity to ask Keith to let you pet the Western Slope's new premier police dog from Slovenia, do it.

I promise that you will be as impressed as I am.



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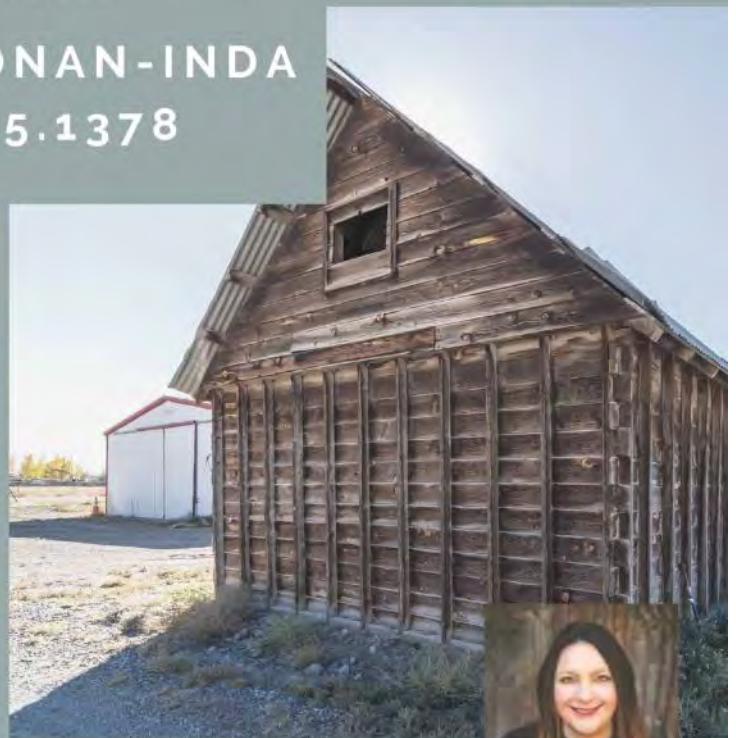
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CONSTRUCTION TO BEGIN ON UNCOMPAGRE RIVER IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE — Starting the week of Oct. 26, contractors working for the City of Montrose will begin a river improvement project along 0.65 miles (3,400 feet) of the Uncompahgre River. The project will include the stabilization of riverbanks, restoration of a more natural stream system, improvement of aquatic and riparian habitats, and improvement of river access and fishing opportunities for the public.

Construction will start around North 9th Street and continue downstream within a 41-acre river corridor tract within the Montrose Urban Renewal Authority boundaries. The property was recently donated to the City of Montrose by Colorado Outdoors.

For safety reasons, public access to the Uncompahgre River within the project area will be closed throughout construction. However, the new recreation trail situated alongside the project, as well as boating access on the remainder of the Uncompahgre River, will remain open throughout the construction project. Through boaters are encouraged to take out at the West Main Trailhead upstream of the project. Although a temporary takeout will be constructed at the beginning of the project area, vehicular access to this area will be much more limited than at West Main. Project activities are expected to last until June 2021.

The river improvement project is being made possible with approximately \$785,000 in grants received from the Colorado Water Conservation Board and Colorado Parks and Wildlife. The remainder of the \$1.6M project is funded by the Montrose Urban Renewal Authority (MURA).



MONTROSE MIRROR

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

TEMPORARY BUS CLOSURE IN MONTROSE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-Friday, the Montrose County School District (MCSD) COVID-19 Response Team (CRT) confirmed that two staff members with our school bus contracting company, Student Transportation of America (STA), tested positive for COVID-19. MCSD has worked with Montrose County Public Health (MCPH) to contract trace anyone with whom the individuals had prolonged close contact, and have notified anyone who needs to quarantine and seek COVID testing.

Below is an official statement from STA: "STA is dedicated to the health and safety of our employees, passengers, and customers, while remaining committed to safely transporting students to and from school. The Company has a number of policies and protocols in place to address safety issues during the COVID-19 pandemic. Drivers and monitors are required to wear face masks at all times while operating a vehicle, and when interacting with

others while on duty. Additionally, high-touch points on the vehicle are wiped down after each run with a CDC-approved disinfectant and sanitized with an antimicrobial agent based on the manufacturer's recommended schedule.

Unfortunately, this week two STA employees, a driver and monitor, tested positive for COVID-19. Per company protocol, the driver and monitor will self-quarantine for 14 days. STA immediately took the impacted buses out of service for deep cleaning. A number of additional drivers, although not in close contact with the impacted staff, are being tested out of an abundance of caution, and will not return to work until cleared by their doctors."

On Friday, the School District asked that all 41 STA staff members pursue COVID testing, provided free of charge by Montrose County Public Health, in order to ensure the safety of all children and individuals riding school busses.

These employees will be unable to return

to work until they receive a negative COVID test result.

As such, school bus service will be temporarily unavailable until STA employees are able to return. We understand the difficulty this creates for our bus riding families, but must prioritize student health and safety as our primary concern.

Students who are unable to provide their own transportation to school due to the bus closure will learn remotely from **Monday, October 26th through Wednesday, October 28th**. In the event STA employees receive negative test results prior to Wednesday, October 28th, bus operations may reconvene earlier.

In-person instruction and operations will continue throughout the bus closure, with only transportation affected Monday (10/26/20) through Wednesday (10/28/20).

Please contact your school principal and teachers directly via phone or email with questions.



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

TRUNK OR TREAT EVENT



Photo by Gail Marvel

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-Rosemont Baptist Church, located at 1598 E Niagara Rd in Montrose, will host a Trunk or Treat event from 4 to 6:30 p.m. on Oct. 31st. Pastor Rolland Kenneson said, "We want to get back to activities and we feel there are safe ways to do it even if we still have to wear masks."

2020 GENERAL ELECTION

UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES

Monday, October 19th

Montrose Voter Service Polling Center opens at the Old Courthouse

Monday, October 26th

Last day for a voter to request a ballot to be mailed to them

Monday, October 26th

West End Voter Service Polling Center opens at the Nucla-Naturita Chamber of Commerce

Tuesday, November 3rd

ELECTION DAY - Voter Service Polling Centers open from 7am - 7pm



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

PERCEIVED CORRUPTION OF BIDEN FAMILY SHOULD RAISE SERIOUS CONCERNS

Editor:

For several years there has been widespread speculation concerning the Biden family and questionable ties to Ukraine, Russia, and China. The recent New York Post articles concerning Hunter Biden's laptop and contents, as well as "Big Tech's" attempts at blatant censorship to cover up the story, seem to have provided the proverbial "smoking gun", that puts an end to any further speculation.

Hunter Biden is already under a FBI money laundering investigation. Evidence from his laptop emails, and comments made by a former partner on 10/22/20, certainly point to the "Big Guy"

[Joe Biden] as being involved in an influence for pay scheme, despite his protestations to the contrary.

Only a complete and thorough investigation by the FBI will uncover all the sordid details, but the very perception of corruption by the entire Biden family in influence peddling, should raise serious concerns for those contemplating a vote for Biden.

Dee Laird, Montrose



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COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

NEW CDOT SURVEY REVEALS RISKY ROADWAY BEHAVIORS

Special to the Mirror

STATEWIDE — Results from a new statewide driver survey by the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) found that nearly all Colorado drivers engage in distracted driving and 17% admitted to not buckling up when driving short distances. Just 6% of respondents say they never exceed a posted speed limit of 65 mph. These are just a sampling of problematic driving behaviors CDOT learned from 897 Coloradans in a survey administered between February and June 2020.

"Over 9 in 10 Coloradans admitted they drove distracted in the last week. Being present behind the wheel can be especially hard with all of the pressures people

are under right now with the challenges we face with the COVID-19 pandemic, but it's more important than ever," said Shoshana Lew, CDOT's Executive Director.

"Unfortunately, distracted and impaired driving are contributing to a tragic pattern of increased roadway fatality rates in the past months. Just as we must protect public health by fighting the virus with measures like social distancing and wearing masks, we must protect ourselves and our neighbors by driving carefully and safely. It could save your life."

The survey assessed Colorado residents' attitudes and behaviors related to seat belt use, speeding, distracted driving and alcohol, marijuana and prescription medication use.

In 2018, there were 632 traffic fatalities in Colorado. Nearly 25% of all fatalities involved an alcohol impaired driver. Additionally, the 216 unrestrained fatalities in 2018 represent 54% of the 410 total passenger vehicle fatalities. Distracted driving was the contributing factor in 54 (8.5%) of the 2018 fatalities. The full 2020 survey results are available on CDOT's website at: <https://www.codot.gov/safety/safetydata/driver-surveys>

Looking to the holiday travel season and into the new year, CDOT will use these annual survey results to shape its traffic safety education campaigns, aiming to reduce dangerous driving behavior to keep the traveling public safe on Colorado roads.



Michelle Martinez

GRI, SFR, CFA

Broker

michellelmartinez.realtor@gmail.com

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COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

TRI-STATE COMMUNITY SOLAR PROGRAM ADVANCES ADDITIONAL MEMBER FLEXIBILITY

Special to the Mirror

WESTMINSTER— Members of not-for-profit interstate power supplier Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association will soon have expanded opportunities to pursue community solar projects through a new program developed by Tri-State's members. Consumer-members of Gunnison County Electric Association in western Colorado stand ready to benefit from the new option.

Community solar projects are marketed to retail consumers under subscription arrangements. Tri-State's community solar program was developed by the cooperative's utility members in 2019 to provide additional flexibility for member community solar projects, in addition to the 5% self-supply provisions in their existing wholesale power contracts and a new partial requirements contract option to self-supply up to 50% of member's power needs. As a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) regulated utility, Tri-State is required to file its community solar program for acceptance and approval from FERC. Under FERC's rate regulation of Tri-State, each member across four states can participate in the federal regulator's review of Tri-State's tariffs, con-

tracts and policies, including the policy that implements the community solar program. Colorado-based Gunnison County Electric Association (GCEA) is the first Tri-State members to take advantage of the flexibility offered by the new program. With FERC approval of the program, the distribution cooperative will move forward with a 101-kilowatt community solar project in the town of Gunnison, Colo. GCEA already is taking consumer reservations for the project. "With the great interest in this option, consumers have already reserved 80% of the capacity to be made available in our first community solar project under this new program. In addition, we've started planning for our next project, and already have a waiting list for monthly subscriptions in that project," said Mike McBride, CEO of Gunnison County Electric Association.

"Our co-op values the flexibility with Tri-State to develop both community solar options for consumers, as well local renewable energy projects to serve all of our consumers. We also benefit from Tri-State's substantial and growing renewable energy portfolio," McBride said. "Our goal is to fully utilize the 7% of flexible self-supply available under our current con-

tract which, with Tri-State's renewables, will result in more than 50% renewable energy for our members and lower wholesale power costs by 2024."

Earlier this month, Tri-State's board of directors announced a goal to reduce its wholesale rates to members 8% by the end of 2023. "We continue to implement important components of our Responsible Energy Plan, providing more options for our members to develop local renewable resources, lowering our emissions and increasing clean energy, all while reducing our rates to our members," said Duane Highley, CEO for Tri-State.

Tri-State's utility members can develop community solar projects totaling up to 4,600,000 kilowatt-hours, or 2% of their purchases from Tri-State, whichever is lower. The community solar program is in addition to the 5% local renewable energy provision and is separate from Tri-State's flexible partial requirements contract option. Under the partial requirements option, utility members of Tri-State will be able to express their intent to transition to a partial requirements contract by participating in an open season period to allocate an aggregate 300 megawatts of system-wide member self-supply capacity.



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

OURAY SILVER MINE, INC. FRINGE LEASE APPLICATION COMMENT PERIOD

Special to the Mirror

DELTA – The Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison (GMUG) National Forests, Ouray Ranger District and Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Uncompahgre Field Office, is inviting comments on a proposal from Ouray Silver Mines, Inc. (OSMI). OSMI has applied to lease approximately 152 acres of locatable minerals under National Forest System (NFS) acquired lands. These NFS acquired lands were patented mining claims that reverted to public domain status. The requested “fringe lease” application areas would connect OSMI’s patented claims to OSMI’s Revenue Tunnel, providing access to silver, gold, copper, lead, and zinc mineral deposits in OSMI’s patented claims. No post-leasing surface disturbance is anticipated on NFS lands as part of this action. Because no post-lease surface disturbance is proposed, potential impacts to water resources are expected to be the primary focus of the environmental assessment (EA).

Additional information on this project, including the project map, can be found on the project website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=58860>. Please send comments via:

- online comment tool- <https://cara.ecosystemmanagement.org/Public/CommentInput?project=58860>
- post- Attn: OSMI Fringe Lease EA, 2250 S. Main St, Delta, CO,
- fax- (970) 240-5367.

Your feedback will be most helpful if received by Nov. 13, 2020. If you have any questions regarding the project, please contact Brittany Duffy at brittany.duffy@usda.gov.



MC-GOP 2020 Voter Recommendations Colorado and Montrose County ★ Ballot Issues Guide ★

- | | |
|------------|--|
| YES | Amendment B (Constitutional) “Gallagher”
Repeal Property Tax Assessment Rates |
| YES | Amendment C (Constitutional)
Charitable Bingo and Raffles |
| YES | Amendment 76 (Constitutional)
Citizen Qualifications of Electors |
| YES | Amendment 77 (Constitutional)
Voter Approval of Gaming Limits |
| ➔NO | Proposition EE (Statutory) Tax Increase on
Tobacco/E-Cigarettes for Health &
Education Programs |
| ➔NO | Proposition 113 (Statutory)
National Popular Vote Interstate Compact
Referendum |
| ➔NO | Proposition 114 (Statutory) Gray Wolf
Reintroduction Initiative |
| YES | Proposition 115 (Statutory) Prohibition on
Late-Term Abortion |
| YES | Proposition 116 (Statutory)
State Income Tax Rate Reduction |
| YES | Proposition 117 (Statutory) Voter Approval
in Certain Fee-Based Enterprises |
| ➔NO | Proposition 118 (Statutory) Paid Family
and Medical Leave Insurance Program |
| YES | Ballot Issue 7A: Colorado River Water
Conservation District |

More Information on Issues:

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www.MontroseCounty.net
Montrose County Courthouse
320 S First St, Rm 103

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Photos by B. Switzer.



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COUNCIL HEARS UPDATE ON 347 MAIN INCENTIVES; POSSIBLE 'AUDUBON' WETLANDS BOARDWALK AREA From pg 1



Council heard an update on the Missouri-Block Building Incentives Project.

truck driver, Martinez is a lifelong local, born and raised in the Montrose/Olathe area.

Originally from Connecticut, McDonnell has a background in marketing and hospitality. She has been on the Western Slope for five years, most recently in the Durango area. She will work with the City's Office of Business & Tourism.

Webb will be the lead operator at the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant. He is originally from South Dakota and has worked there as well as in Alaska and Arizona prior to coming to Montrose.

Lundberg is a native of Montrose; he attended Fort Lewis College in Durango and has worked in Telluride. "I am very proud and excited to be working for the City of Montrose," he said.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Council heard a "Workforce Housing" Incentives Report on the Missouri and Block Building, from building owner Dr. Sarah Judkins.

Background-Drs. Sarah and Tim Judkins and Dr. Paul Rinne, doing business as Main Street Montrose, LLC, purchased the downtown building located at 347 Main in October 2017. Despite a possible conflict of interest on the part of City Councilor Barbara Bynum (now Mayor), a \$241,186 incentives package for the building was approved by City Council in June of 2018, to help the owners cover the costs of as-

bestos removal and other updates. Bynum did not recuse herself from voting on the package, despite acknowledging that she and her husband were business partners with an applicant in a [separate business venture](#).

Another potential conflict of interest with regard to financial incentives concerned Mayor pro tem Dave Bowman, who had a longstanding financial relationship with intended Downstairs non-profit tenant KVNf radio. Bowman did not recuse either, but voted in favor of awarding Main Street Montrose, LLC, the \$241,186. Along with KVNf, initial tenants of the Missouri and Block Buildings were Maggie's Books (now defunct) and the Vine Restaurant (also defunct).

Incentives update & report-At the Oct. 19 work session, City Director of Business & Tourism Chelsea Rosty introduced the discussion on the Missouri and Block Building incentives package, which she said was intended to implement workforce housing Downtown. "This project was a renovation of a historic building, which added five residential units to the Downtown on the second floor of this building," Rosty said. The building already included five commercial units, which were renovated as well.

"The agreement that we have with the owners lasts through May of 2023," Rosty said. "...we were in agreement with the

owners to keep rents at a certain range which is termed workforce housing, or a rate that is affordable to the workforce."

Maximum rents were initially capped at \$1,235 but building owners may seek rent increases by documenting wage increases and working with the Cit. An audit was performed, and current leases are in compliance, Rosty said. The project has performed as intended, though there are now vacancies in the Downstairs units.

Owner Sarah Judkins, present via Zoom call, said that the Certificate of Occupancy for the building was received in March of 2019. The upstairs units were blighted at the time of purchase, she said.

"...Paul and I had a pretty unique opportunity to work with the City and partner with local contractors to make this project become reality," Judkins said. "...All the apartments have been filled pretty much that entire time; we just had our first two turnovers and they're both filled already."

Originally, Tenant Sara Rinne of Maggie's Books handled property management tasks. Now, "We've turned that over to Area Best who doesn't allow for any short-term rentals, it's all 12-month leases," Judkins said. Long-term Downstairs tenants include KVNf Radio and Jack the Clipper. A space that held a local real estate office has been transitioned to a manicurist. "...The most exciting thing is the Vine and the bookstore space which has been empty pretty much since April...we do have a letter of intent for a new restaurant opportunity that's gonna combine both of those spaces with an experienced person who's run restaurants before..." Judkins said.

"...both Paul and I are very excited that this project has been successful from our standpoint...we really appreciate the opportunity to work with the City of Montrose to make that happen."

City Councilor Dave Frank expressed excitement that the Vine and Maggie's bookstore spaces would again be filled. "...we want to encourage restaurant spaces Downtown," Frank said, "That's great." Councilor Roy Anderson said that the project is serving the intended purpose.

Continued next pg

COUNCIL HEARS UPDATE ON 347 MAIN INCENTIVES; POSSIBLE 'AUDUBON' WETLANDS BOARDWALK AREA From previous pg

"...It'd be neat if you were willing to share your experience...and encourage other people to do this sort of thing...it's really going to help when COVID's over for us to get the motor going again and build our economy in the Downtown area...Thanks, doctor, for your efforts."

There are increased commercial vacancies Downtown now, Judkins noted.

"There's multiple buildings for sale right now that would lend themselves to this structure...I think it's an opportunity for investors and the City to partner."

Owner Paul Rinne was also present via Zoom call and said that the new restaurant is working to obtain financing through Region 10 and should be open in about a month. "It shouldn't be long...the concept is very similar to what was in there with the Vine." He noted that the historical designation would be more beneficial if obtained early on. "...If that's in place from the get-go, it could be quite advantageous...I am really appreciative of everything that the City has done for us," Rinne said. "I think the project has gone well."

Senior Planner Amy Sharp presented information on the **Rainbow Trout Addition Annexation**.

Background-A memo prepared by Sharp for Council states, "The Rainbow Trout Addition is a proposed annexation approximately 2.82 acres in size. The parcel is located north of Spring Creek Road, west of Mayfly Drive and the Uncompahgre River, and northeast of Marine Road. It is within the City's Urban Growth Boundary, the City of Montrose Water Service Area, Tri-County Water Service Area, and West Montrose Sanitation District. Annexation

of this property will clean-up an orphaned parcel of City-owned land adjacent to the Uncompahgre River. The Council Resolution to set a hearing date is not required for this annexation as it is City-owned property."

Presentation-Sharp presented maps and discussed the proposed annexation; staff recommends approval.

The property is marshy, City Manager Bill Bell said. "...We kind of refer to it as the Audubon property...the long-term plan that's been discussed for a couple years...is to put in handicapped accessible boardwalks through that marshy area...you can go down along the river and walk through birding habitat...and really start promoting birding."

"The future of that area looks like a really nice addition to our parks system, to have some of that wetlands birding habitat."

The City is working on possible grants to the Audubon Society, Bell said.

"This is kind of exciting to me," Councilor Roy Anderson said, "...because I sense a need...a long-range plan for the City to have something like that would be good."

City Engineer Scott Murphy said that the City closed on the property in February.

"The original drive for this purchase...part of it's gonna become the River Project, but it kind of becomes a continuation of the Audubon area Bill was talking about...until it's developed with boardwalks and such it's generally inaccessible...you can't really drive to it yet, you can't really walk to it." The boardwalk system would be accessed from Marine Road, Murphy said.

Sharp also presented information on the **Hilltop Addition II Annexation**.

Background-A memo prepared by Sharp for Council states, "The Hilltop Addition II is a proposed annexation approximately 0.45 acres in size. The parcel is located north of Locust Rd and consists of the west side right-of-way of 6600 Road. It is within the City's Urban Growth Boundary, the Tri-County Water Service Area, and the City of Montrose Sewer Service Area. Annexation of this property will clean up an orphaned parcel of land which consists of county road right-of-way adjacent to the recently annexed Hilltop Addition (July 2020). The City of Montrose is applying for this annexation on behalf of Montrose County."

In other business, Utilities Manager David Bries discussed a **proposed amendment to the Wastewater Treatment Plant Nutrient Removal Optimization Contract**; Finance Director Shani Wittenberg discussed a **proposed resolution amending Defined Benefit System contribution rates**.

GENERAL CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Councilor Dave Frank thanked City staff for reinstalling safety rails where Niagara road crosses the canal. "...thank you to City staff; that was handled very promptly and very professional. Good job."

Bynum discussed scheduling an executive session for a mid-cycle evaluation of City Attorney Stephen Alcorn.

Bynum also asked whether the City is adding an additional trash route. The City is not adding a route, but adding a truck to meet demand, Public Works Manager Jim Scheid said, noting that some stops are now using two trash cans.

Bynum reminded viewers of the regular Council meeting on Oct. 20, at 6 p.m.

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COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

TRI-STATE APPLAUDS COLORADO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION DECISION

Special to the Mirror

WESTMINSTER – Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association applauded a decision today by the Colorado Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to dismiss a complaint filed by two members that had asked the commission to set the cost to break their long-term power supply contracts. “We are pleased that the Colorado Public Utilities Commission agrees that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has exclusive jurisdiction over member withdrawal charges, and that questions of Colorado corporate law are a matter for the state courts,” said Tri-State CEO Duane Highley.

Tri-State also acknowledged the concerns expressed by commissioners as to future Tri-State activity before the CPUC, including new resource plan filing requirements. “We look forward to fully engaging the Colorado Public Utilities Commission in the electric resource planning process, and we remain deeply committed to helping meet Colorado’s energy and environmental goals,” Highley said.

Tri-State currently is developing its electric resource plan to file with the CPUC in December 2020. The filing will demonstrate the not-for-profit power supply cooperative’s meaningful greenhouse gas reductions, as it retires its Colorado coal-fired generation and significantly increases renewable energy.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has exclusive jurisdiction over Tri-State’s wholesale rates and member exit charges, and preempted the CPUC on these matters. The FERC also has accepted a contract termination payment methodology, developed by Tri-State’s utility members, that determines the costs a Tri-State member would pay to withdraw from the generation and transmission cooperative. The methodology is in effect subject to refund, and has been referred to FERC’s hearing and settlement procedures.

Tri-State sought FERC rate regulation across the four states where it provides wholesale power and has members. FERC regulation provides more certainty as Tri-

State implements its Responsible Energy Plan to increase member contract flexibility and to transition to a clean energy portfolio. This week, Tri-State filed with the FERC its community solar program that delivers additional opportunities to its members to develop local renewable resources. Under FERC, Tri-State is regulated the same as the wholesale power businesses of other regional utilities, including Xcel Energy and Black Hills Energy.

Tri-State’s board of directors took action at its July 2019 board meeting that would place the cooperative under wholesale rate regulation by the FERC. In September 2019, Tri-State added its first non-utility member, which made Tri-State rate jurisdictional to the FERC. The complaints filed at the CPUC by United Power and LPEA in November 2019 came after Tri-State became jurisdictional to the FERC. In an attempt to thwart FERC’s rate regulation of Tri-State, United Power and LPEA have asserted the addition of non-utility members violates state law. Tri-State strongly disagrees.



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

DELTA HOSPITAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH DIRECTOR BRINGS RURAL VOICE TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TASK FORCE 'S BLUEPRINT FOR REFORM

Special to the Mirror

DELTA-According to The State of Mental Health in America report, in 2019, 1 in 5 Coloradans reported experiencing a mental health condition. That is just one of many statistics regarding the prevalence of behavioral health disorders among Coloradans.

Evaluating and setting a roadmap to improve the current behavioral health system in the state was the mission of the Colorado Behavioral Health Task Force (BHTF) that developed and presented Colorado's Behavioral Health Blueprint to Governor Polis in August.

Rebecca Ela, MSW, LCSW and Director of Behavioral Health at Delta County Memorial Hospital (DCMH) was asked to join the BHTF to provide guidance and perspective on the behavioral health challenges that rural communities in Colorado face.

"What really hit home during this process is how confusing the [behavioral health] system is," said Ela. "We looked at ways to identify accessible, affordable, quality behavioral health services throughout the state with multiple entry systems. [We want people to be able] to access services at school, through the health department or their primary care provider so that not everyone has to go through a community mental health center."

Ela was invited to join the BHTF in 2019 to serve for one year and to look at the barriers to accessing behavioral health services throughout the state. She felt

that since she lived and served a rural community she could speak well to the issues present on the Western Slope.

"Our goal was to submit a blueprint to the Governor with recommendations that were quantified into six pillars: access, affordability, workforce and support, accountability, local and consumer guidance and whole person care. Each of those pillars was then broken down to show where opportunities for improvement could be made." Those pillars then fall into a 3 System Reform that will be rolled out over the next one to five years. The reform includes the creation of a behavioral health administration, the implementation of care coordination and the top 19 recommendations within the six pillars.

"One of the key takeaways is that the changes we're looking to make are going to take a long time," said Ela. "We're talking about changing policies and legislation and it requires action at the state level. One of our top concerns was asking how these recommendations would get carried out, and the Behavioral Health Administration will help oversee these changes."

The task force also set up testimonies to hear from the public about their journey within the Behavioral Health system; the challenges being worked through and any suggestions they had to make the system work better for all Coloradans. The videos helped inform the BHTF about personal journeys and experiences and helped guide their work.

"Here at DCMH we practice whole-person care and integrated behavioral health care," said Ela. "That means we look at the social determinants of health such as transportation, food security, housing, social isolation, interpersonal violence and all of the components that might cause someone to not do well." For a lot of rural communities on the Western Slope, budget cuts have also affected health care providers' ability to serve those in need, said Ela. The hope is that this blueprint will help address some of those longer term issues that do affect rural communities specifically while also addressing the need to make the services simpler to access.

DCMH has continued to expand its integrated behavioral health services at their primary care clinics in Delta County. Call a DCMH primary care clinic or visit deltahospital.org to learn more.

To learn more about the BHTF, visit online at colorado.gov/pacific/cdhs/colorado-behavioral-health-task-force where you will also find the Behavioral Health Blueprint for Reform.



Rebecca Ela, L.C.S.W. West Elk Clinic. Courtesy photo.

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MONTROSE CITY COUNCIL VOTES TO CHANGE TIME OF NOV. 3 MEETING, APPROVES SALE OF RUSSELL STOVER LAND

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE—On Tuesday Oct. 20, the Montrose City Council met for a regular meeting at 6p.m. All councilors were present, wearing masks, screened by plexiglass dividers and social distancing. Only Council and staff gathered in chambers though others could attend online via Zoom, Cable television, or the City's web site.

Mayor Barbara Bynum welcomed all to the meeting and led in saying the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Pro Tem Doug Glaspell had no changes to the meeting agenda.

CALL FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from the public.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the Oct. 5, 2020 special City Council meeting and the Oct. 6, 2020 regular City Council meeting as presented.

TIME CHANGE FOR NOV. 3 CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Council voted unanimously to change the time of the Nov. 3 regular City Council meeting to 10 a.m.

YOUTH CITY COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS

Also approved unanimously were the appointments of Gunnison Clamp; Josie Coulter; Harrison Hall; Grace Hotsenpiller; Zack Oldroyd; Chyanne Storrs; and Mari Wilson to the City of Montrose Youth City Council for the 2020-2021 term.

Mayor Bynum said, "We had a wonderful group of youth City Council applicants, we had a great opportunity to talk to each of them and ask them questions. I am so proud of them for stepping forward and taking an interest in their community and in civic service."

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS

"Council had the opportunity to interview, talk to, and receive applications from four people," Mayor Bynum said, "...we also thank them for stepping up and being willing to serve their community in this capacity."

Incumbent committee members Ian Atha, John Eloie, and Kenneth Huff were re-appointed unanimously.



On Tuesday Oct. 20, the Montrose City Council met for a regular meeting at 6p.m. All councilors were present, wearing masks, screened by plexiglass dividers and social distancing.

The candidates have done an exemplary job, Bynum said. "Thank you to all of those applicants."

Council voted unanimously to appoint the applicants to the Historic Preservation Commission for terms that end on Oct. 16, 2023.

ORDINANCE 2509-AND ORDINANCE 2510 -SECOND READING

Council voted unanimously to adopt Ordinance 2509 on second reading, for the annexation of the Unrein Addition II; and Ordinance 2510 on second reading, zoning the Unrein Addition II as a B-2 Highway Commercial District, as previously discussed in work session and on first reading.

ORDINANCE 2512-FIRST READING

Also unanimously approved was Ordinance 2512 on first reading, authorizing the disposal of real property (Adamson Family Trust #1 Gap Parcel) pursuant to § 1-9-2 of the Official Code of the City of Montrose, as previously discussed.

ORDINANCE 2513-FIRST READING

Council also voted unanimously to adopt Ordinance 2513 on first reading, authorizing the sale of real property pursuant to the 1972 Russell Stover lease and § 1-9-2 of the Official Code of the City of Montrose.

City Attorney Stephen Alcorn said, "In

1972, the forerunner of the Montrose Economic Development Corporation or MEDC purchased a plot of land... it was part of an incentive package to get Russell Stovers to build a plant here."

The land was transferred to the City, Alcorn said. "We in turn did a series of long leases with the Russell Stover's company to build a plant there."

A lease clause gave Russell Stover the right to exercise a purchase option, he said, "Which they have done in this case. It is our understanding that once they purchase it, they are working with two different buyers, a buyer for the retail space and a separate buyer for the factory space."

Mayor Pro Tem Doug Glaspell said, "Once this sells...it will go back on the County tax rolls."

Councilor Dave Frank noted that the clause was written into the contract in 1972.

"You could choose to vote no, and you would make a bunch of lawyers happy," Alcorn said, "because we would be going into litigation for breach of contract."

"Can we take that dollar and have it mounted someplace at City Hall?" Glaspell said.

"If the dollar is not paid, the sale would be null and void," Alcorn said.

CITY COUNCIL VOTES TO CHANGE TIME OF NOV. 3 MEETING, APPROVES SALE OF RUSSELL STOVER LAND From previous pg

STAFF REPORTS/GENERAL COMMENTS

City Finance Director Shani Wittenberg presented a Sales, Use & Excise Tax report.

"It's nice to see a positive number on hotels," Councilor Frank said. "that's a heartening thing for all of us."

The City's Budget presentation will be made available on the City's web site, Mayor Bynum said.

The City of Montrose recently gave money to the Montrose Community Foundation for restaurant gift cards, generating a 67 per-cent return on City-issued gift cards for local restaurants for locals in need, Frank said. "The numbers look like they really helped both some of our local restaurants as well as a lot of our citizens."

A full report will be presented in November, Frank said.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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NOSOTRAS HABLAMOS ESPANOL

COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

5,735 REGULAR INITIAL UI CLAIMS FILED WEEK ENDING OCT. 17

Special to the Mirror

DENVER -- The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) reported that 5,735 regular initial unemployment claims were filed the week ending October 17th. There were also 2,973 Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) claims filed for the same week. Since mid-March, a total of 581,334 regular unemployment initial claims have been filed and a grand total of 751,602 claims, including federal PUA benefits.*

For the week ending October 10th, a combined total of 217,974 continued claims were filed, including 111,129 from regular UI, 67,234 from PUA, and 39,611 from Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation.**

Benefits paid since March 29:
Regular UI \$2.10 Billion

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (gig workers/self-employed) \$696.6 Million
Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (\$600/weekly UI benefits to eligible claimants) \$2.48 Billion
Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (extends unemployment benefits by up to 13 weeks) \$126.5 Million
State Extended Benefits (extends unemployment benefits an additional 13 weeks) \$2.1 Million
Lost Wages Assistance (\$300/weekly UI benefits to eligible claimants) \$371.5 Million
Total \$5.77 Billion
Claims by industry and benefits paid

Benefits paid: Regular UI
Week ending October 17: \$41.5 Million
Top 10 industries with highest initial claims for week ending October 3rd
#1 Accommodation and Food Services: 483 (11.2% of claims for week)
#2 Healthcare and Social Assistance: 445 (10.3%)
#3 Retail Trade: 437 (10.2%)
#4 Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services: 414 (9.6%)
#5 Construction: 396 (9.2%)
#6 Manufacturing: 351 (8.2%)
#7 Transportation and Warehousing: 315 (7.3%)
#8 Professional and Technical Services: 288 (6.7%)
#9 Public Administration: 205 (4.8%)
#10 Wholesale Trade: 184 (4.3%)

Colorado county-level initial and continued unemployment claims data released this week for the week ending Oct. 3rd is available [here](#).

* Initial claims are 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.

**Continued claims are filed to request payment for a given week after eligibility has been established. Weeks claimed provide information as to current labor market conditions.

COLORADO UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE CHARTS THROUGH WEEK ENDING OCTOBER 17, 2020

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colorado.ballottrax.com or

[Govotecolorado.gov](https://govotecolorado.gov)

TO CHECK THE STATUS OF YOUR MAIL BALLOT



OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

SOMEONE PLEASE START A RECALL EFFORT BEFORE MONTROSE IS BANKRUPT

Editor:

The city of Montrose has now 'officially' demonstrated that it will fire (or dump) any employee or contractor who dares to question one of their city councilors or administrators. We all knew it was coming. Now the city employees have been put on notice that retribution is alive and well in the city. It used to be that way in the county but the people got that changed. In this case the victim got fired and the perpetrator is still your representative. "How convenient!"

Can you believe, they are taking Ms. Culver's livelihood from her. Fired because she questioned Mayor Bowman's ethics and the city manager's office?

This really does not sound like the America that I stand for; the Constitution of Colorado or the Constitution of the United States. Or for that matter the oath that they took upon assuming their duties on the council.

Of course the public statements from council and the city manager about this action are so convoluted, upside down and inside out, that no one can tell who did what to whom and certainly not 'accuse' anyone of an 'illegal employment action'. Simply a contract cancellation, don't ya know? More 'convenience' but not a subject for "Saturday Night Live."

I know that two of the councilors are honest and upright people (or I thought they were). How do they put up with such behavior in their name? Is 'go along to get along' official council policy?

Of course it cannot be proved but you can bet your sweet 'bippies' that this was done in retribution for Culver exposing Bowman's crooked practices and conflict of interest. Most importantly however, it was done to unequivocally tell every city employee and contractor who considers being a 'whistle blower' that tomorrow will be his last day on the job.

Our city, Montrose, for having only 20,000 people, sure has corruption. Need a cou-

ple of million for your housing development so you can get a bigger profit? Just ring Mr. Bell's chimes, he'll provide. Need some infrastructure to make your land more salable, just see "good old Bill", he'll get it done. Need your property cleaned up to meet federal anti-pollution specs and Billy Bell will recommend a stipend. They will block off streets for no GOOD reason and wonder why folks won't shop downtown. How long will our citizenry put up with this so called 'legitimate graft'? This is why we have an \$8 million street repair backlog. We have holes in our streets from last winter and he still engages in profligate special interest giveaways!

I know, it is ok right now because your ox is not being gored. You did not lose your

job; your kids will not go hungry! These sleazy practices of your city council justifies and legitimizes extortion. It has condoned borderline activities. It permits the city manager to put our tax money where he wants to, not where it would be best employed. (perhaps with his favorite contractors and golfing buddies?) The Montrose City Council is five spineless peeps warming chairs (nests) and collecting salaries while Bell does what he wants and takes us all to the cleaners. By the way Bell's remuneration is far above (2x or 3x) what should be paid for a town this size. It is time for a change. It is time for a housecleaning.

Will someone please start a Recall effort before Montrose is bankrupt?

Bill Bennett, Montrose

WHERE CAN I DROP MY BALLOT?

24/7 VIDEO SURVEILLANCE, OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK
BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 18TH

Montrose County Old Courthouse
320 S. 1st Street Montrose

Nucla Annex Clerk & Recorder's Office
300 Main Street Nucla



ISSUE 287 Oct. 26, 2020

ART & SOL

UTAH STATE SCHOLAR SEES SOMETHING NEW IN CEDAREGE SCHOOLBOY'S LONG AGO DISCOVERY



Gnathomortis stadtmanni.
Photo courtesy Gary Thompson.

By Caitlin Switzer

REGIONAL—As a boy growing up in Cedaredge, Gary Thompson combed the base of Cedar Mesa in search of fossils, his interest sparked by a class field trip to nearby Escalante Canyon. And in 1975, Thompson, 15, found something much bigger than he could have imagined—though it has taken nearly half a century for the full significance of his discovery to be recognized.

Just two days before moving away to New Mexico with his mother as a teen, Thompson asked her to drop him off near the Cedaredge Rodeo Grounds for one last fossil hunt. He spent time walking up the road toward Cedar Mesa, finding fragments of what appeared to be petrified wood or bone. He eventually spied a

mounded area with loose dirt. Suspecting at first that he had encountered more samples of petrified wood, “I found a sharp rock and started scraping,” Thompson said.

Soon, the teen realized that what he had found was not petrified wood after all, but bone.

“I dug up one piece,” Thompson said. “I continued scraping around, and I tapped into a longer piece.” The second bone was enormous, said Thompson, who now lives and works on the Front Range.

“It was then that I realized it was not a rib bone I had started out following but a part of a very large vertebrae,” he recalled. “I began digging and clearing the dirt off the vertebrae section...I was thinking I might have found a dinosaur.”

Thompson notified his Junior High Science Teacher Dick Jones, who contacted Brigham Young University to share the discovery.

Now, that long ago finding has taken on new significance.

A [September article](#) from Utah State University notes that USU’s Curator of Paleontology Josh Lively has determined Thompson’s find to be a new genus of mosasaur, the *Gnathomortis stadtmanni*.

In the USU article, Lively spoke about the importance of these findings in rural West Central Colorado. “What sets this animal apart from other mosasaurs are features

of the quadrate – a bone in the jaw joint that also forms a portion of the ear canal,” he said. “...We now know *Gnathomortis* swam in the seas of Colorado between 79 and 81 million years ago, or at least 3.5 million years before any species of *Prognathodon*.

“...The new name is derived from Greek and Latin words for ‘jaws of death,’” Lively said. “It was inspired by the incredibly large jaws of this specimen, which measure four feet (1.2 meters) in length.”

Gnathomortis’ big bite can be viewed at the BYU Museum of Paleontology in Provo, Utah. A cast of the skull can be seen at the Pioneer Town Museum in Cedaredge, and reconstructions of the full skeleton are on display at the John Wesley Powell River History Museum in Green River, Utah and BYU’s Eyring Science Center.

“It has been quite a long ride over the years,” Gary Thompson told the *Mirror*, after learning of Lively’s determination. The story of his boyhood discovery has now been featured in Denver’s *Westword*, and his excitement for fossils has not diminished with the years.

After all, the bones Thompson stumbled across 45 years ago belong to one of the most powerful creatures ever to inhabit West Central Colorado—or stalk Planet Earth.

“It could eat T-Rex for a snack,” Thompson said.

COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

NEW MEAT SCHOOL COMING TO A TOWN OR COMPUTER NEAR YOU!

Special to Art & Sol

MONTROSE-Are you interested in learning more about production, processing and selling high quality meat through diverse market channels? Would you like new ways to manage risk in your livestock business and improve your profitability? If the answers are yes, then you'll want to check out the Western Meat School. Registration is open now, and deadline to enroll is Oct. 28' 2020. Classes begin on November 4th and run every Wednesday evening through December 16th (skipping Thanksgiving week). Visit the Western Meat School website to learn more and enroll.

An in-person Zoom session will be held locally in Montrose at the Montrose County Fairgrounds to facilitate meaningful conversation, and to address questions. Open to 10 people, the in-person session will be hosted by the local Tri-River Colorado State University Extension and Valley Food Partnership, a local non-profit dedicated to healthy, local food and sustainable agriculture practices. COVID precautions will be exercised such as physical distancing, and masks when moving

about. Snacks will be provided.

All speakers will be brought to you via the Zoom webinar platform. Classes cover marketing, production, and processing topics - all critical for direct marketing high-quality meat.

Classes will also include a live beef animal evaluation and yield analysis demonstration with Nathan Parker of the Oregon State University Clark Meat Science Center, and similar "hoof to rail" demonstrations on pig and lamb carcasses at the University of Wyoming Meat Lab. Participants will receive a text and gain access to a resource guide, recorded videos, and optional add-on modules: one on hogs (breeds, forages and finishing) and another on meat pricing.

The Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network (NMPAN), an Extension program housed at Oregon State University, is collaborating with Colorado State University and other institutions to offer this 6-week class.

Funded by Western Extension Risk Management Education grants and the Globetrotter Foundation, the Western Meat

School is an accessible and affordable way for farmers and ranchers to learn the most practical aspects of producing and marketing meat while deepening their understanding of the full niche meat supply chain. You can attend classes at one of 4 sites in Colorado: Montrose, Rocky Ford, Pueblo or Colorado Springs, or from your own home computer.

This Meat School builds on a pilot project offered by Colorado State University Extension in Fall 2019. One Colorado grass-fed beef producer had this to say about the school:

"Outstanding use of my time, rich learning experience, very targeted to the pressing questions and needs of my small, growing grass-fed beef finishing and direct marketing operation. [The speakers] were obviously people who had direct, lived, relevant expertise. Their presentations were very professional."

For local information contact Ann Duncan, CSU TriRiver Ext 970-249-3935

Ann.Duncan@colostate.edu or Colleen Trout at Valley Food Partnership, 970-249-0705 colleen@valleyfoodpartnership.org.



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COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

HILLTOP FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER RECOGNIZED

Special to Art & Sol

DENVER-The Parents as Teachers National Center has awarded Hilltop Family Resource Center Blue Ribbon Affiliate status. Earning the Blue Ribbon Affiliate designation – the highest status bestowed by Parents as Teachers – means that Hilltop Family Resource Center is one of the top home visiting programs in the nation, demonstrating remarkable results in implementing the evidence-based Parents as Teachers model with fidelity and quality.

The Parents as Teachers home visiting model promotes the optimal early development, learning and health of children by

supporting and engaging their parents and caregivers. As part of the program, home visiting professionals meet families where they are comfortable, typically in their homes. During visits, parent educators assess family needs and partner with parents to set family goals. Home visitors provide necessary information and resources to help parents support the emotional, behavioral, and physical development of their children. Each personal visit includes a focus on parent-child interaction, development centered parenting, and family well-being.

To become a Blue Ribbon Affiliate pro-

grams undergo a rigorous year-long review process. As part of the process, programs must meet at least 95 specific standards which ensure they are among the best home visiting programs in the nation.

Hilltop Family Resource Center serves children and families from prenatal through kindergarten throughout Mesa and Montrose counties.

Parent Possible is the Colorado state affiliate for Parents as Teachers and supports 27 sites across the state implementing the Parents as Teachers model. Learn more at: www.parentpossible.org/PAT

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Jeff Keehfuss

Broker/Owner

970-209-3825

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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. 26-30-The 7th Judicial District announces that as part of the Colorado Judicial Branch's Pro Bono Week, it will facilitate a local Ask-An-Attorney event during the week of Oct. 26-30, 2020. Participants will be matched with a local attorney who specializes in their case type for a free consultation. Availability may be limited, so participants are encouraged to register early. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, consults will be limited to telephone or online formats. To register or for additional information please call 970.252.4312.

Oct. 31-Rosemont Baptist Church, located at 1598 E Niagara Rd in Montrose, will host a Trunk or Treat event from 4 to 6:30 p.m. on October 31st.

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.

Nov. 20-The Black Canyon Boys & Girls Club's (BCBGC) 6th Annual Crab Crack fundraiser will be a little different this year to comply with COVID-19 social distancing restrictions and will be the "Stay in your Shell" edition. This means the BCBGC will not be having an in-person event at a specific venue but, rather, Crab Crack will be delivered to you at the location of your choosing in Montrose! A land and sea feast of crab, shrimp, Andouille sausage, corn, potatoes, and dessert with wine (with all the eating supplies you need) delivered to your door. There will be no individual ticket sales this year but sponsorships are available. There will also be an online benefit auction where you can bid on and fund items the Club members' need. The link to this auction will open on the Club's website (www.bcbgc.org) on Nov. 20. Please contact Bud Taylor at btaylor@bcbgc.org or at 970-249-5168 for sponsorship inquiries or event questions.



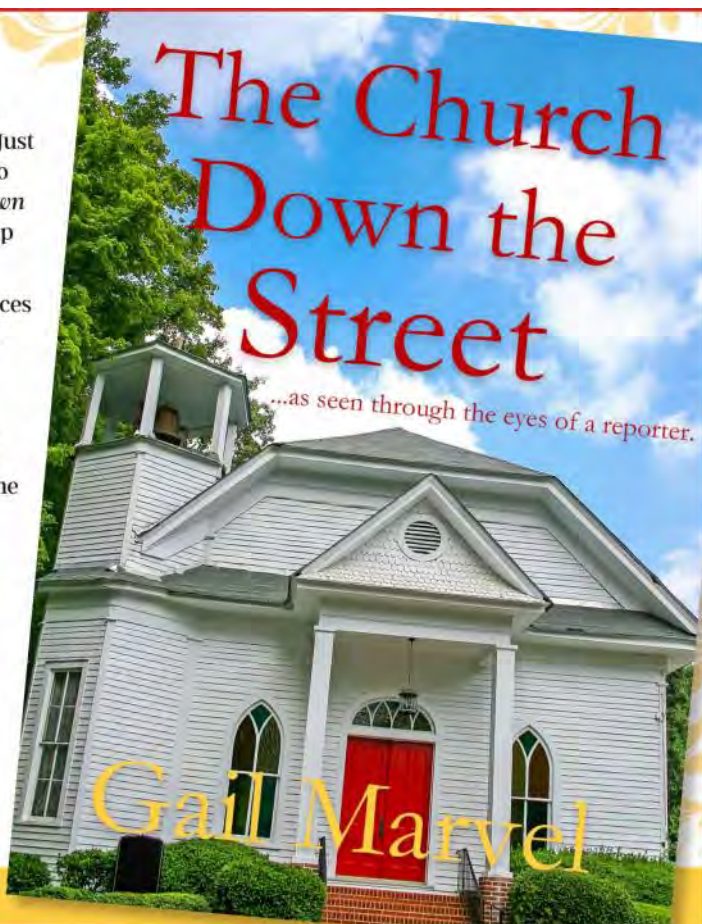
GAIL MARVEL
Montrose Author
& Reporter

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.



Contact the Montrose Mirror:

970-275-0646

Editor@montrosemirror.com

www.montrosemirror.com

READER PHOTO SPOTLIGHT: BY DEB REIMANN



Deb snapped these photos Friday, of the West Fork of the Animas River in California Gulch, left, and Poughkeepsie Gulch from Hurricane Pass.

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