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THE MONTROSE MIRROR

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Issue No. 51 Jan. 1 2013

CLEAR TALK COMES TO MONTROSE!



Clear Talk offers affordable cell phone service, with no surprises. The company has built its network in Western Colorado for more than a decade. Photo by Claire Clemens.

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE—Montrose residents seeking more affordable cell phone service now have another local option; ClearTalk--Wireless Made Simple has opened a corporate store at 155 Oxbow Drive. The Montrose store opened just after Thanksgiving, and celebrated its Grand Opening last Friday.

"We are glad to be here," staffer Sean Trepas noted. "We have three stores in Grand Junction now, and we have built our network here and thought we should have a store here too."

With a presence on the Western Slope for more than a decade, Clear Talk has established a reputation for providing an alternative to higher-priced wireless providers, offering unlimited talk, text and data nationwide, with up to four lines for as low as \$100.

"We try to make it as simple as possible," Trepas said. "We have three rate plans that compare impressively to other providers. All of our plans offer unlimited service for a flat monthly rate—no surprises. We have tried to do away with the things that people

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LOW FRACKING FORUM AT HEDDLES JAN. 12

By Caitlin Switzer

DELTA—It's an issue that could affect the quality of YOUR life. When the Montrose-Delta League of Women Voters hosts a forum on the controversial energy extraction technique of hydrofracturing, or "fracking," on Jan. 12, the idea is make sure you and your West Slope neighbors are armed with all of the facts.

"This is important, because fracking has the potential to impact the quality of life of everybody," League President Karen Connor said. "Even if you are not living in the immediate area, there is the possibility of contamination of ground, aquifer and surface water. It could affect trout fishing, and it could poison the animals drinking the water and the animals we eat."

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announced in November that it intends to lease 20,555 acres in the North Fork Valley at a February Oil and

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This photo from the Delta County Tourism Cabinet's Facebook page depicts agriculture in the North Fork Valley near Crawford, a thriving industry that could be impacted by fracking, concerned citizens say.

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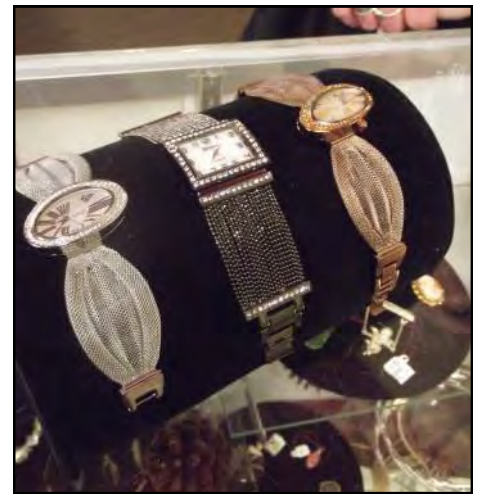
HAPPY NEW YEAR!—HEIRLOOMS FOR HOSPICE CELEBRATES A DECADE IN MONTROSE!



Heirlooms for Hospice Manager Sally Lawson says that the store's 125 volunteers are a gift from the community. Photo by Claire Clemens.



Donations of gently used items are always welcome at Heirlooms for Hospice. Photo by Claire Clemens.



Heirlooms for Hospice offers good items at great prices, Manager Sally Lawson said. Proceeds help to fund Hospice & Palliative Care programs. Photo by Claire Clemens.

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE—Hospice & Palliative Care of Western Colorado helps people approach the end of life with dignity, care, love and the support of a strong community. And in Montrose, becoming part of that mission is as simple as walking through a door Downtown.

To step through the front doors of the Heirlooms for Hospice store (435 East Main St.) is to enter a world of beautiful displays, one-of-a-kind merchandise, and the type of personal service that only a small boutique can offer—and proceeds from the store go to fund the programs that help Hospice serve the people of the Western Slope. Heirlooms for Hospice will celebrate ten years in Montrose in 2013, noted store manager Sally Lawson.

"We are actually doing really, really well in this economy," Lawson said. "People are looking for a good item at a great price, which is what we offer."

Because Heirlooms for Hospice specializes in the kind of gently-used, special items that can be hard to find elsewhere, the shop has established a strong niche with shoppers.

"We have unique and different items that you can't find in the big box stores," Lawson said.

Supporting the mission are 125 store volunteers, she noted.

"The community support we receive through our volunteers is absolutely phenomenal," Lawson said, and noted that the volunteers bring special strengths of their own to the Hospice mission.

"I think any time you walk in here, you can hear laughter and feel the warmth and love," Lawson said. "This is a whole separate family—we have shifts who go out to lunch together before they come to work. There is such great camaraderie between these four walls."

Donations are key to the success of Heirlooms for Hospice, and are always welcome. Once operations costs are covered, store proceeds go to fund the work of Hospice itself.

"Last year we put more than \$100,000 back into the budget," Lawson said. "We are always seeking donations—everything from men's and women's clothing to kitchenware, to household items, knick-knacks, jewelry, vintage clothing and furniture, china, glassware, porcelain, bedding and linens. We save seasonal items, as well as antiques and collectibles, shoes, scarves and belts."

"Don't be afraid to bring your items here—we have trained volunteers to help

you."

Many of the customers who shop at Heirlooms for Hospice are also among those who bring in donated items, she added.

"I feel I have the best job of anybody," Lawson said. "I am so blessed to be part of the store here, and what it represents in our community. Our volunteers give so generously of their time and talents—we couldn't do without them. And our donors support Heirlooms, which supports Hospice & Palliative Care, which supports people at the end of their lives."

New volunteers are always welcomed, as are donations, she said.

"We could not do this without you," Lawson said.

In addition to shopping and donating with the Heirlooms for Hospice store, local Hospice supporters will have the chance to give back to the non-profit organization in two upcoming Montrose fundraisers: The Montrose Gala for Hospice & Palliative Care takes place at the Montrose Pavilion on March 16, 2013. The Fifteenth Annual Hospice Golf Tournament will take place on Saturday, June 22 at the Bridges of Montrose. To learn more about either event, please contact Nancy Hoganson, Director of Community Relations at 970-240-7776.

LOWV FRACKING FORUM AT HEDDLES JAN. 12 from page 1

Gas lease sale in Denver, just as communities across the state are enacting regulations and other measures to deal with the possible impacts of fracking, a technique that can potentially devastate the local environment and contaminate groundwater supplies.

Citizen action groups in the North Fork Valley have developed an alternative resource management plan, Connor noted, because the plan used by the BLM in designating areas for the February 2013 lease sale was 23 years old and does not reflect the North Fork Community as it is today.

Fracking in our Backyard—Oil and Gas Drilling Affects us All—will be held at Bill Heddles Rec Center (Conference Room B, 530 Gunnison River Drive) in Delta from 10 a.m. to noon on Jan. 12. The forum will feature diverse speakers and stakeholders in an effort to raise awareness of this important issue, and there will be a question and answer session to follow. A non-partisan political group, The League of Women Voters of Colorado is currently undertaking a statewide study to investigate the impact of the practice of hydrofracturing for natural gas, oil, and methane

on Colorado and its citizens, and to discern what public policies are in place or need to be in place for this activity.

“The League of Women Voters does not support political candidates or parties,” Connor said. “But we do take positions on issues of importance to our communities. The Colorado League sees fracking as an issue of importance to the whole state, but we have no position as yet, which is why we are doing a study. We are primarily looking at water issues, but we also think this is important to agriculture.”

Among the many poisonous chemicals used in hydrofracking are hydrochloric acid and numerous biocides. Farmers and ranchers have expressed opposition to the Feb. lease sale, as have local business owners.

“Colorado’s North Fork Valley has become a premier destination for its wineries, farms, orchards, artists, and food culture. Nothing about today’s North Fork was ever considered by the BLM in its 25-year old management plan and it is simply wrong, based upon that plan, to open these lands up for oil and gas,” said Ty Gillespie, owner and operator of Azura Cellars and Gal-

lery in Paonia in a news release prepared by the non-profit Citizens for Healthy Community. “People here deserve better from our government than to be ignored, and America’s public lands deserve more as well.”

It is important to note that the North Fork Valley has a longstanding tradition of supporting energy development, Connor added.

“They have had coal mining up in that area for a long, long time,” she said, “and it works well. This is a different issue, and it is really important for everyone to know what is going on.”

Although BLM officials have been invited to present information about the Environmental Assessment at the forum, the agency had not yet made a decision as to attendance, and could not comment publicly at the time of this publication, Public Affairs Manager Shannon Borders said.

Learn more about the issues involved with fracking, and how this controversial drilling technique could affect your life and property. Call 970-249-8963 to register or to learn more about the “Fracking in our Backyard.”

CLEAR TALK COMES TO MONTROSE...continued from page 1

don’t like—so there’s no commitment on your part. “It is up to us to provide you with excellent service.”

Founded in Texas, Clear Talk currently serves customers in Arizona, California, Colorado and New Mexico. Although its

services have been offered through other local retail outlets in the past, this is the company’s first dedicated store in Montrose.

“We are here to stay,” Trepas said.

“Business is good! People are learning that

we are here. And we are serving a niche that nobody else is.”

Vicki McFadden serves as Manager of Clear Talk’s Montrose store. Those interested in learning more can call 200-TALK, ext. 4.

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28 DAYS TO SHARE THE LOVE

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE—It was just a week before Christmas, but the crowd of community leaders who packed into Heidi's Brooklyn Deli on Dec. 18 were not there just for the free cinnamon rolls, or to discuss shopping or gifts—at least not in the traditional sense. What organizers Adam Miller and Melanie Hall had in mind was more of a gift to the community—a paradigm shift toward a more generous Montrose. The subject of the gathering was, “28 Days of Giving,” and participants were asked to envision February, 2013 as a full month of charitable giving.

“Think about what makes generosity accessible to our community,” said Hall, who came up with idea through her work as executive director of the Montrose Community Foundation. “Think about how people connect, and imagine prompts for each of the 28 days.”

She reminded those present that generosity is not only the giving of money, but of time and talents as well.

Miller, a certified financial planner with ElderAdo Financial of Montrose, quoted 2 Corinthians (9:6).

“Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously,” Miller reminded those in attendance, after sharing his own family's story of losing a beloved child but finding a caring, supportive community in Montrose.

“Sow generously,” Miller said.

In February, organizers of 28 Days of Giving will print business cards as prompts, to remind the community about the various forms that generosity can take. The brainstorming session focused on simple ways to give back.

Among the ideas floated at the December meeting were “handwritten note day,” “blood donation day,” “carry something for somebody day,” “give \$5 day,” “soup



“There is plenty of generosity in Montrose,” says Rob Harper, general manager of Cobble Creek Golf Community, where the Fourth Annual Angel Tree Program collected gifts for more than 200 kids this Christmas (see above). Now, some local community leaders want to continue the holiday spirit of giving throughout the New Year and into February, with the “28 Days of Giving” campaign.

for seniors day,” “pet day,” “enable a date night” and “volunteer for 15 minutes day,” and “angel layaway day.”

Volunteers of America Outreach Coordinator Eva Veitch, who shared that she sometimes goes to Starbucks and buys coffee for others anonymously, expressed support for the concept.

“I like the idea of engaging people of all ages,” Veitch said.

The Montrose Community Foundation will kick off 28 Days of Giving with [the Annual Baldrige Fundraising Gala](#), scheduled for Feb. 2. Throughout the month, ideas and prompts will be shared with the community in a variety of formats, including emails and a blog, to encourage both generosity and a spirit of

giving. For Miller, much of the excitement comes from the chance to share the spirit of giving back with his own children.

“Hopefully the idea of giving for 28 days will ignite people,” Miller said. “I am happy to encourage my family, and to try to teach my kids by hosting a journey of generosity and special events.”

Hearing so many ideas from community members has already inspired Miller and Hall, who plan to generate a 28-day list of opportunities for giving by Jan. 1.

“Anyone can participate,” Miller said. “We are not seeking to control it—there is so much good stuff happening, it’s pretty neat.

“You can make a real difference with virtually anything—or nothing.”

THE MONTROSE MIRROR
MONTROSE

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

VOA, RSVP HOST VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE—Montrose and Olathe Volunteers for both the Retired Senior Volunteer Program and Volunteers of America were honored and rewarded on Dec. 4 with a Recognition Dinner at the Montrose Pavilion Senior Center.

The event was hosted by Sherry Faith, RSVP's executive director, and Eva Veitch, regional director of outreach for VOA and CommUnity Meals.

Speakers included Leslie Lewis, CPA with Lewis & Co., and Michele Haynes, director of Region 10. The Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation were said by Michael Moran, minister. He also led a moment of silence to honor volunteers who had passed away in the last year.

In welcoming about 150 of the volunteers to the event, Ms. Faith thanked them for 22,352 total volunteer hours in Montrose County during 2011. Considering an hourly wage of \$15, they donated the equivalent of \$335,280 to the community. "I can't thank you enough for your service to the programs you volunteer for," she said.

Ms. Veitch said, "Your loving hearts and helping hands help many great non-profits in our area meet the needs of those we serve. Without your efforts, organizations like Volunteers of America, Heirlooms for Hospice, our library, The Montrose Coun-

ty Historical Society and RSVP would struggle to serve people as we do. You are the most valuable resource and today we celebrate you!"

Music during the event was provided by Kathy Borinski and the San Juan Song Birds, accompanied by Lela Ala, pianist. Awards were presented to the "Volunteers of the Year," selected at RSVP workstations and programs. They were: Margie and David Hutchinson as RSVP Volunteers of the Year; Mary Lou Jeffers at the Montrose County Historical Museum Depot; Arthur and Barb Slater at Heirlooms for Hospice; Melba Pauli at the Montrose Library; Witt Bailey for the Handyman Program; Judy Dietrich for the Medicare Counseling Program.

Awards were presented to "Volunteers of the Year," selected at Volunteers of America (VOA) facilities and programs. They were: Steve Snare at Valley Manor Care Center; Louise Simonson at the Homestead at Montrose; Kyle Nicolas for the Montrose Senior CommUnity Meals Program; Charlotte Liming for the Olathe Senior CommUnity Meals Program. Volunteers were also honored for their years of service to the RSVP program. Lela Ala was awarded for her 28 years of service, and Charlotte Liming, for 21. Others announced for longest number of years were

Wanda Schneider, 24 years; Phoebe McKinney, 23 years; and Pete Loncar, 22 years. Alice Kramer and Madaline Lake received 15 year service awards, with Bonnie-Lou Lamb announced for the same.

Receiving 10-year service awards were Ruth Atwood, Darlene Brown, Rosalie Cohenour, Patricia Morris and Melba Pauli. Others not present were Sharon Cox, Greta Hemstrom and Sue King.

Five-year service awards were presented to Lavelle Corey, Margie Hutchinson, Margaret Lanam and Mary Lou Luttrell. Others announced were Anne Britton, Jeanne Kuchynka, Freddie Troncoso and Phyllis Lorraine Whittington.

Those with over 4,000 lifetime hours were honored.

Present were Wayne Quade, 6,500; Gayle Clarke-Watford, 4,832; Helen Estep, 4,484; and Rhea Gano, 4,197 hours. Others announced were Gwendolyn Carlile, 5,174 hours; Phoebe McKinney, 4,442 hours; and Pete Loncar, 4,026.

A special award was presented to Paul Ash and Carol Stolns-Ash for 23 years of service to RSVP on the board of directors and previously on the advisory council. The pair recently retired from the board. Veterans of the armed forces came forward and received a well-deserved standing ovation for their service.

Valerie Meyers' Weekly Monday



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*Click here to catch Valerie's weekly Monday
Real Estate Market Report video...from the road!*

Singing about Love with The Black Canyon Barbershop Chorus

By Liesl Greathouse

MONTROSE--Valentine's Day is right around the corner and if you are trying to come up with the perfect gift, a Singing Valentine may be just the thing. And the men who perform these unique gifts are part of The Black Canyon Barbershop Chorus.

The Black Canyon Barbershop Chorus was started in 1976 by a small group of men who liked to sing. It is the only premier a capella male barbershop harmony chorus in the Montrose, Delta and Cedaredge area. It is a non-profit organization, singing at state parks, nursing homes, public events and private gatherings.

Barbershop Singing is where a group of men sing in harmony without instrument accompaniment, normally in quartets and sometimes in a chorus. It is great for men of all singing types, whether they are experienced or beginner musicians.

Dennis Olmstead has been part of the Black Canyon Chorus for eight years and is on the board of directors.

"We are just a bunch of guys who love each other's company and who like singing," he said. "We provide excellent music to the community while having fun doing it."

The Black Canyon Chorus sings a variety of old and new songs. They sing western, pop, show, gospel, love, and even some humorous songs.

They also sing traditional barbershop music such as Sweet Adeline and Let Me Call You Sweetheart.

Members of the Black Canyon Chorus come from all over the Gunnison and Uncompahgre River Valleys in Delta and Montrose Counties. They presently have 33 members and are always welcoming to new people.

One of the main events that the Black Canyon Chorus does is Singing Valentines. This year they will perform their Singing Valentines on Thursday Feb. 14 from 9 a.m.-7 p.m. in Cedaredge, Delta, Olathe,



Members of the 2012 Black Canyon Barbershop Chorus perform. Courtesy photo.

Montrose and Ridgeway. For \$40 a person can get a quartet to sing to their loved one, with a rose included. For \$50 a quartet will come and sing to a group at an office (although, no roses).

When they do their Singing Valentines, the group occasionally gets some unusual requests. "Normally our unusual requests have to do with where we sing," Olmstead explained. "We have sung to guys at factories and construction sites, as well as to teachers in their classrooms."

The Black Canyon Chorus is also available to sing at fundraisers, parties, or social events. Fees depend on the length and type of performance.

Recently, the Black Canyon Chorus performed at a birthday party for a man's 80th birthday. "His children wanted our whole chorus to perform, which can be hard to gather together," Olmstead said. "But we did it, and all 23 of us at the time went to the party. Apparently the man, earlier in his life, was a barbershop member, so he was really surprised and happy. We had a lot of fun and so did he."

Funds obtained from their annual show, which will be on June 15, and the Singing

Valentines allows the Black Canyon Chorus to purchase music, hire a professional music director, make a donation to the church where they practice and to cover the expenses of their annual show guest quartet and the Pavilion.

"There are no requirements to becoming a member," Olmstead explained. "You just have to be male and have an interest in singing. People can go to our website to learn more information and then visit one of our meetings."

The Black Canyon Chorus meets every Thursday evening at 7 p.m. at the Olathe United Methodist Church, 518 Hersum Street in Olathe. People are always welcome to come watch or join in the singing.

Olmstead said that the best part of being in the Black Canyon Barbershop Chorus is making people happy.

"We really have a great time singing to people," he said. "I just love bringing music to people in the community."

For more information, go online to , call 970-596-3196 to learn more about the Singing Valentines, or call 970-486-0126 to learn more about the Black Canyon Chorus itself.

READ LOCAL

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OUT AND ABOUT OVER THE HOLIDAYS!



Above, Michael Covington of Ouray moves snow the old-fashioned way on Dec. 28.



Above, the spirit of the Season at Camelot Gardens in Montrose. Photo by Claire Clemens.



Proving that even in the snowy Switzerland of America leadership is Red hot, Erin Eddy of Ouray Brewing Company.

Below, posing with the Christmas tree at Russell Stover's fabulous new Montrose store on South Townsend are left to right, Amanda Morris, Carolyn Long, Jodi Claydon and Jennifer Lopez. Photo by Claire Clemens.



Below, Ouray after an overnight snowfall.



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Why when we think of paving it seems it's always concrete or asphalt that we think of first? Well, there is a new alternative. It's so new yet it's over 3,000 years old. Did you know that when you install concrete or asphalt you better be prepared to do some major repair in as little as 10 years? Some installations may be in need of repair much sooner and, of course, some may last a little longer. Also, these impervious paving materials contribute to wasted water. Why not consider a paving practice that may be timeless and environmentally sustainable?



BASALITE PAVERS

TIMELESS

Have you ever heard the saying, "all roads lead to Rome"? Those roads were made of cobbles and many of those ancient roads are still in existence today. I have encouraged the use of "cobbles" or manufactured pavers on a sand base for decades. Some of my designs look as great today as the day they were installed many years ago. And now there is a renaissance to use pervious pavers as a solution to wasteful water runoff in areas where water is a precious commodity. I recently attended a major Landscape Architecture trade show where there were many booths featuring various pervious paving materials

and other drainage improving products. I was both amazed and sadden that these products are just now hitting the US market. I was familiar with many of them in Germany 30 years ago. A popular product, grass-pavers, was promoted for areas where green grass is desired but may be subject to vehicle traffic. Wow, it was promoted as revolutionary. But it has been used in Europe for decades.



There are now paving stone products that are so super-porous they can be used for parking areas with no runoff. Instead of designing in large retention areas we can use porous pavers to capture precious rainwater and direct it into the ground that would otherwise be wasted or hazardous. This ground water would, also, contribute to parking lot shade tree survival. Parking lots don't have to be barren and hot concrete wastelands



Berlin, Germany parking lot

I have heard local resistance to using pavers on a sand base as too unstable on our shifting ground. What better place to use a flexible paving system? When the ground shifts under concrete or asphalt it cracks and breaks. Pavers may heave a little but those areas are easily leveled with minimal costs verses reinstalling concrete or asphalt. Pavers have been used for centuries in the European Alps and that area doesn't shift any less than the Rockies. Here are some examples of the attractive use of pavers

on a sand or screed chip stone base. All these areas are more environmentally friendly than impervious pavement and much more attractive.



Where the plotter to assassinate Hitler were executed



BASALITE PAVERS AND WALL BLOCKS available from Pioneer Sand and Gravel in Olathe

STORM WATER HARVESTING

Did you know that in Colorado it is unlawful to have a rain barrel? Legally speaking it is also unlawful to look up in the sky during a rain-fall and catch water in your mouth. That is a ridiculous example but true. In Colorado all water is owned by someone else who has early water rights. Those owners of water expect rainfall to collect in their water-right areas to be used for their purposes. Any water collected by someone else in their watershed is considered stolen property. Water may be directed into the ground where it will eventually move into their streams and irrigation ditches. That is why, in Colorado, **it is legal to direct but not collect**. There are some exceptions but it is generally illegal to have cisterns or unauthorized retention ponds. But you can direct that rain water to areas where it will soak (percolate) into the ground. This is where water harvesting comes in.

A lot of water is wasted when it is misdirected "down hill." Typical storm water systems move water from point A to point B with the intent to minimize flooding and as fast as possible. This old concept of engineering water away creates problems when the quantity and quality of the water is not properly accounted for. Natural meandering streams become straightaway sleuths. Contaminated water pollutes wetland areas, streams and rivers. Volumes of water becomes wasted or outright dangerous. More recently there are efforts to manage that storm water in a more environmentally sustainable manner. Many water managers are calling this practice "rain water harvesting." Instead of sending the water downhill they are looking for ways to use the water to supplement or reduce treated water which is becoming



Rain Chain used in a Japanese garden. Photo image taken from the Web

more scarce as climate changes and populations grow. When domestic water is scarce or worse, restricted for landscape use, methods are being tried to collect as much storm water for more attractive landscapes. Cities like Seattle, San Francisco, Portland and Phoenix are encouraging the implementation of "rain gardens." Even our Nations Capitol has rain garden displays within walking distance of the Capitol Building. Brad Lancaster travels the lecture circuit promoting the concept of water harvesting. His book, *Rainwater Harvesting for Drylands and Beyond*, is an excellent source of information. He is from the Phoenix area and Phoenix is a great example where water harvesting is having a terrific effect on the quality of their urban landscape. When you drive around Phoenix you can admire the preponderance of vibrant landscapes that are difficult to encounter in the Western Slope. It is not because our climate is that much different, it is because of their incorporation of the techniques of water harvesting.

Direct water from rain gutters and paved areas to low depressions in your landscape and use these areas to locate your landscape plants that may require more water. You can also create a "bog" area where runoff water can collect and filter through the landscape returning to the ground in a much cleaner condition. An excellent item to incorporate in a rain garden is a rain chain. These handy devices are an attractive way to enjoy the water collect from your rain gutters into your rain garden. I have directed water from my rain gutter, across my driveway towards one of two honey locusts trees. Both trees were about the same size when planted but one was planted about a year before the other. The one receiving the additional rain water is about 50% larger than the other now. Proof that rain water harvesting works.

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Legislative Update

By Senator Ellen Roberts

Amidst the holiday hubbub and celebrating my 30th anniversary with my terrific husband, Rick, on New Year's Eve, I've been working on ideas and drafts of bills for the new legislative session. On Jan. 9th, 100 state legislators from across Colorado will begin another session of no more than 120 days.

November's election results changed the political composition of the Colorado legislature from divided control to single party domination, residing with the Democrats in the Senate, House and the governor's office. Single party control didn't work out so well for the last governor and we'll see how this governor handles it. As for me, though in the minority, I anticipate working hard and getting bills passed that make sense and help my district and the state.

There'll be no shortage of controversies this year, some repeats from the recent past and some new. From the debates on the pros and cons of civil unions, oil and gas issues, gun control efforts, budget and taxes, there'll be plenty of blood sport for the reporters to fixate on, but I'm hoping we spend more time on what everyone says they'll focus on, that is, improving

Colorado's economy and getting people back to work.

The unemployment rate in my district remains high, between 7.4 – 8.5 percent, depending on location, and many small business owners have told me that the business climate is so unfriendly and uncertain, they don't know how much longer they'll be able to hang on. Sobering words and worthy of legislative action, not rhetoric.

The abysmal failure on the part of those in Washington, D.C., to deal responsibly and timely with the financial condition of this country will haunt us through the legislative session and add significant uncertainty to the legislature's budget decisions. As of the writing of this column, we're hanging on to the federal fiscal cliff by our collective fingernails, still waiting for what now appears to be, at best, another rendition of kick the can down the road.

However frustrating that is, we've no choice but to move on with the state's business. I'll continue to be on the Senate Health and Human Services Committee, this year as the ranking Republican member. There'll be many consequential decisions before this committee as implementation of the federal health bill rolls around. The U.S. Supreme Court decision

this past summer gave states the option of not expanding Medicaid eligibility further upward without putting at risk our current Medicaid funding from the federal government.

Without realized cost containment and already explosive growth in the costs of this state program, I believe we should put the existing Medicaid program on solid fiscal ground before expanding it further. I'm continuing to work on legislation aimed at reducing Medicaid fraud and am also sponsoring a bill improving access to primary care providers.

The dramatic rise in costs of the Medicaid program puts it in direct competition with those looking for better funding in many other areas of the budget, most notably, education. There's talk of proposing a ballot measure for a state tax increase for education, but with the impending 2013 tax increases in many areas at the federal level, this ballot measure will likely face a stiff headwind of resistance from voters.

Much to consider this legislative session, please send me your thoughts.

Ellen S. Roberts, State Senator
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Home phone: (970) 259-1594

VOA/RSVP VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION PHOTOS

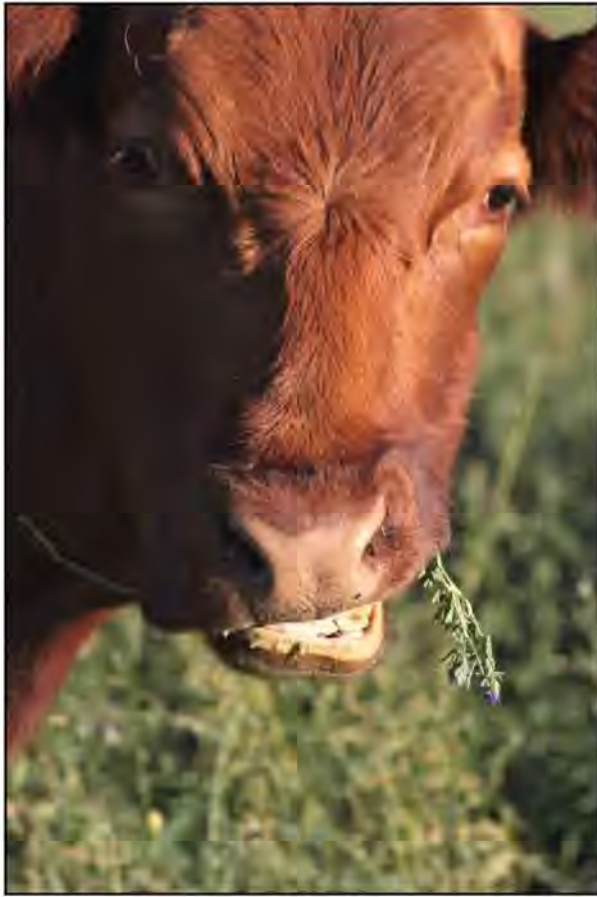


More than 4,000 LIFETIME HOUR AWARDS are given to, from left, Rhea Gano, 4,197 hours; Helen Estep, 4,484; Wayne Quade, 6,500; and Gayle Clarke-Watford, 4,832. Not pictured are Gwendolyn Carlile, 5,174 hours; Phoebe McKinney, 4,442 hours; and Pete Loncar, 4,026. (RSVP Photo).



LOUISE SIMONSON is honored as VOA's Volunteer of the Year from The Homestead at Montrose, during the recent volunteer recognition event. (Courtesy photo).

Princess Beef grows happy cows



One of Princess Beef's hundred happy cows grazes rich pasture on Fruitland Mesa near Crawford.

**By Rita H. Clagett,
North Fork Bureau Reporter**

"We're trying to emulate nature long ago, where you had huge herds of bison that would roam around and stay in a tight herd, kept together by predators. They'd plow up the ground with their hoof action, which allows rain to penetrate the earth and soak in more, and drop manure which is fertilizer, and seeds, and then they would move off and go to a new spot, and they wouldn't come back for quite a while."

Cynthia Houseweart, founder and proprietor of [Princess Beef](#), explains the concept of Holistic Range Management, which she uses to raise the grass-finished beef that has made her family business a growing success in the North Fork Valley. Houseweart started about 15 years ago with one cow and her calf, and has gradually increased the Princess Beef herd with a careful eye on genetics. This year she sold almost 40 steers to 100 eager

customers who had all signed up by June for October delivery.

"Come meet us. Come see what we do," says Cynthia. "Know exactly what you're eating. We sell out every year. Next year we'll give repeat customers first chance at ordering early, then open it up."

We're talking at the Houseweart family ranch on Rogers Mesa west of Hotchkiss, which has been in the family for a hundred years. Cynthia's husband Ira works in his metal shop across the driveway from the farmhouse. Tiny gingerbread houses made by Cynthia and Ira's two daughters decorate the table, and homemade ornaments hang from the Christmas tree.

"I graduated from Colorado College," Cynthia says, "and I wasn't sure what I wanted to do. I had lined up a variety of things for that summer... I started my adventures with a cattle drive at the Allen ranch." Steve and Rachel

Allen were early pioneers of Holistic Range Management in the North Fork Valley, on their ranch at the west end of Fruitland Mesa south of Crawford. Cynthia Butterfield, at the time, went on some other adventures that summer, but, she says, "I came back to the Allen ranch, and never really left after that. That was in '93."

A couple of years after she started working for them, the Allens gave Cynthia a cow she named Princess, and her calf. That was the beginning of Princess Beef. About the same time she was starting her herd, she learned of Jo Robinson, an investigative journalist writing about the [benefits](#) of raising animals on pasture. Robinson has identified hundreds of peer-reviewed studies from the 1960s to the present that show that

raising animals on pasture is good for the animals, the environment, farm families, and the health of consumers. Cynthia based her nascent business on this theory, and started selling the steers to friends and family, keeping the females for the herd. And the rest is, well, history.

In just over 15 years, she has built a herd of a hundred healthy, happy bovines who provide dozens of customers with clean and delicious beef.

"I think the thing that makes Princess Beef special is that we have our animals from birth all the way to slaughter," Cynthia explains. By selective breeding, she has grown a herd of smaller cows that are "more efficient" and thrive on grass.

While they will use antibiotics if an animal is sick, she explains, they don't sell it as Princess Beef, it goes to the sale yard. "What we've found is our animals are not sick very often, because they're not stuck in a corral or feedlot on their own manure. They're out in the open fresh air and clean pastures, and rotated frequently. We just don't have those problems."

That brings us back to the concept of holistic management. "Holistic management is where you form a goal as to how you want to see the future and work towards that. All our decisions we try and go back to that goal. My goal is to make ranching and agriculture sustainable. It isn't, really, right now,



Calves are weaned at about six months old, usually across a fence, which makes the process less stressful for everyone.

Grass-finished beef better for all

especially if you're playing a commodity market, and the packing houses sort of run the prices on beef.

She continues, "The other thing is how we manage the animals. I try to improve the ground with animal impact. In the long run it's more sustainable because you're not doing it with machinery. You're doing it with animals, that are putting on weight, that you will then make money on. It's like harvesting free solar energy and making money off of it. You improve the soil, you improve the pasture, you improve the animals, then we eat it, it's all around a good thing."

Houseweart uses electric fencing to keep her herd in one section of pasture for a short time, then moves it to another section.

"In the spring when things are growing quickly you want to move them no less than every three days so that they don't overgraze. ... We make these little paddocks with electric fence and keep the herd pretty tight together and move them frequently. That's good for a number of things: fly control, so we don't have to use chemicals to get rid of flies; and they're always eating a variety of pasture."

If the cows are allowed the run of the whole pasture, they will eat the plants they



Princess Beef founder and proprietor Cynthia Houseweart stands amid her herd at the Allen Ranch. Photos by Rita Clagett

being forced to eat stuff they don't like so much."

In the past, they've run both the mother cows and the beef steers together, but this year with the drought, they were forced to split the herd.

Last year Fruitland Mesa had just one month of water, she says, and she and the Allens had seen the writing on the wall and put out an SOS to the [Valley Organic Growers' Association](#). As a result, a family on Stewart Mesa offered their pasture for lease, looking to improve their land through animal impact.

Houseweart expresses deep concerns for the water resources of the valley. "It's huge. It's very scary. We all need to conserve a little more and spread it out a little better. It was very apparent in the drought this year. I mean, if there's no

water there is nothing. It goes back to a desert. So I think we all have to be careful."

Potential drilling in the valley, she says, is "frightening. Especially from an organic perspective. We are so careful about what we put on our land for our plants and soil health. It's very scary."

I ask about the B/B brand I see in Ira's metalwork on one of the corrals out the window. "I used the Allen brand when I first started Princess Beef, then when I got married we decided we should have our own brand," she answers. "My great-great-grandfather homesteaded in Holyoke, Colorado, and his original brand was available. Now all of our cows have the original Butterfield 1902 brand on their hips."

A perfect and poetic touch for this thriving family business.



Fifteen years later, descendants of the original Princess provide a family with income and a community with wholesome meat.

like the best first, and those plants will die out. "If they're forced to eat everything in a little place and then move on, they get a variety of things and then move on. They get high quality all the time. They're not just getting it in the beginning and then



Rita Clagett blogs about everything that makes the North Fork valley special at: www.northforkscrapbook.org

She also writes and posts photos about gardening and eating well at: www.miradormorning.wordpress.com

SHARING THE SAN JUANS WITH THE WORLD...DAVID FRAKES DAY



Solid Muldoon and Durango Democrat Publisher David Frakes Day. Public domain photo.

"It is easy enough to start a paper—keeping it going is what exercises the inventive genius." —*Solid Muldoon* editor David Frakes Day.

By Caitlin Switzer

OURAY—He lived more than a century ago, and built his business long before the Internet and even the railroads arrived in Western Colorado. Yet the newspaper he started in Ouray in 1879 earned him worldwide fame, an audience with the Queen of England and a place in the history books.

By age 18, Ohio native David Frakes Day had already mustered out of the Union Army after three and a half years of service. Ouray County historian and author Jim Pettengill, author of *The Muldoon Man: David Frakes Day* (*Ouray County Historical Society Magazine* Vol. 3, 2005) notes that Day's experiences as a soldier included fighting at Shiloh, Vicksburg and Atlanta, being wounded at least four times, being captured at least three times—and escaping three times—and earning a Medal of Honor. Even more important, notes Pettengill, were the reading and writing skills the young soldier acquired along the way. After the war, Day followed a beloved commanding officer to Missouri,

where he worked, married, fathered five children, and began to write articles for local newspapers.

When Day's brother Stanley struck out for the San Juans in search of mining riches, David Day and another friend, Jerrold Letcher, soon followed. According to Pettengill, "...they moved to Ouray for good on June 4, 1879. Letcher had located a printing press in Lake City, and Day walked to Lake City over Engineer Pass to buy the press and bring it to Ouray, where he and Letcher planned to open a newspaper. That paper would be *The Solid Muldoon*, and it would ensure David Day's place in history."

West Slope author and historian Sandra Dallas has called the *Solid Muldoon* "the most irreverent newspaper in the West." Day was never shy about expressing opinions on any subject, from the removal of the Utes from Colorado to the expansion of Ouray's red light district. A staunch Democrat, he and his newspaper were funded in part by a group of fellow party members, Pettengill notes. According to Fort Lewis College Professor and Colorado historian Duane A. Smith in his book, *The Irrepressible David F. Day* (Western Reflections, 2010), "That made him stand out in a state that in the late 1870's and into the late 1880's generally voted Republican."

"Absolutely fearless," as Smith describes him, "Partisan David took no political prisoners. Politics brought out the best and some believed the worst in the *Muldoon's* Day."

He was also not afraid to boost Ouray's standing in comparison to other nearby locales, as a number of quotes collected by Smith from various issues of *The Solid Muldoon* illustrate.

"Visitors to Ouray pronounce it the cleanest and most pleasantly located camp in the state," he wrote on June 9, 1882, "And it is."

Montrose, by comparison, "is the most forsaken, desolate, barren looking hole in all Colorado. It is located in the midst of a vast alkali bed where greasewood and sage brush refuse to grow."

Neighboring Silverton—occasionally referred to as the "the scourge of the San Juans," endured seemingly endless abuse

from Day.

"Silverton is now referred to as 'the bride of the North Pole,'" he wrote on Jan. 14, 1881.

"Silverton has a heart," he penned on April 27, 1883. "We saw it going in a few days since—three gamblers, two women and a 'yeller dog.'"

As for Grand Junction, it was frequently referred to as "Queen Fraud of the Western Slope" by Day, notes Duane Smith, and the subject of an article entitled, "An Empire Founded on Greed, Gall and Prevarication," that appeared in the *Solid Muldoon* on Jan 14, 1884.

Durango was "too far from Gunnison to ever amount to anything," while Lake City was "too far from Ouray to ever make much of a town."

"Gunnison to have street cars," Day wrote on April 27, 1883. "A wind break is about what Gunnison needs."

Even more distant communities did not escape Day's scorn. On Dec. 12, 1884, he wrote, "*The Del Norte Prospector* complains of a lack of religious service in that village. Wonder if it ever occurred to the Prospector man that the average Del Norte soul was not worth saving."

It can be hard to separate fact from fiction when it comes to Day, whom rumor had as the subject of anywhere from 42 to 47 different liable suits.

"He became famous for the saying, 'No man's property or life is safe while the legislature is in session.'" Notes Civil War Historian [Eric Wittenberg](#), "Day, known nationwide for his caustic wit, honesty and bitter sarcasm, proved that his pen was as mighty as his sword had been nearly thirty years earlier. His fame even spread to England, where Queen Victoria was said to have read his paper for many years."

Although most sources agree that Day received a portion of \$40,000 for his interest in the El Mahdi in 1888 and toured Europe with the proceeds, Pettengill notes him "being presented to Queen Victoria," and Smith states simply that he "used his profits to travel to Europe to see the sights."

Historian Sandra Dallas questioned whether Day ever had an actual audience with the Queen as he later claimed.

Continued on page 15

SHARING THE SAN JUANS WITH THE WORLD...DAVID FRAKES DAY Continued

"He was not above creating stories to fool his readers," Dallas wrote in *Colorado Ghost Towns and Mining Camps* (1985, University of Oklahoma Press). "On a trip to England, he sent back breathless dispatches of his meeting with Queen Victoria, who, he assured readers, was devoted to him and wept with grief when he left." Author and Biographer Michael David Kaplan, in his book [*David Frakes Day, Civil War Hero and Notorious Frontier Newspaperman* \(McFarland, 2011\)](#) writes that Day was presented to the Queen at Victoria Station after a tour of Buckingham Palace.

"The Monarch professed to be an admirer of his, and he later claimed that she was a longstanding subscriber to the *Muldoon*... in subsequent dispatches, he, with tongue in cheek, described the progress of a preposterous mock love affair between himself and the corpulent, seventy-two-year-old, withdrawn ruler...near the end of his three-month stay, he joked that the Queen was disconsolate by the prospect of his departure. At the same time he seized the opportunity to roast (Denver & Rio Grande Railroad President Dave) Moffat, who was expected to visit the British Isles in the near future:

"Queen Vic shipped her maids of honor to Scotland, anchored Buckingham Palace

to the Thames Embankment, issued barbed wire hooks and eyes to the barmaids, suppressed the sale of can openers and appointed a committee of twelve policemen and two gattling guns to receive President Dave Moffat of the Denver & Rio Grande at Liverpool," wrote Day.

Kaplan points out that Day's last wire from England "combined the final episode of his mock romance with the Queen with another dig at Moffat: 'The Queen promised us as we kissed her goodbye at Victoria Station that Dave Moffat would find it 'a little chilly.' God save the Queen."

Moffat, a friend, had thwarted Day's ambitions in 1886 to create a townsite called Ramona near present day Ouray, in an effort to have the Denver & Rio Grande Railway stop at Ramona, where Day had acquired and sold land to investors. If the plan had succeeded, it would have meant great profits for Day, and certain death for Ouray's business community. Ouray locals fought back by engineering a deal with Moffat behind Day's back, and Ramona, named for local author Helen Hunt Jackson, never came into being. The first train, however, pulled into the Ouray Depot on Dec. 15 of 1887, Pettengill notes.

The intrepid *Muldoon* editor certainly made many enemies—both Pettengill and Smith recall an account by Day's wife Vic

of her husband coming home and sitting down to dinner after a bullet had been fired through his hat, and tales of duels with rival publishers abound. He also made friends, however, the dearest of them none other than Railroad builder Otto Mears.

It is Mears who is suspected of penning the obituary, a portion of which appears below, that appeared when Day died at age 67 in Durango, where he had moved to open a second newspaper, *The Durango Democrat*, in 1892:

"As public official, journalist and private citizen he was always guided by the uniform principals of rectitude and integrity, with a mind that rose superior to fear, to selfish interest and corruption, but ever zealous for the public uplift and weal."

The gentle humor that Day brought to his work as a journalist in the San Juans began a tradition that continues today with Kevin Haley's brilliant [*San Juan Horsehoe*](#), and can be enjoyed in its original form even now in these delightful briefs from 1884. "Tomorrow will be Arbor Day and property owners should not overlook the shrubbery," Day wrote on April 25, 1884. On May 2 of that year, he followed up: "Arbor Day was not a howling success in this section, it is only on St. Patrick's and Bock Beer occasions that our people enthuse."

HONORABLE MENTION

To our readers...Happy New Year!

To pastry chef Erin Latta at Ouray's Artisan Bakery...for baking such wonderful, REAL croissants ...

To our Montrose Mirror sponsors and advertisers...thanks for being part of our mission to share Western Colorado with the world!

To writer Marcy Neth for sharing her experiences as parent of a child with Aspergers...

To my former Telluride Daily Planet co-worker [**Reilly Capps**](#), for being the best young writer on Earth. Talent and brilliance DO count. It takes hard work and a higher power to write like this. Read and enjoy...and encourage Reilly to finish that book already!

OPINION/EDITORIAL

A TEACHABLE MOMENT...ASPERGERS, FIRSTHAND

By Marcy Neth

AURORA--My first baby didn't look at me in the hospital. His first coos and smiles were not directed at a person, but at picture we had hanging on the wall above his changing table. He could not sleep without being in motion. He was speaking in sentences at one and reading fluently by three. As a toddler he had enormous outbursts of frustration that frightened his daycare provider. He started biting when he was about three.

He is on the Autism Spectrum, currently diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome.

I was tricked by his early language skills and didn't understand at the time the difference between speaking and pragmatic communication. If he had not been speaking I might have sought early intervention, but I didn't. His father and I were on our own with him. The outbursts and biting had me worried. He could read, but he refused to even attempt to write. A preschool teacher suggested the possibility of a developmental disorder. I got an initial evaluation and started occupational therapy and speech therapy when he was four.

At five he got a tentative diagnosis of Asperger's. It was tentative because my son refused to talk much to the psychologist who was evaluating him. He refused all tests. He was obstinate and had violent moments. I learned fairly early to keep him out of situations that might cause a breakdown, but he was unpredictable. Driving a different way home might cause a two-hour meltdown, or not, no matter where we were. We had to depend on routine.

That sort of public crash is what has been in the news lately. Could Asperger's drive a person to murder? Do those very noisy meltdowns evolve into violence? I don't believe it works that way. A person on the Autism Spectrum would be no more or less likely to commit crime than anyone else, even less likely. Rules and boundaries are important tools for navigating the world. The biting and screaming sessions

that I have experienced first hand come from anxiety and confusion about the world, a reaction to external stimuli.

My son has an extremely sweet nature, and this tends to be common on the Autism Spectrum. At 12 he still holds my hand and watches My Little Pony with his sister. He loves animals and nature, but he is scared of the world. He doesn't understand it the way his younger siblings naturally do. Asperger's is a developmental puzzle. The way the brain processes information is different...not wrong, just different. He doesn't have a mental illness. He doesn't need to be "fixed". He has a different way of being. It is up to me, as his parent, to guide him through the world as gently as I can; to make sense of the things he doesn't understand; to help others understand him.

I have been given an enormous amount of advice: spank; don't spank; gluten and casein free diets; chelation therapy; definitely don't vaccinate. I have done a lot of personal research but find that there is no panacea. Gluten-free diets do nothing for my son. I don't believe in chelation and I do believe in vaccines. My son has an easier time of life when I reduce his dairy intake, so I do. He is also on medication that helps him reduce obsessive thinking and makes change a little easier for him. He stopped biting in third grade, when he started the meds.

Above all else, his special ed providers at school have been essential. He gets occupational therapy and pragmatic speech therapy at school. He is learning to tie shoes and hold conversations. Teaching these things requires education and training I don't have. I am grateful every day to have these educators on his side.

Asperger's as a diagnosis is going to disappear with the newest edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM). They will lump it in with Autism Spectrum disorders and it won't be its own thing. I don't disagree with this change. Asperger's has been ste-



My son has an extremely sweet nature, and this tends to be common on the Autism Spectrum. Children with Asperger's do not lack empathy; but they often lack the knowledge of appropriate social cues. Courtesy photo.

reotyped into a socially awkward boy who loves math and doesn't understand emotion. Children with Asperger's do not lack empathy. They often lack the knowledge of social cues that would tell them to exhibit empathy at appropriate moments, but they have strong emotions. To calm himself down, my son likes to be around babies. Babies have very basic social cues and he responds accordingly.

I worry about all the current misinformation about Asperger's, mental illness and violence.

I don't want cures or cages for a perfectly nice young man. I suspect he will get to college and shine. He plans to be a zoologist, but I think he may end up being a special ed teacher.

My son has a great future in front of him. I don't want anything-- especially ignorance--to stand in his way.

Marcy Neth is a professional educator and mother of three who lives and works in Aurora, Colorado.

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Send contributions to editor@montrosemirror.com.

REGION

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ARTS AND CULTURE

WAIT UNTIL DARK OPENS AT MAGIC CIRCLE THEATRE!



Jessica Kastendieck as Susy Hendrix in Wait Until Dark, opening this month at the Magic Circle Theatre. Courtesy photo.

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE--For an exciting evening of suspenseful mystery and a triumph of human determination, don't miss Magic Circle Theatre's production of *Wait Until Dark* by Frederick Knott, which opens Jan. 11, 2013.

Set in a basement-level New York apartment in the 1960s, *Wait Until Dark* tells the story of a recently handicapped young woman, Susy Hendrix (played by Jessica Kastendieck). She must outwit a murderous band of confidence men who will stop at nothing to possess a fortune in heroin her husband Sam (Troy Lee) has inadvertently brought into their home.

While Sam is gently pressing Susy to regain her confidence in coping with a world she struggles with, being somewhat less helpful is Gloria, a young girl who

lives in the apartment upstairs (played in six performances by Jewel Kastendieck and two performances by Brenna Russell).

When Sam is out late one evening, three criminals—a slippery con artist named Mike Talman (Peter Ambrose), a bogus police sergeant named Carlino (Travis Russell) and a determined psychotic named Harry Roat (Nate Cretti)—intrude their way into Susy's apartment and instill doubt and fear in her mind.

As the criminals' plot proceeds, Susy notices clues of their deceit and inconsistencies in their behavior.

When it becomes obvious she has become their target for murder, she devises a desperate defense strategy based on her handicap. Will she prevail against the foe or will evil prevail against her? For the answer, you will have to *Wait Until Dark*.

Rounding out the cast are police officers Chris Tarman and Charles Lee.

Directed by John Snyder, who directed *Broadway Bound* for MCP, and with Dave Olson, assistant director, *Wait Until Dark* uses darkness and silence like a switchblade in the night.

Be assured, the action is ominous and heart-stopping. If you love thrillers, it's a perfect way to spend an exciting time at Magic Circle Players.

Evening performances are on Jan. 11, 12, 18, 19, 25 and 26 at 7:30 p.m. with Sunday matinees on Jan. 13 and 20 at 2 p.m.

Tickets sales open to the public on Jan. 8 at the box office of Magic Circle Theatre, 420 South 12th Street, Montrose, or by phone at 970-249-7838.

Box office hours are 2-5 p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.



Alternating in the role of Gloria in the Magic Circle Theatre production of Wait Until Dark are Brenna Russell, above, and Jewel Kastendieck (not shown).

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SKI SEASON UPDATE WITH J. BERNDT

By J. Berndt

REGIONAL—Like it or not winter is upon us and with the recent snowfalls the ski resorts are up and running, ready to get you on that lift and up the mountain! Living in Montrose we are fortunate enough to have three ski slopes with no more than a two hour drive. They all have their unique terrain with runs to suit every skill level.

Powderhorn Mountain resort can be found on the Grand Mesa, the largest flat-top mountain in the world, with an average of 250 inches of snow in a single season. As of now they have a 43 inch base with 100 percent of the lifts open. In just a five-day period they accumulated 32 of these inches, enough to make shoveling snow a part-time job.

Skier Chris Clemens of Cedaredge said that he has missed only two days at Powderhorn so far.

"It's the best snow in Colorado right now," Clemens said. "I have skied unbelievably good powder every day for a week—the resort is 100 percent open, and they've got the snow--the base is as high as anywhere in the state. Steamboat may be a little ahead, but 40 inches sure goes a lot further here at Powderhorn!"

Telluride, along with other ski resorts in Colorado have had somewhat of a slow start considering the lack of snow when the season opened, but with a few snow storms they are at 25 inches, with 15 of the 18 lifts now open. Tom Watkinson in charge of the PR & Communications at Telluride Ski & Golf said, "We will ensure the terrain is safe before it is opened to the public."

Crested Butte is another favorite of the locals as well as people from all over the world as being one of the best extreme skiing areas. That is if you can brave the cooler temperatures. They have a 31-inch mid-mountain depth and 12 of the 16 lifts are open. If Mother Nature does as expected, this week's snows will help with getting the rest of the mountain open. Crested Butte is host to many great events during the winter, but there is one you need to mark on the calendar and that's the Crested Butte Songwriters Fest, January 18th through the 19th. The fest will have many diverse song writers from all over the world.

The snow fall came a little late this year and I know all of you ski bums and bunnies were holding your heads in your hands sobbing hoping for nothing more



Powderhorn has some of Colorado's best snow right now. Courtesy photo Powderhorn Mountain Resort.

than some fresh powder. Well, I'm going to predict this will be one of the better winters than we have had the past few years. I'm not sure where I came up with this, but in this day and age if the masses have smart phones, everyone's a weather man... or weather woman...or meteorologist.

Forum for Farmers and Ranchers Jan. 10

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE—If you're a small-acreage farmer or livestock producer, or if you're interested in becoming one, you won't want to miss the inaugural Western Colorado Food and Farm Forum (WCFFF). This new conference, which will be Thursday, Jan. 10, at the Montrose County Fairgrounds in Friendship Hall, will focus on sustainably improving the production, marketing and consumption of locally grown food products.

The forum is organized into three primary tracks—crops, livestock and business management. Participants will choose workshops from the three tracks for each of six breakout sessions. Fred Provenza,

is the Keynote Speaker at lunch. His presentation will be on "The Web of Life: How Behavior Connects Humans, Wildlife and Landscapes." His commentary will be very interesting and thought provoking.

The conference is designed to allow time for networking and gathering resources from participating vendors. Vendor exhibit space is only \$75. There is still space available for vendors.

The Western Colorado Food and Farm Forum is a collaborative effort between the Valley Food Partnership, CSU Tri-River Area Extension Service, the Small Business Development Center and the Rocky Mountain Farmers Union Cooperative and Economic Development Center. Sponsors

include these organizations along with Community Banks of Colorado.

Learn more about the event by visiting the Valley Food Partnership website at www.valleyfoodpartners.org. Registration is \$45 in advance by Jan. 2 or \$60 at the door, and includes lunch plus morning and afternoon refreshments. Those interested in attending need to register via the CSU Extension website at:

www.Colostate.edu/Depts/CoopExt/TRA/prog.shtml.

For more information about the forum, sponsorship, exhibiting at the event or attendee registration, contact Becky Denton at 970-874-2195 or via email, bdenton@deltacounty.com.

REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

MMH DONATES TO SHARING MINISTRIES



Special to the Mirror
MONTROSE—In light of the Christmas spirit, the staff and physicians at Montrose Memorial Hospital participated in a food drive to support Sharing Ministries. Forty-five turkeys were collected and the Admissions Department won the contest for the most food gathered. The hospital also donated \$500 to Sharing Ministries on behalf of the Montrose Medical Staff. Left to Right: Patricia Chaloupka, Board of Directors for Sharing Ministries receives a check from MMH CEO, Dave Hample.



graphic design

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Hold the Date! Upcoming Business and Cultural Events

ONGOING-

First Friday Stroll Montrose Downtown —Monthly from 5:30 p.m.-8p.m. Artist Demonstrations, Free Wine Tastings, and in store promotional events!

Montrose Indoor Farm Market—1st and 3rd Saturdays of every month, Centennial Plaza.

Jan. 1—New Year's Day!

Jan. 1—Beaumont Grill in Ouray (505 Main St.) open 4 to 9 p.m., come and sit by the fire! Call 970-325-7000 for reservations.

Jan. 4—Free Puppet Show, Dusty's Gold, Montrose Regional Library Meeting Room (320 South Second St.)

Jan. 4—First Friday Stroll, Montrose Downtown., 5:30 to 8 p.m.

Jan. 7—Western Colorado Botanical Gardens and Western Colorado Center for the Arts in Grand Junction present children's class-Forms in Nature. Info@wcbotanic.org.

Jan. 10—Western Colorado Food and Farm Forum, Friendship Hall, Montrose County Fairgrounds. For more information about the forum, sponsorship, exhibiting at the event or attendee registration, contact Becky Denton at 970-874-2195 or via email, bdenton@deltacounty.com.

Jan.10-13—18th annual [Ouray Ice Festival!](#) Ouray Ice Park, Ouray.

Jan. 12-League of Women Voters presents a Fracking panel discussion at Bill Heddles Rec Center in Delta. 10 a.m. to Noon.

Jan. 12—Montrose ACT Business to Business Expo, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Montrose Pavilion.

Jan. 18—Closing reception for Lynn Vogel and Bill Wilson's Wired Two, Around the Corner Gallery, 5:30 to 8 p.m.

Jan. 16-Cactus and Succulants in the Rock Garden, with instructor Don Campbell. Noon to 1 p.m. Presented by Grand Junction Parks and Recreation. Call 254-3866 for more information.

Jan. 19-21—Second Annual Songwriters Festival in Crested Butte, to feature Robert Earl Keen, Dean Dillon and others.

Jan. 26—Blue Sky Music benefit for Hospice and KVNF, 8 p.m. at the Montrose Pavilion, with Take 5 and Curtis Stigers. Reserved seat tickets available at Around the Corner Art Gallery.

Feb. 1—Western Colorado Botanical Gardens and Western Colorado Center for the Arts in Grand Junction present children's class-Paper Making and Paper Wasps. Info@wcbotanic.org.

Feb. 14—Brown Bag Lunch, USDA Rural Development Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) grant application training, at DMEA building (11925 6300 Road), 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Learn about implementation of commercially available energy efficiencies or renewable energy products on a commercial building or making Energy Efficiency improvements to a manufacturing process or equipment such as coolers, refrigerators, etc. Training is free, but space is limited - RSVP required. Call 970.874.5735 x 136 to register.

Feb. 14—Valentine's Day!

Feb. 15—The Center Affaire—A Friend Raiser for Center for Mental Health, 6 to 9 p.m., Holiday Inn Express (1391 South Townsend Ave.).

March 8—Western Colorado Botanical Gardens and Western Colorado Center for the Arts in Grand Junction present children's class-Batiks and Insects. Info@wcbotanic.org.

March 16—Montrose Gala, Hospice & Palliative Care. Montrose Pavilion., 6:30 p.m.--Champagne Reception & Silent Auction, 7:30 p.m, Dinner & Live Auction, 9 p.m., Dance to the music of Miss Emily with Project Groove. The community is a big part of our success, with more than 400 people attending each year. If you're interested in attending the Montrose Gala or want to support Hospice & Palliative Care of Western Colorado through the Gala, please contact Nancy Hoganson, Director of Community Relations at 970-240-7776.

May 3—Western Colorado Botanical Gardens and Western Colorado Center for the Arts of Grand Junction present children's class-Birds and Their Habitat. Info@wcbotanic.org.

June 22--Fifteenth Annual Montrose Golf Tournament for Hospice, Bridges of Montrose.



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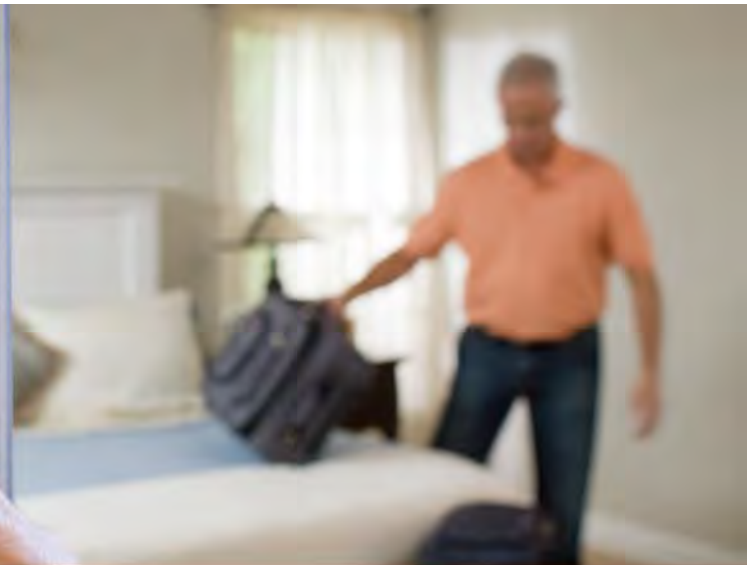
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Left, Camelot Gardens offers a warm blast of color during the chilliest months of the year (photo by Claire Clemens) ...above, Kathy Flower and Dave Bowman escape the cold at Horsefly Brewing Company on Dec. 26. Dave's Blue Sky Music Presents will host the Annual Benefit for Hospice and KVNF on Jan. 26 at the Montrose Pavilion.



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