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CITIZENS ASK RE-1J BOARD TO FOCUS ON ACADEMICS, NOT SOCIAL AGENDAS; BOARD VOTES TO RENEW CONTRACT WITH VISTA CHARTER SCHOOL



Constituent John Brown addressed the Board of Education during the meeting of Aug. 12: "...Please do something to bolster our math and reading scores, and possibly if there's a way that we can have MCA reapply, let them reapply and show them that we really care about our children, not our own agendas." Meeting Screenshot.

By Caitlin Switzer

MONROSE-Montrose County School District RE-1J Board of Education Vice President Stephen Bush (District G) presided over the regular board meeting of Tuesday, Aug. 12. Along with Bush, board members present included District A Director Neisha Balleck; District C Director Alice Murphy; and District F Director Jody Hovde.

Board President Sarah Fishering (District E); District B Director Ted Valerio; and District D Director Tom West were absent.

Bush called the meeting to order and led in saying the Pledge of Allegiance.

Directors voted to approve the meeting agenda.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

District Public Information Officer (PIO) Mikayla Unruh introduced Future Farmers of America (FFA) students from Olathe and Montrose, who shared their experiences at the Montrose County Fair. Altogether, 22 students from

[Continued pg 27](#)

COACH'S CORNER: BRETT MERTENS – RED HAWKS VARSITY FOOTBALL COACH

By Cliff Dodge

MONROSE-August 4th was a very special day in the lives of thousands of high school students--August 4th was the first day of football practice throughout the State of Colorado.

The real work of popping helmets and shoulder pads did not commence until Monday, Aug. 11. The Montrose Red Hawks began preparing for their first battle with an opponent wearing a different colored jersey, the always difficult task of taking on the Durango Demons in Durango on Aug. 22.

The real preparation began for the Red Hawks in June when Coach Mertens took his team to a football camp along with a number of other teams. The non-contact camp over three days gave the Red Hawks the opportunity to test their skills against opponents in 7 on 7 and 11 on 11 drills, in addition to five scrimmages versus other



Red Hawks leaving the practice field. Photo by Cliff Dodge.

[Continued pg 5](#)

*Dr. Lauren Hall Ruddell, PhD:
Your Brain on Nature!*

*Regional Health Departments Share
Information on smoke, air quality!*

*Do Colorado Courts Protect
Pedophiles? Parents Speak Out!*

*The Satisfied Woman:
By Gia Pirelli!*

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Dear Readers:

We appreciate your letters! We like reading and hearing opinions from all perspectives. We are sharing herewith our updated guidelines: In the past we have had one rule, to be implemented at the editor's discretion. We are now including two more suggested "Rules" for letter writers.

RULE 1. The Dead Horse Rule has been in place from the start of the *Mirror*. This is somewhat self-explanatory, but there are times when something has been said so many times it can run afoul of the "Dead Horse Rule," in which case we will inform the writer.

RULE 2. While there are always exceptions, a letter can often say what needs to be said in one page or less. Our pages are 8.5 X 11, we use a 10 pt Calibri font; letters that are roughly 800 words fit well within this suggested guideline.

RULE 3. Please limit repetitive mud-slinging to avoid bumping up against Rule 1. Also, in the case of those writing to intentionally discredit a public official or candidate for public office, please provide a link to the source of your allegation if possible. Unsourced, unproven allegations are not credible, and could in fact be untruths.

Finally, opinions expressed in letters and commentary are those of the authors themselves, and do not reflect the views of the *Montrose Mirror* or editorial staff.

Thank you,
Caitlin Switzer,
Montrose Mirror Editor



the **Montrose Mirror**

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We welcome community contributions and commentary! Please note, submitted content does not necessarily reflect the views of the *Montrose Mirror* or its editorial team.

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Intro to Hiking Safety

Intro to Hiking Safety
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OPINION/EDITORIAL: CORRECTION

CORRECTION TO READER OP-ED IN PREVIOUS ISSUE

CORRECTION: Leah Vandersluis has shared the following correction to her previous Op-Ed (MM650)-- *"I meant to say "aircraft carrier" instead of "nuclear submarine." Fyi, a nuclear submarine generally has 140 to 180 people on board, where an aircraft carrier can have up to about 7,000."*

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COACH'S CORNER: BRETT MERTENS RED HAWKS VARSITY FOOTBALL COACH *From pg 1*

other teams.

When asked about the Red Hawks as they faced the new season, Coach Mertens was forthright in pointing out that attempting to assess the strengths and weaknesses of his team would be a work in progress, as pre-season practices and actual competition will tell the coaching staff a great deal about the future success of this team.

The Red Hawks have roughly 40 players who were holdovers from last year's team that played for the 5A state championship at Canvas Stadium at CSU in Fort Collins. The Red Hawks are itching to return to the championship fray and win the final game of the 2025 season.

The offensive and defensive lines have several returning lettermen including Easton Jessup, Trevor Prock, Preston Bercillio, Brent Brashers, Owen Cervantes and Dyllan Thompson. The offense continues to run the football while the defense continues to stop the opposing offense from successfully penetrating the Red Hawks gritty front seven.

The Red Hawks return Cade Saunders at quarterback, Chase Mehan at running

back, and Elijah Womack at fullback. A bevy of running backs includes Maverick Powers, Biniyam Kenny, Lincoln Jones, Cutter Travers, Rian Reeder, Jayce England along with many underclassmen.

The receiving corp includes Aadin Gonzales, Owen Evans, Liam Deater, Ryan Pankey and a host of sophomores and juniors.

The Red Hawks Southwestern League continues to be a daunting task. Several of the teams on the Red Hawks' schedule have new coaching staffs, so offensive and defensive changes will abound. Pueblo West will be one of the best teams in the state this season, as will Mesa Ridge. The rest of the league includes Doherty, Falcon and Widefield.

The rest of the Red Hawks schedule includes longtime opponents such as Palisade, Fruita Monument, Grand Junction Central High School, and Greeley West. Coach Mertens keeps an eye out for both the Junior Varsity and the Freshmen teams. Both of these teams also have 10 games on the books that are loaded with natural rivals up and down the schedule.



Red Hawks Scrimmage. Photo by Cliff Dodge.

Game time commences in less than a week as the Red Hawks travel to Durango for the first of 10 games. Coach Mertens believes strongly in his young players and knows and understands the challenges that lie ahead. His philosophy is to play each game one at a time and never look ahead. The coaching staff asks that the players give it their all and then let the chips fall where they may.

REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

DONATION WILL FUND NEW BLANKET WARMERS TO ENHANCE PATIENT COMFORT

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE – The Montrose Regional Health (MRH) Foundation has presented River Valley Family Health Centers with a \$4,000 donation to purchase new blanket warmers for patients. The gift was made possible through the Foundation's San Juan Fund.

"We're proud to support River Valley Family Health Centers with this \$4,000 gift for new blanket warmers," said Kelly Anderson, executive director of the MRH Foundation. "This small but meaningful investment will help provide warmth and comfort to patients during their visits. The Foundation exists to support local health care organizations, especially in times of need."

Blanket warmers (also known as warming cabinets) are used to gently heat blankets and linens for use during and after medical procedures. Providing patients with warm blankets can help prevent hypothermia, particularly for those undergoing surgery or treatment involving anesthesia.

The MRH Foundation invites community members to invest in local health care by donating, volunteering, sponsoring events or becoming a corporate partner. To learn more, visit mrhfoundation.org.



Pictured left to right: Kelly Anderson -MRHF executive director, Kaye Hotsenpiller-MRHF board member president, Leann Tobin -MRH chief ancillary services and marketing officer, Dr. Mary Vader-MRHF board member, and Jeff Mengenhausen-MRH CEO.

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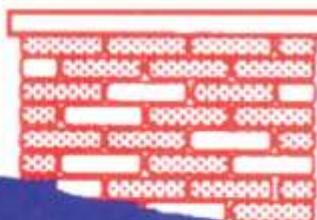
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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

DEPUTY INJURED IN HIGHWAY 145 COLLISION; SUSPECT ARRESTED FOR IMPAIRED DRIVING

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-On Saturday, August 9, 2025, at approximately 11:40 a.m., Montrose County Deputy Sara Riddle was on routine patrol, traveling northbound on Highway 145 near mile marker 113.5 (just outside the town of Norwood) in her marked patrol vehicle.

At the same time, a Ford truck driven by Torrey Bennett (DOB: 11/04/1976) was traveling southbound on Highway 145.

As the vehicles approached each other, the Ford truck crossed over from the southbound lane into the northbound lane, striking the patrol vehicle on the driver's side, from just ahead of the front tire to the rear of the vehicle, causing extensive damage.

Deputy Riddle sustained minor injuries, while Bennett was uninjured.

The Colorado State Patrol arrested Bennett at the scene on charges of Careless Driving, Weaving, Failure to Wear a Seatbelt, and Driving While Ability Impaired by Alcohol.

The Colorado State Patrol is the lead investigating agency for this crash. If you witnessed this crash and have not spoken to investigators, please contact Colorado State Patrol Dispatch at (970) 249-4392 and reference 5C250957. Be prepared to provide your name and contact information so that investigators can reach you.

The Montrose County Sheriff's Office would like to remind everyone that the charges are merely an accusation and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.



Photo courtesy Montrose County Sheriff's Office.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

MONTROSE COUNTY MAN CHARGED WITH 84 COUNTS OF ANIMAL CRUELTY

Montrose County Sheriff's Office News

Release -

MONTROSE-On August 11, 2025, Scott Flores (DOB 6/8/64) was issued a misdemeanor summons for 84 counts of animal cruelty related to animals in his care.

The charges stem from an investigation that began on May 31, when the Montrose County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) received a report of a dead horse on his property.

On June 12, MCSO Animal Control received a second report from a passerby regarding another dead horse on the same property, located at 12484 5875 Road in Montrose. At that time, an MCSO Animal Control Officer spoke with Flores and photographed several horses on the property.

The MCSO Animal Control officer contacted the Bureau of Animal Protection (BAP), the investigative division of the Colorado Department of Agriculture.

On June 19, BAP investigators obtained an administrative search warrant, allowing them to enter and document conditions on the property.

On July 3, a second search warrant was executed, this time with three veterinarians, BAP investigators, and MCSO Investigators present.

Following field evaluations by the veterinarians, 79 horses, four dogs, and one goat were removed from the property and taken to a BAP holding facility for further



Photo courtesy Montrose County Sheriff's Office.

health assessments.

Based on the veterinarians' findings and Colorado law, Flores was charged with 84 misdemeanor counts of animal cruelty. Each count carries a potential penalty of up to 365 days in jail, fines of \$500–\$1,000, and possible anger management treatment.

Flores is required to appear in Montrose County Court on Monday, September 15,

2025, at 8:30 a.m., located at 1200 N. Grand Ave.

*David Farley – Public Information Officer
Montrose County Sheriff's Office*

The Montrose County Sheriff's Office would like to remind everyone that the charges are merely an accusation, and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.



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MIRROR STAFF REPORT-MAN CHARGED WITH ANIMAL CRUELTY IN MONTROSE MAY HAVE FACED SIMILAR CHARGES IN PUEBLO

Mirror Staff report

MONTROSE— Scott Flores, who was recently charged with animal cruelty in Montrose, may have previously faced animal cruelty charges in Pueblo.

An article by Patrick Malone for the *Pueblo Chieftain*, dated Aug. 22, 2002, and entitled [Ranch Foreman Charged with Cattle Theft](#), states: "The former foreman of a ranch where starving cattle and horses were discovered pleaded no contest on Wednesday to a single count of animal cruelty. Scott William Flores, 38, of Pueblo, promised to testify against two co-defendants at trial. In exchange for his plea, 10 more counts of animal cruelty, a Class 1 misdemeanor carrying a maximum sentence of 18 months in jail, were dis-

missed. Flores received a one-year deferred sentence from County Judge Ernest Ruybalid. The judge admonished him that any further charges of animal cruelty would result in an 18-month jail term as Flores stood silently next to his lawyer, Michael Garcia, clutching his black cowboy hat in his hands.

Flores operated a 35,000-acre ranch just northeast of Pueblo off Overton Road, for its owner, Colorado Springs plastic sur-

geon Dr. Alexander McCulloch. Animal control, police and Pueblo County sheriff's deputies investigated the ranch in April after reports that cattle and horses were starving on the bare land."

While the name and age of the Pueblo ranch foreman appear to match those of the livestock owner charged in the Montrose County incident, the *Mirror* has not been able to verify that the two are one and the same.



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DO COLORADO COURTS PROTECT PEDOPHILES? PARENTS SPEAK OUT

By Caitlin Switzer

REGIONAL-In years past the arrest of a local teacher for pedophilia was enough to generate not only headlines, but legal repercussions. Today, many parents fear that the courts are not holding individuals accountable for crimes against children—while those who speak out about an offender may find themselves subject to bullying and repercussions.

In the case of one recent alleged pedophile, the Montrose Police Department issued a news release regarding her arrest, but the courts have continued the case, which remains unresolved. The news release is excerpted below:

"On December 31, 2024, officers of the Montrose Police Department received a report of on-going, inappropriate communications between a teacher and student at Colorado West Christian School, located in Montrose, Colorado. The report was initiated by the student's father.

On January 3, 2025, Lisa Thyre, (44 years of age), was arrested on an arrest warrant following an investigation into the alleged activities between Thyre and a teenage student at the school. Thyre was booked into the Montrose County Jail on the following felony charges and held on a \$10,000.00 bond.

- *Unlawful Electronic Sexual Communications (Persuade to meet.)*
- *Unlawful Sexual Communications (Expose or touch)*
- *Conspiracy to commit tampering with physical evidence.*
- *Tampering with physical evidence."*

[Another recent case](#) involves the arrest of a former San Miguel County Police Officer, Jesus Damian Nieblas, who worked with Norwood schools; the officer was accused of possessing 27 videos of child sex abuse materials.

Several years ago, Award-winning [ProPublica](#) Journalist Hannah Dreyfus did a series of articles on court cases involving abused children, detailing the ways in which the system revictimizes but rarely helps the youngest victims. Several of Dreyfus' articles focused on cases that originated in Western Colorado.

In 2023, [Colorado Politics](#) ran an article about local Judge Cory Jackson—now

head of the 7th Judicial District. Jackson had issued rulings in three cases of child neglect, rulings that were later reversed by the court of appeals.

While those accused of serious crimes do have the right to a fair trial, the youngest victims and their parents often feel that the justice system does not serve them at all. The *Mirror* spoke with several local parents, granting them anonymity to share their concerns.

Here is what they had to say. Their names have been withheld. The first is a young parent with children in the local schools: *"I am writing as both a concerned parent and an engaged citizen regarding the troubling lack of public information in the ongoing case against former teacher Lisa Cianfone-Thyre (also known as Mrs. T). Earlier this year, our community — and much of the nation — was shocked to learn of her arrest on felony charges related to alleged sexual misconduct with a student. Many parents felt blindsided, angry, and deeply disturbed by the nature of the allegations. According to reports, the incidents took place over the Christmas break, when Ms. Cianfone-Thyre allegedly pursued inappropriate communication, including explicit messages, with one of her students, and sought to meet with him in person. These allegations represent a profound violation of trust — one that demands transparency and accountability.*

"Since the initial arrest and media coverage, communication to the public has stopped altogether. The case, which has been scheduled for a plea hearing since April, has been continued multiple times without explanation, leaving parents in the dark. Meanwhile, Mrs. Cianfone-Thyre has been working at a local business while the terms of her release prohibit contact with anyone under the age of 18. It is also known that her child is enrolled in Cottonwood Elementary for the upcoming school year — a school she once openly criticized while employed there. As a parent who has had direct experience with her in the classroom, I recall her making negative statements about administrators and being restricted to email-only communication with families due to undisclosed



A local parent who has had personal experience with the 7th Judicial District courts hopes to bring about change with an initiative called Project Justice. Courtesy image.

concerns. These patterns of behavior underline why many parents remain uneasy. "The lack of progress and communication in this case raises serious questions about whether the judicial process is being applied consistently, and whether a plea deal could result in her avoiding both meaningful accountability and sex offender registration. This is not just about one case — it is about the safety of children in our schools and our community's right to know when potential threats exist. Parents should not have to wonder if the person accused of harming a student might reappear on a school campus. We deserve clear answers from both the courts and school officials: How will this case be resolved? What safeguards are in place? And how can we ensure that individuals accused of predatory behavior are prevented from endangering children again?" When asked to address these concerns, the RE-1J School District provided the following statement:

"Thank you for your inquiry. We understand that serious incidents within the community can generate concern, particularly when they may impact the well-being of students. However, in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Montrose County School District is legally prohibited from disclosing personally identifiable information

DO COLORADO COURTS PROTECT PEDOPHILES? From previous pg

about students or their families without prior written consent.

"As a district, we take the safety and well-being of our students seriously. We maintain strong partnerships with local law enforcement and other relevant agencies and follow all applicable state and federal laws. When matters of legal concern arise in the community, we rely on guidance from those agencies to ensure we are responding appropriately and in accordance with the law."

Another Colorado parent, one who has had personal experience with the 7th Judicial District courts, hopes to bring about change with a new initiative called Project Justice.

Project Justice Colorado is focused on capturing the experiences of parents and families who feel that justice has eluded them in the courtroom. Project Justice states its mission: "We are here to gather the voices of the silenced, through anonymous surveys, to work towards reform in the CO family court. We hope to use what we collect to present to State leadership to fight for change that supports families, not punishes them."

The parent who has helped to create this project explained, "There are three parts to what we are doing: 1. Collecting voices through a survey on the family court. 2.

Collecting experiences through judicial evaluation scorecards (built by using ABA guidance) and when we get enough per judge, we will do scorecards. 3. Mind mapping relationships of all family court professionals nationwide."

Finally, the *Mirror* also heard from a parent who has been highly vocal in her criticism of a court decision involving her child, only to suffer in return. Here is what she had to say: "For more than eight years, I have sought justice and protection after my daughter was placed with her predator through the 7th Judicial system, despite the involvement of individuals with mandatory reporting obligations. Law enforcement repeatedly failed to investigate, refused to document crimes, and allowed those responsible to avoid accountability. Instead of receiving help, I have been excluded from victim advocacy groups, publicly slandered, blocked from public forums, and had my victim statements erased from the record. These actions not only harmed my family but sent a clear message to other victims: in Ouray County, reporting abuse results in retaliation, not protection.

"Organizations such as Hilltop, OCSAP, VAST, MARC, and MEND present themselves as advocates for sexual assault victims, yet they have excluded certain survi-

vors—including me—while aligning themselves with community leaders and officials who protect predators. Their members have deleted my public statements, silenced my voice in community spaces, and spread false information about my case. Despite my repeated calls for internal investigations and my submission of documented evidence, the sheriff's department, town leadership, and county commissioners have failed to act. The lack of policy, accountability, and transparency has created an environment where predators are protected—and victims are abandoned.

"This is the reality of Ouray County's rape culture: those in power shield abusers while punishing the people who speak the truth. I have been labeled 'vicious' for refusing to remain silent about the crimes committed against my daughter and the systemic failures that enabled them. I have lost my livelihood, my reputation, and my family unit because I chose to fight for justice. I will not stop. Our leaders must immediately end their support for individuals and organizations that protect abusers, hold all perpetrators accountable, and ensure every victim has a voice. Until this happens, children like mine will remain unprotected, and our community will remain unsafe."



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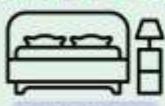
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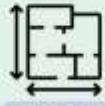
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COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

CBI INVESTIGATING TEEN SHOOTING, TWO JUVENILES IN CUSTODY

Special to the Mirror

LEADVILLE- On Monday, Aug. 11, 2025, at approximately noon, the Lake County Sheriff's Office responded to a report of a shooting near 19773 Hwy 24 in Leadville. A juvenile male reported being confronted by two other juveniles and was shot once in the arm. The victim sustained non-life-threatening injuries and has since been released from a local hospital.

A short time after the incident, Lake

County Sheriff's Deputies located and arrested two male juvenile suspects without incident. Both individuals are from the Leadville/Lake County area and have been charged with Attempted First-Degree Murder.

The Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been requested to take the lead on the investigation, with the Lake County Sheriff's Office assisting.

There is no ongoing threat to the commu-

nity. Due to the involvement of juveniles and the active nature of the investigation, no additional information will be released at this time. Further updates will be provided to the media as they become available.

The CBI and the Lake County Sheriff's Office are asking that anyone with information related to this incident please call the Lake County Emergency Communication Center at 719-486-1249.

FEDERAL CIVIL RIGHTS PLAINTIFF CALLS FOR IMMEDIATE OVERSIGHT OF MONTROSE COUNTY AND COLORADO'S 7TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT AMID GROWING CORRUPTION SCANDAL

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE — The 7th Judicial District, which oversees Montrose County and surrounding areas, is facing intensifying public scrutiny after a wave of civil rights complaints, petitions, and investigative reporting exposed patterns of misconduct, bias, and alleged corruption within its legal system.

Odyis Cruz Osollo, a Montrose County resident and pro se litigant in federal civil rights lawsuit 25-CV-2442-RTG, is publicly demanding immediate intervention by state and federal authorities to halt ongoing retaliation and rights violations connected to his case.

"This is not just about my case or my family anymore. The 7th Judicial District is running a coordinated operation to silence citizens, manipulate outcomes, and protect insiders at the expense of truth and justice," said Osollo. "Recent reporting and public petitions prove I am not alone in this fight — the pattern of abuse is county-wide."

Evidence of Systemic Corruption

Recent developments supporting these concerns include:

-Civil Rights Complaints: Residents across the 7th Judicial District have reported harassment, retaliation, and denial of due process. ([Pagosa Daily Post, Aug. 12, 2025](#))

-Public Petition for Accountability: A petition with growing statewide support accuses district officials of engaging in systematic rights violations, obstruction of justice, and misuse of judicial authority. ([Change.org Petition](#))

-Judicial Bias & Conflicts of Interest: Investigations by the *Montrose Mirror* revealed troubling relationships between sitting judges, former chief judges, and court-appointed consultants in parental alienation cases — raising questions about impartiality and transparency. ([Montrose Mirror, Issue 603](#))

Call for Immediate Action

Osollo is demanding:

1. Independent Federal Investigation into judicial and prosecutorial conduct within the 7th Judicial District.
2. Immediate release and protection for individuals, including his partner Megan Osollo, who are being subjected to retaliatory confinement conditions.
3. Full public disclosure of communications between Montrose County officials, law enforcement, and the District Attorney's office regarding ongoing civil rights litigation.

"Montrose County and the 7th Judicial District are on notice," Osollo stated. "We will not be silenced, and we will not allow this corruption to remain hidden any longer. If state leaders will not act, federal authorities must step in immediately."

About the Plaintiff:

Odyis Cruz Osollo is a Montrose County resident representing himself in a federal civil rights lawsuit against multiple officials and agencies for alleged violations of constitutional rights, retaliation, and systemic abuse of authority.

REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

FIRST POSITIVE WEST NILE VIRUS MOSQUITOES IDENTIFIED IN DELTA COUNTY

Residents are urged to follow the “4R’s” to prevent West Nile Virus!

Special to the Mirror

DELTA-A mosquito pool collected in the Delta area has tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV). This is the first confirmed pool on the Western Slope this year. The positive result was reported by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's (CDPHE) state lab.

To help control mosquito populations, use **laricides** in standing water. Laricide "dunks" are available free at **Delta County Public Health**. Granular laricides can be found at hardware stores and online.

The most effective way to prevent West Nile Virus (WNV) is to protect yourself from mosquito bites. Remember the **Four R's**:

REPEL mosquitoes with an EPA-registered insect repellent.

REMOVE standing water from your home and yard.

REPAIR or replace damaged window and door screens.

REMIND your family, friends, and neighbors about mosquito safety.

For more information: <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/animal-related-diseases/west-nile-virus/west-nile-virus-data>



WELCOME

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

BOSOM BUDDIES ANNOUNCES 2025 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-Bosom Buddies Breast Cancer Support Group of Southwestern Colorado is pleased to announce the organization's 2025 Bosom Buddies scholarship recipients.

First-time recipients include Maddison Jo Coca, Paola Cortez-Suarez, and Brody Cooling all from Montrose High School.

Continuing educational scholarships were awarded to Jackson Campbell of Telluride High School and Connor Bell and Quincy Cooling, both of Montrose High School. Students in good standing may re-apply and receive scholarships for up to four years. They do not need to be consecutive. "Applicants must have a parent or guardian who has, at some time,

been diagnosed with breast cancer and must be residents of either Montrose, Ouray or San Miguel Counties," said Kim Jones Co-Chair with Lori Webb of the Bosom Buddies Educational Assistance Committee. "The deadline for submitting an application is April 15th each year." "We encourage our local 2026 graduates who qualify to visit our website and apply," [said Jones](#).

"Scholarship funds are available for full-time and part-time students enrolling in a vocational, community college, university, or accredited on-line program," said Webb. "So, students who qualify have a number of educational opportunities with the Bosom Buddies' program."

"In addition, educational funding is available to survivors of breast cancer regardless of age," said Jones.

"Applicants must be enrolled in an institution of education including a high school diploma program, GED program, vocational, community college, university, or accredited on-line program.

"Survivor applications must be submitted a minimum of 60 days prior to the beginning of the course start date."

Educational assistance information, scholarship applications and details on programs offered by Bosom Buddies can be reviewed and downloaded from the organization's website at www.BosomBuddiesSWC.org.

Make Integrated Dermatology of Montrose your skincare destination of choice!



Spencer Hamner,
PA-C

Se habla Español

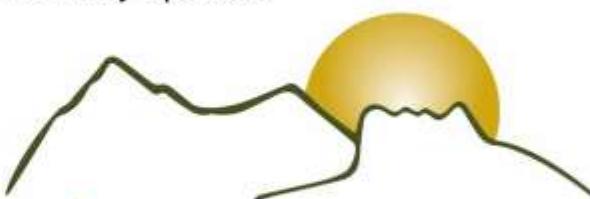


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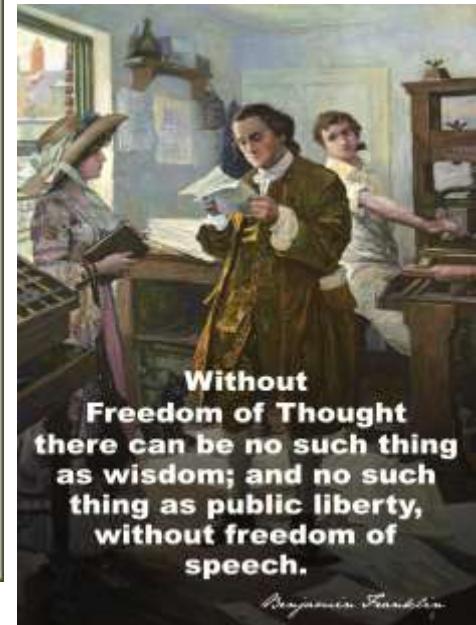
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TENTH ANNUAL LOG HILL HUSTLE, FUN RUN AND FUNDRAISER

Special to the Mirror

RIDGWAY-The Fortuna Tierra Club is hosting the tenth annual Log Hill Hustle, Fun Run and fundraiser on Sunday, Aug. 24 at 8 AM starting and finishing at the Divide Ranch and Club Clubhouse at 151 Divide Ranch Circle, Ridgway, CO 81432. This year to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Log Hill Hustle, we are providing t-shirts. Please visit <https://www.fortunatierra.com/> to register and find out more information about the Fun Run. Fortuna Tierra's major fundraiser provides scholarships for Ridgway secondary school graduates.





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SEPTEMBER 2025

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SATURDAY **SEPTEMBER 6** • **13 & 20** @ **7:30PM**
SUNDAY **SEPTEMBER 7 & 14** @ **2PM**

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

STAGE 2 FIRE RESTRICTIONS IN PLACE FOR ALL OF SAN MIGUEL COUNTY

Special to the Mirror

SAN MIGUEL COUNTY--- Stage 2 fire restrictions will take effect in all unincorporated areas of San Miguel County beginning at 12:01 a.m. on Friday, August 15. The eastern portion of the county, currently under Stage 1, will be upgraded to Stage 2, bringing our county in alignment with all our federal partners, including the BLM and USFS (Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests [GMUG]), as well as Ouray, Montrose and Dolores counties.



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970-249-7427

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970-240-8899

Fiesta Guadalajara
970-249-2460

Alpen Confections
970-648-0609

Jimmer's Steak & BBQ
970-252-1227



Beer Barn II
970-249-5550

Vegetation moisture levels across the region are very low, and with little measurable precipitation in the forecast, we are asking everyone to take the threat of wildfire seriously. Any spark or discarded cigarette could start the next uncontrollable wildfire.

Stage 2 Fire Restrictions:

- No Open Fires
- No campfires, charcoal grills, wood-burning stoves, chimineas, tiki torches, or any open flames, even at private homes or campgrounds.
- Gas grills or propane stoves are allowed if they can be turned on and off, and only in areas cleared of flammable materials.
- No smoking except within an enclosed vehicle or building
- No chainsaws or other equipment powered by an internal combustion engine, unless it has a working spark-arresting device
- No outdoor welding or acetylene torches unless in a cleared area at least 10 feet wide and a pressurized fire extinguisher must be on hand
- No off-road driving or parking: vehicles must stay on established roads, trails, or parking areas. No parking over dry grass.
- No explosives or fireworks

The following acts are always prohibited on federally managed lands:

- The use of fireworks and other incendiary devices
- Leaving fires unattended or unextinguished

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

MEDICARE INFORMATION SESSION AT THE LIBRARY AUG. 21

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-The library and Region 10 are partnering for an information session about Medicare. Doug Speedie, a certified Medicare counselor, will give a presentation that will be followed by a Q&A session. Join us on Thursday, Aug. 21 from 6 - 7:30 p.m. in the Library Meeting Room. Contact Christine at ctharp@montroselibrary.org with any questions.

MEDICARE IN A NUTSHELL

*A free community presentation
with Doug Speedie, MD*

**Certified Medicare Counselor,
State Health Insurance Assistance Program**



Whether you're brand new to Medicare, reviewing your plan options, or have questions about coverage and upcoming changes, this session is for you.

Dates: (choose one)

- Wednesday, August 13 | 10 a.m.-12 p.m.
- Monday, September 29 | 4:30-6:30 p.m.

Location:

Montrose Regional Health - Conference Center
800 S. 3rd Street | Lower Level | Montrose, CO

Light refreshments served. Everyone is welcome!



MontroseHealth.com

LIBRARY TO HOST HEALTH INSURANCE INFORMATION SESSION SEPT. 22

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-The library and Tri-County Health are partnering for an information session about health insurance options available through the Colorado marketplace. Bring your questions for a Q&A at the end. Join us in the Library Meeting Room on Monday, Sept. 22, from 6 - 7:30 p.m. Contact Christine at ctharp@montroselibrary.org with any questions.

An advertisement for "FRESH NEWS for Busy People". It features a stylized coffee cup icon at the top, followed by the text "FRESH NEWS" in a bold, serif font, with "for" in a smaller font below it. Below that is the text "Busy People" in a cursive, handwritten-style font. At the bottom, there is a call to action: "Call FOR AD RATES 970-275-0646". The background of the ad is a close-up image of a cup of coffee with steam rising from it. The bottom right corner of the ad contains the text "THE MONTROSE MIRROR" and "Your Source for Local Business News and Information".

Montrose Regional

Crime Stoppers



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

SPOOKS, GHOULS, AND GHOST STORIES AUG. 22

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-Join the Montrose County Historical Museum on Aug. 22 at 7pm for an eerie evening of spooks, ghouls, and ghost stories as we explore the haunted history of downtown Montrose. Led by the museum's resident ghost expert, this chilling walking tour weaves together local legends and true tales from the town's shadowy past. Brave participants will wander dim alleyways and haunted corners of Main Street, hearing accounts of paranormal activity that have lingered through the years. You might even encounter something yourself... Stick around after the tour to share your own ghostly experiences! This is a family-friendly event, and tickets are \$10 per person. Be sure to sign up and have a spot saved for you. You can call 970-249-2085 or email at info@montrosehistory.org



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Tuesday, August 19

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6pm - Dinner and Concert 7:30 pm - Concert Only
Ouray County 4H Event Center in Ridgway

Wednesday, August 20

Ulysses Quartet Rooftop Concert

6pm Citizens State Bank in Ouray

Thursday, August 21

Evening Salon

5pm Private Home in Ridgway

Saturday, August 23

Festival Concert

7:30pm Wright Opera House in Ouray
Reception Following Concert

Sunday, August 24

Free Children and Family Concert

2:00pm United Church of the San Juans in Ridgway
Part of the UCSJ "Sunday Sundaes" series



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and Information

WWW.OCPAG.ORG



DAVE AND MARY WOOD FUND



REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

TROOPER ARRESTED IN ALAMOSA

Special to the Mirror

ALAMOSA - The Alamosa Police Department notified Colorado State Patrol last week that a Patrol member, Brandon Stevens, was arrested at his residence, where he was suspected of Domestic Violence and 2nd Degree Assault. He was immediately placed on administrative leave.

Brandon Stevens joined the Colorado State Patrol in April 2023. He has worked at the Alamosa Troop Office since completing the Academy in the fall of 2023.

All inquiries should be directed to the Alamosa County Jail.

The Colorado State Patrol and its members are here to ensure the safety of all persons and to adhere our core values of honor, duty, and respect. We take these standards seriously and recognize that the success of our mission depends upon maintaining the trust and the safety of the public we serve. We respect and defer to the 12th Judicial District Attorney's Office and our judicial system regarding this charge.



Patrol member, Brandon Stevens, was arrested. CSP courtesy image.



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Tacos & Beer on Main
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Pahgre's
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Lighthouse Eatery
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Ray's Corner Cafe
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Trattoria de Sofia
970-249-0433

Rib City
970-249-7427

Stone House
970-240-8899

Sidelines Sports Bar
970-765-0129

Amelia's Hacienda Restaurante
970-249-1881

Delta: Pour Ernie's
970-546-0074



BOARD VOTES TO RENEW CONTRACT WITH VISTA CHARTER SCHOOL *From pg 1*

Montrose High School and 25 from Olathe Middle-High School participated in a variety of events throughout Fair week. One of the students did not take part in the Montrose County Fair but was planning to show his heifer at the Colorado State Fair. District A Director Neisha Balleck commended the students for their hard work and thanked them for their participation.

DONATIONS

PIO Mikayla Unruh presented recent district donations:

- Bank of Colorado donated \$840 to the Northside Elementary School 2nd grade class for a May field trip to Eureka in Grand Junction;
- Mt. Hayden Rebekah Lodge No. 54 donated \$5,000 to Peak Academy for their Library Fund and any other needs;
- Valley Restoration & Construction Inc. donated \$1,000 in May for the MHS Baseball team.

BOARD ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATES

District F Director Jody Hovde discussed the recent meeting of the Facilities Committee. The maintenance group is finishing summer projects, she said. Sewer system repairs at Olathe Elementary were not as serious as previously thought. RE-1J Facilities Director Matt Smith will compile facilities projects for the coming school year.

Board Vice President Stephen Bush said that he intends to drop off the Montrose Urban Renewal Authority (MURA) board and asked whether anyone else would like to serve as the district's MURA representative.

COMMUNITY INPUT

First to address the Board of Education was Leah Vandersluis, "We all have different perspectives; I'm presenting this from my perspective...we are beginning a new school year with an opportunity to teach our kids well so that they will succeed in life...I have some questions for you.

"Will the district focus on the basics--reading, writing, arithmetic--or social issues? Will we focus on putting the stu-

dents' future as most important, or pushing any personal agendas? Will we focus on increasing student numbers, or will we focus on making sure the students we do have are well trained?

"Will our emphasis be on bringing money into the district's coffers, over the success of our students? Will our priorities be to strengthen the administration, or put more money in the classroom? Will we focus on our students' happiness, or prepare them, with the skills--such as critical thinking, math, reading, writing, balancing a checkbook, and problem solving--and challenging them to learn lifelong skills and being able to function in society?

"As you know, going to school should not be about having fun, although that's part of it sometimes, but about learning the necessary skills for life.

"As a board you have a great responsibility to make decisions that edify, strengthen, encourage and prepare our students for a productive life.

"Are you each able to face the repercussions of leading our students in an unhealthy direction that causes them to fail in our society? Children are precious, they are vulnerable, and can easily be misled. A great Rabbi once talked about, if we cause one of these little ones to stumble, there would be devastating repercussions as a result.

"This reveals the gravity of leading our kids astray, so please consider these words and know that we are all held accountable for how we influence others. Thank you."

Next to speak was John Brown.

"I am really disappointed with the school district board," Brown said. "Twice, the MCA has come up and asked for accreditation, and twice you guys have voted it down. It brings new definition to the term 'stupidity,' doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. And they never happen."

"...For the last three years or so, our num-

bers for reading and for math have been way down. Why couldn't you have given MCA a chance? Our whole goal is hope for our children...we have to give them every opportunity to succeed. If we want them to stay in Montrose, we've got to make it enticing for them once they graduate, to go to a local school and then to have a local job, where they can have money to survive.

"If we can't give the employment necessary because of their education, they're going to go elsewhere. We're going to be losing the valuable resources that we have in our young people. We must do something about our scores, and improve our training to our children; give them the best training that they have. We all grew, we had good training for the most part, and most of us turned out very good as far as our occupations and where we're at in life...things are different these days...we need to afford that opportunity for our children. Please do something to bolster our math and reading scores, and possibly if there's a way that we can have MCA reapply, let them reapply and show them that we really care about our children, not our own agendas."

CONSENT AGENDA

District C Director Alice Murphy asked to pull Consent Agenda [items 6](#) and [9](#) for further discussion. District F Director Jody Hovde asked to pull [Consent Agenda Item 5](#) for further discussion. The remaining Consent Agenda items were approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Following some discussion, Items 5, 6 and 9 were approved as well.

VISTA CHARTER SCHOOL CONTRACT RENEWAL

After some discussion, the board voted to renew the contract with Vista Charter School. Vista Principal Luke Siebert was not present.

With no further business the board voted to adjourn. "Thank you all for coming," Bush said.

REGIONAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS SHARE INFORMATION ON SMOKE, AIR QUALITY



While weekend weather brought some relief, there's still plenty of smoke in Western Colorado skies. Mirror file photo.

Mirror staff report

REGIONAL-With fires burning in multiple locations across Colorado and Utah, Montrose residents have faced smoky air quality for much of the summer. The *Mirror* spoke with health departments in the West Central region to find out what options are available to lessen impacts for local residents.

On July 11, Montrose County issued [a news release](#) with regard to the use of masks to protect from wildfire smoke. The news release states, "If you cannot leave the smoky area, good ways to protect your lungs from wildfire smoke include staying indoors and reducing physical activity. Wearing a special mask called a 'particulate respirator' can also help protect your lungs from wildfire smoke."

Calls to Montrose County Public Health Director Mirza Ahmed for further comment were not returned.

Ouray County Public Health Director Kristin Kelley said that Ouray County has been sharing air quality advisories with residents, with color coding added to make the advisories easier to read. "So people will know, what does it mean for you?" In addition, Ouray County offers free N-95 masks, which are also placed near Narcan kiosks, Kelley said. "We're trying to keep an eye on it," Kelley said of the smoke levels. "We're going to ride it out, but I hope we can get some rain soon!"

In Delta County, Public Health Director

Jacqueline Davis takes a proactive approach; a team member, Robin Mills, returned our call within minutes, and noted that the department had just released its regular monthly newsletter, "Smoke, Bats and Bugs."

Director Davis also reached out to the *Mirror*.

The Delta County Public Health newsletter directly addresses air quality:

Wildfire Smoke and Air Quality

With wildfires affecting much of the Western Slope, air quality has been a growing concern. Smoke from wildfires contains fine particles that can irritate the eyes and lungs, especially for children, older adults, and those with heart or lung conditions. We urge residents to [monitor local air quality reports](#) and take precautions such as staying indoors, using air purifiers, and avoiding strenuous outdoor activity during smoky conditions.

N95 Mask Giveaway

To help the community stay safe during poor air quality days, Delta County Public Health is giving away N95 masks while supplies last. These masks are effective in filtering out harmful fine particles from wildfire smoke. Stop by our office to pick up a free pack and learn more about protecting your health during wildfire season.

Director Kristin Kelley said that Ouray County has been sharing air quality advisories with residents, with color coding added to make the advisories easier to read. "So people will know, what does it mean for you?" (See graphic at right). In addition, Ouray County offers free N-95 masks, which are also placed near Narcan kiosks, Kelley said. "We're trying to keep an eye on it," Kelley said of the smoke levels. "We're going to ride it out, but I hope we can get some rain soon!"

In Delta County, Public Health Director Jacqueline Davis takes a proactive approach; a team member, Robin Mills, returned our call within minutes, and noted that the department had just released its regular monthly newsletter, "Smoke, Bats and Bugs."

Director Davis also reached out to the *Mirror*.

AIR QUALITY INDEX (AQI)

Source: PurpleAir with US EPA corrections

0-50

Air quality is satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk with 24 hours of exposure.

51-100

Air quality is acceptable. However, there may be a risk for some people with 24 hours of exposure, particularly those who are unusually sensitive to air pollution.

101-150

Members of sensitive groups may experience health effects with 24 hours of exposure. The general public is less likely to be affected.

151-200

Some members of the general public may experience health effects with 24 hours of exposure; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects.

201-300

Health alert: The risk of health effects is increased for everyone with 24 hours of exposure.

301 and Higher

Higher Health warning of emergency conditions: everyone is more likely to be affected with 24 hours of exposure.

Color coded Air Quality Index Graphic Courtesy of Ouray County Public Health.

The Delta County Public Health newsletter directly addresses air quality:

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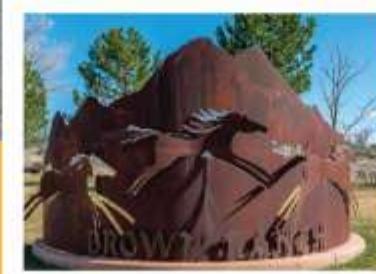
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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

THE CONSTITUTION'S ENDURING MANDATE PRIORITIZING PRINCIPLES OVER PERSONALITIES

Editor:

Prioritizing Principles Over Personalities

Here in Montrose, we see national politics through a local lens. Charismatic leaders and partisan fights dominate our local news, but we must refocus on the U.S. Constitution, the very foundation of our country. This document is no dusty artifact; it is the literal guide for liberty, built to outlast any one person's ambitions. George Washington, in his 1796 Farewell Address, warned that political parties might serve short-term goals but often let schemers undermine the people's power. He grieved over factions that blur constitutional freedoms and sow discord. Washington's vision was a nation of free individuals, free from party ties that exalt people over principles.

Founders' Insights and Historical Warnings

Our founders grasped human flaws and history's lessons, placing the Constitution above individuals. The Federalist Papers, 85 essays by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay as Publius, reveal how it protects liberty. In Federalist No. 51, Madison explained separation of powers and checks to stop any branch from seizing freedoms, noting ambition checks ambition for balance. These ideas stemmed from real history, like the Roman Republic's start in shared rule, only to crumble under factions, leading to Julius Caesar's dictatorship and decay under corrupt emperors like Commodus.

In modern times, we witness similar erosions. Over the past 50 years, Congress has overstepped by creating independent agencies, unauthorized by the Constitution, that operate without accountability, forming an unintended fourth branch. In

Montrose, where we cherish limited government, this federal bloat hits home, clashing with our rural independence.

The Peril of Exchanging Liberty for Security

Each generation must guard liberty, as Washington suggested. Yet, debates hide this under security or ease. Benjamin Franklin nailed it in 1755: "Those who would give up essential Liberty, to purchase a little temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety." Written during colonial tax and defense squabbles, it warns against swapping rights for false safety today.

Gun Control and Selective Outrage

Take the push for tough gun control, rampant in Colorado with red flag laws and assault weapon bans that Montrose County has opted out of as a Second Amendment sanctuary. Advocates in states like ours frame guns as dire threats, demanding bans. But 2024 stats show inconsistency: about 40,886 gun-related deaths nationwide, including suicides, homicides, and accidents. Motor vehicle crashes killed around 39,345. No one demands car abolition, vital as they are in our spread-out Western Slope. This bias erodes the Second Amendment's shield against tyranny, meant for self-defense and community protection, as locals here affirm. Focusing on kids under 18, 2024 saw over 5,200 children and teens affected by gun violence deaths and injuries. Mass shootings, including schools, killed at least 15 people, many children. Yet, car crashes claimed about 3,048 teens aged 13-19 in 2023, plus younger kids, totaling thousands under 18. In Montrose, where hunting and ranching define life, restricting guns ignores bigger risks to our

youth.

The Abortion Debate and Constitutional Priorities

The abortion debate flips priorities too. Framed as "reproductive health," 2024 saw over 1,038,100 procedures nationwide. This dwarfs gun homicides at around 16,576, excluding suicides. The Constitution safeguards life, liberty, and happiness via the Declaration and Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments' due process. Roe v. Wade (1973) fell in Dobbs (2022), restoring state control and federalism per Federalist No. 45. In Colorado, where Amendment 79 enshrined abortion rights, many in Montrose hold pro-life views with exceptions, seeing this as valuing choice over life.

Orwellian Inversions in Modern Society

Such twists recall George Orwell's 1984: truth twisted, war as peace. We see values upside down under modern facades. The Constitution calls for watchfulness, ditching personality politics for core principles.

Upholding Constitutional Fidelity

In the end, individuals pass, but the Constitution endures. Washington's party warnings, Franklin's liberty alert, and Federalist defenses stress responsibility in freedom.

Learning from collapsed republics and backing the Bill of Rights secures liberty for our kids. In Montrose, let us argue from constitutional loyalty, not idols, or lose what our ancestors won.

Michael J Badagliacco, "MJB"

Michael is a United States Air Force Veteran, father of five and grandfather of three, passionate about this country and the Constitution.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

BLOOD DRAWS AND HEALTH FAIR OFFER BIG HEALTH BENEFITS

By Cathy White, Special MRH Correspondent

MONTROSE-For the past 37 years Montrose Regional Health (MRH) has offered the community comprehensive, reasonably priced health screening through its annual early Blood Draws and Health Fair. The week-long event gives participants a convenient and affordable opportunity to be proactive and prevention-minded about their health. Whether one is following a chronic condition or tracking things like blood sugar or cholesterol levels, attendees unanimously praised the value of the Health Fair and enthusiastically shared stories about why they come and why they will definitely be back next year.

Comments from this year's 2,000+ attendees, whether first timers or repeat customers, describe both the blood draws and fair as well organized and efficiently run, with special kudos going to the "amazing" phlebotomists who are "friendly, fast and expert at what they do". Many mentioned what a terrific value the event is, offering an extensive menu of blood tests for a very reasonable price as well as free screenings and a wealth of information. Many also mentioned the convenience and ease of registration, either ahead of time or at the door. They appreciated being able to schedule a specific time for early blood draws or, when available, take advantage of walk-in appointments.

ISWM, (It Starts With Me), the company that partners with MRH for the event, does an outstanding job of coordinating registration, compiling blood analysis data, and rapidly returning results back to participants. Online results often arrive in just a few days, and a hard copy is mailed to all attendees as well. This booklet provides a wealth of information including explanations of certain tests and results. For repeat customers it can include trending results from prior years in certain categories.

The information can also be posted, at the customer's request, to the Quality Health Network, (QHN), so that your personal physician or specialist can access the information. It is also available to the Emergency Department at MRH and other hospitals. The value of this feature became clear recently when several serious automobile accidents occurred in our area and Emergency Department physicians were able to rapidly access the health information of several seriously injured patients when they were brought to the hospital. In addition to blood tests, the Health Fair offers free screenings from health care providers, which this year included hearing tests and oral and skin cancer exams. A wide range of booths and exhibits provided an opportunity to meet physicians, nurses and other hospital staff and ask questions and obtain literature about everything from Cardiology to Physical Therapy to Pain Management. Also much appreciated, since the blood tests require an overnight fast, was the refreshment table, which offered a variety of complimentary snacks and beverages to hungry attendees.

It takes a village of many people to put on this event and months of planning. Whether it is those at the registration desk, the refreshment area or the exhibit booths, those who handle the data, or the health care professionals, it is a total group effort. Marlinna Heater, an EMT and Emergency Department Technician from MRH who has been working at the Health Fair since 2008, is in charge of organizing the phlebotomists. "We love that we can help people monitor their health and possibly catch potential health issues before they become serious," she said. "On one day of the early blood draws we drew blood from 429 patients in about 3 hours." Is all this effort worth it? Ask the lady who found out she has a serious thyroid condition or the person who learned of a dangerous level of iron in her blood. Or, the gentleman a few years ago who got a call from doctors at MRH about his results two days after his blood draw and was subsequently diagnosed with a rare form of leukemia, went through treatment and is alive and well today. We look forward to seeing you next year at the MRH Health Fair.

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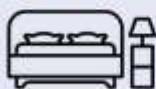


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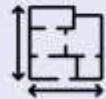
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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

DEMOCRATS ARE ALL ABOUT FLEECING TAXPAYERS AND INCURRING DEBT TO LINE THEIR OWN POCKETS

Editor:

Sorry, I just have to chuckle. Once again President Trump has put Democrats in a position where they have to choose between common sense and defending their failed policies. They can't help themselves. They cannot do what is best for the country and actually work with Trump to fix problems, because those problems are usually a direct result of their own actions. Doing what comes naturally, Democrats reflexively took the position that rampant crime in our nation's capitol was not a problem that needed fixing. They just can't accept the reality that crime is a problem. Even MSNBC's Joe Scarborough had to criticize his fellow Trump haters for blasting Trump in public, while simultaneously complaining in private that Trump is right about the out-of-control crime in D.C.

As they did with Biden's out-of-control inflation, his obvious diminished mental capacities, and so many other things, Democrats don't want you to believe your lying eyes about crime in D.C. They point to statistics that indicate crime is going down, but don't want to talk about the questionable nature of those statistics and the scandals involving police commanders suppressing crime reports to artificially reduce crime rates. Even if you accept the statistics as accurate, they still reveal the reality that our capitol is unsafe. The homicide rate in the capitol is still the fourth highest among U.S. cities. A murder every couple of days may not be an emergency in Detroit or Chicago, but Washington is the seat of our government and should at least be safe, if not a showcase of law and order. The city's residents, government employees, and Americans wanting to tour their nation's capitol shouldn't have to live in fear. Somehow Democrat Senator Schumer claiming he feels "perfectly safe" walking around Washington, D.C. early in the morning is not too reassuring to residents who don't have the luxury of Schumer's full time security detail. Those residents, who are 97% Democrat, are now volunteering en masse to assist in Trump's cleanup efforts.

Common sense should dictate that Democrats support Trump's decisive actions to make a dramatic turnaround in D.C.'s fight against crime, but that's not happening. The

elites calling the shots in today's Democrat party seem to be more interested in throwing tantrums and being obnoxious and profane than making choices that actually help the American people – choices that could bring their approval ratings out of the sewer. Texas Democrat Beto O'Rourke seemed to be the voice of the party this week in championing the protection of illegal immigrants and other criminals with his comment to "F___ the rules. We are going to win. Whatever it takes." Zohan Mamdani, the radical socialist Democrats chose as their candidate for the mayor of NYC, and Omar Fateh, another radical socialist Democrat running for mayor of Minneapolis, joined the Democrat chorus advocating for policies that are in direct conflict with the well-being and wishes of the American people.

Democrats don't seem to understand that normal people are laughing at them. They only hear the party elites or their consultants telling them they are doing great. These are the same people that told them they needed to get on the "defund the police" and the "transition the kiddies" bandwagons. This is the same party that paid consultants \$20 million to explain to them that the way to win back normal men is to send morbidly obese women as ambassadors and harangue them about pronoun usage. No one with any influence in the party is brave enough to suggest that Democrats just be normal for once. For most people, repeated failure would bring some level of shame, but not Democrats. They seem to revel in being on the wrong side of every issue because their echo chambers keep telling them their failures are great successes and their defeats are incredible victories.

Closer to home, Colorado has risen to the #1 ranking for auto theft and #2 for "most dangerous", while sinking to #43 in best roads and infrastructure. Our crime is nothing like Dem controlled cities because Democrats have not had complete control of Colorado as long. The very basic things we expect from our government, safety and infrastructure, are the last things on Democrats' minds. Since the beginning of the Democrat takeover in Colorado, TABOR has been a major roadblock for Leftist radicals wanting to constantly increase our tax burden. However, in the last 30 years, inflation

plus population growth has risen 196% in Colorado. In that same time period, fee-based revenue (revenue outside the TABOR cap) has risen 3,400%. In the last seven years, our state's budget has doubled. Polis and his Democrat controlled legislature's billion-dollar budget deficit is less than 3% of the total budget. Democrats could easily trim their spending to balance the budget without raising taxes or creating more new fees, but you can bet on that not happening. They will continue their corrupt efforts to get around TABOR, and claim everything is not their fault.

Democrats will continue to try to convince voters that Trump's successes are illusions. The bad news for Democrats is that in just seven months Trump is ratcheting down costs. Groceries and gas at the pump are cheaper. Unaffordability was made right here in the U.S.A. by Democrats. The Biden presidency supercharged costs. That was accomplished the old-fashioned way; big governments spending. Democrats are all about fleecing taxpayers and incurring debt to line their own pockets. Trump is doing the fixing of the affordability crisis. That leaves Democrats to pretend that they don't own the crisis and they will fix what they swear they didn't break. Pretending is all Democrats can do. Pretend they aren't responsible for housing, groceries, vehicles, and everything else being unaffordable. Pretend crime is not a problem, and if it is, it's not their fault. Pretend that they didn't intentionally create an invasion of 12 million unvetted illegals at our southern border. Pretend they don't understand how that border was completely shut down within the first weeks after Trump's inauguration. Pretend that, prior to Trump, Europe and much of the rest of the world didn't freeload off U.S. defense, block American goods, stiff-arm American energy, and bankroll Moscow. Pretend that Trump has not recalibrated our trade relationships with the rest of the world by constantly putting America's interests first. Pretend that raging against Trump for trying to stop the Ukraine war makes any sense to anyone with a brain. Pretend that Democrats are not becoming increasingly irrelevant and are not the laughing stock of the country.

Ed Henrie, Montrose

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REGIONAL-During periods of high fire-danger weather, the following acts are prohibited:

- Building, maintaining, attending or using a fire or campfire is prohibited in all areas of the parks, including charcoal fires. Properly shielded gas or liquid-fueled portable camp stoves are allowed.
- Smoking is prohibited, except within a personally owned enclosed vehicle.
- Discharging, or using any kind of fireworks or other pyrotechnic devices are always prohibited on all federal public land, including Black Canyon of the Gunnison National.

Area Description: All lands within the boundaries of Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park and Curecanti National Recreation Area.

Fire use by visitors in the parks is regulated to protect resources and visitors. The intent of Stage 2 Fire Restrictions is to reduce the number of human-caused fires during periods of very high fire danger by decreasing potential sources of ignition. Montrose, Delta, and Gunnison Counties are experiencing critical fire conditions--extremely dry fuels, above normal temperatures, low humidity, minimal precipitation, and high winds. As many fires ignite across the west, competition for fire-fighting resources remains high.

When necessary, National Park Service Rangers will issue citations to persons violating the terms of this closure under authority of Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations 1.5(f) - punishable by up to \$5,000 in fines and/or up to 6 months in jail.

Please use extreme caution when visiting public lands during the hot, dry, summer season.



OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

OUR PRESIDENT FAILED, AGAIN

Editor:

I am writing to give my condolences to those who have supported, and continue to support, Donald Trump.

On Friday, we specifically watched the Putin - Trump meeting held at JBER (Joint Base Elmendorf- Richardson) in Anchorage, Alaska. Since the renewed Russian invasion of Ukraine started back up in 2022, my wife and I have donated to various organizations to help the citizens, the soldiers, and even the homeless pets roaming the Ukrainian streets. We have called our representatives. We display the blue and yellow flags on our vehicles and fly the Ukrainian flag at our home.

Trump's election claim was that he would bring about peace in 24 hours once he was re-elected. It has now been well over 200 days. So finally, Trump was going to sit down with Vladimir Putin. We watched as the two left their planes and walked out on the red carpet on the tarmac. They greeted each other and shook hands. Trump even gave Putin a ride to the meeting.

A few hours later we watched as Putin and Trump came out to give an announcement to the press corps. We hoped to hear of a cease fire or maybe even a few talking points towards establishing long-term peace and an end to hostilities. Bam! Slammed! Nothing. Absolutely nothing but a photo op, and one that flattered Putin, not Trump. The two were on American soil (yes, Alaska is the 50th state and a part of the United States Mr. Trump). Putin began talking and spoke of the historical perspective of what Alaska means to the Russians. How many place names were Russian. How many Russian pilots were buried in Alaska. Then he threw out propaganda of how he was protecting people in Ukraine.

Putin said, "The situation in Ukraine has to do with fundamental threats to our security. We've always considered the Ukrainian nation..., a brotherly na-

tion. We need to eliminate all the primary roots, the primary causes of that conflict,...to consider all legitimate concerns of Russia."

Putin started the war. He invaded Ukraine. He continues to kill Ukrainians indiscriminately. He wants Ukraine. All of Ukraine.

Then Putin added, "When President Trump is saying that if he was president back then, there would be no war, and I'm quite sure that it would indeed be so, I can confirm that."

I repeat. The War was instigated by Russia. Putin is the aggressor.

Then Trump said a few words and we realized there was no cease fire agreement. There was no outline of plans to stop the war on Ukraine. Instead he said, "I've always had a fantastic relationship with President Putin, with Vladimir. We had many, many tough meetings, good meetings. We were interfered with the Russia, Russia, Russia hoax."

That's it? That was the summary of the meeting between Russia and the United States? A meeting to discuss the fate of Ukraine, but devoid of any representative from Ukraine? Nothing.

Suddenly the announcement by these two world leaders ended. No questions were allowed and the two presidents left the stage. What happened?

The United States of America was humiliated on the 15th of August 2005. It started with members of the Air Force, bending down on hands and knees to roll out the red carpet, to an international terrorist, a murderer, and a kidnapper of Ukrainian children. First, there never should have been a red carpet, but American service members kneeling down to Putin? The next humiliation, after a handshake and smiles and pleasantries, was the brief press conference on the tarmac when a reporter asked Putin (and he failed to answer) when he would stop killing civilians. Trump quickly spirited him

off. Trump then gave Putin a ride in "The Beast". Putin had brought along his own personal vehicle, but instead he got another photo op, smiling and waving from the presidential limousine.

Humiliation continued at the final press conference following the two presidents' meeting. A planned lunch was cancelled (the menu read "*In Honor of His Excellency Vladimir Putin*"). The meeting went shorter than planned. And then the first man who started talking to the press, on American soil, was the president of Russia. He took over the press conference. So where was Trump's bravado? The ambush that he and J.D. Vance concocted against Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy, now Trump stated mum as Putin spoke. Trump boasted a few weeks earlier that Putin was starting to anger him, yet now again they were "best" friends. Yet Trump continues to play with Ukraine's freedom. Sometimes authorizing the sale of weapons, then abruptly cutting off the transfer.

Just before the Alaska meeting, news came out that Russia was responsible for hacking into the Federal Court Filing System. Trump's reply was basically, "They hack in. That's what they do."

Trump promised to quickly end the war in Ukraine. He failed. He gave us hope setting up the Alaskan meeting. He failed. He has pumped himself up proclaiming to be a strong man. The world leader. The man who will bring peace. And then he stands besides Putin. He failed.

And yes, he continues to throw out his attempts at easing World tensions, his attacks on Democrats or Republicans who do not toe the line, tariffs, rails against Federal Reserve Board Chairman Jerome Powell (whom Trump appointed in 2018), whining about deserving the Nobel Peace Prize, all to deflect and deter his failure to release the Epstein files. He failed, again. *Jon Sering, former Montrose resident*

OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

PRO-LIFERS ARE WALKING, TALKING, SHOOTING OXYMORONS

Editor:

You can tell the pro-life extremists. They're the ones who want their enemies—the women and men who support a woman's sovereignty over her own body—dead by any means at their command. Hard to get more pro-life that that.

Mike Lee, the brilliant Republican US Senator from Utah, went on Elon Musk's social media platform, X, and posted about the fatal shooting of Democratic politicians in Minnesota, that, "This is what happens When Marxists don't get their way."

Allegedly, the shooter in Minnesota left a notebook that included some of his "reasoning," and also a list of future targets of his, 100 percent of whom were Democrats if they were elected officials. Mike Lee, explain how this relates in any way to Marxists (sorry, Mike, nobody likes the Marxists, so just cut it out), to Democrats, to anyone except Trump-supporting Republican anti-abortion zealots *like the shooter*.

Yes, there are plenty of abortion opponents who do not include murdering anyone on a different side of that question as an enemy who qualifies for assassination. Swell. Is the bar really that low in our Trump era?

I am on a peace team. We do some accompaniment work occasionally. We've helped escort for Planned Parenthood.

They had folks on the shooter's list too. It has never computed for me. Kill in the name of being pro-life?

Then again, there are many other threats to life that "pro-lifers" frequently either ignore or outright support the life-threatening side. I'm thinking about:

- Radioactive material, all of which causes cancer, as well as mutagenic and teratogenic harm. This applies to the nuclear material in uranium mines, uranium processing plants, power plants, bombs and depleted uranium bullets, and waste storage.

- Petrofarming with biocides that cause cancer and birth defects.

- Big Oil, which causes and is accelerating climate chaos, taking more and more lives every year.

- Assault weapons.

- War.

Of course there are many more such anti-life threats that many "pro-life" people support. Am I being a radical idealist here, or just asking us to try to hold what the late Jesuit priest, Fr. Daniel Berrigan named a "seamless philosophy" about it all?

Dan was pro-life. He opposed abortion, war, industrial practices that cause great harm, and he repeatedly went to prison for his lack of hypocrisy. His late brother Phil, a Josephite priest and then a radical anti-racism, antiwar nonviolent resister,

also held a set of values that were for life without exception, and went to prison even more than his little brother Dan.

Few can live lives of complete adherence to values and principles that do not effectively contradict each other. It is basic decency, however, to at least attempt to practice our places in the world that are not ethically or morally mutually exclusive, to the best of our abilities.

I'm waiting for our "leaders" begin demonstrating such golden rule lives. *Do unto others as you would have them do unto you* is one version of the Golden Rule. *He who has the gold rules* is, of course, the opposite other golden rule.

Back in the day, zealots would preach that you need to follow their moral practices or go to hell. I hope we've begun to evolve to teach our children that doing right by everyone, practicing nonviolent conflict transformation, is its own reward, right here, right now.

Ceasing the anti-life war preparation, war waging, and industrial processes are the more eternal reward, since life for the many generations to come will be possible only if we do.

-Tom H. Hastings, Portland, Oregon

Dr. Tom H. Hastings is Coördinator of Conflict Resolution BA/BS degree programs at Portland State University. His views, however, are not those of any institution



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

175 CYCLISTS TRAVELING ALONG SOUTHWEST COLORADO ROADWAYS FROM AUG. 18 TO 22

Special to the Mirror

SOUTHWEST COLORADO— The Colorado Department of Transportation and the Colorado State Patrol are advising drivers to be prepared to share the road with approximately 175 bicyclists touring roadways between Silverton and Wolf Creek Pass during the annual week-long Colorado's Ride event beginning Monday, August 18. "This



Cyclists ride single file along US 160 during last year's Colorado's Ride event in southwest Colorado. Each year, CDOT, CSP and Colorado's Ride work closely to ensure the annual week-long bicycle event is safe for motorists and riders, encouraging all roadway users to travel responsibly and follow traffic laws. Courtesy photo.

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is the third year of welcoming Colorado's Ride to our region, and we want to make it another safe and successful event for all roadway users. Please, always make a point to limit distractions, stay alert and follow the speed limit," said Transportation Director Julie Constan.

Highway closures will not be necessary; however, motorists are urged to watch for cyclists along several highways and county roads between Durango, Silverton, Pagosa Springs, and Wolf Creek Pass. The event will take place over 5 days (August 18 to 22), between 7 a.m. and 3 p.m. each day.

Dates and Highway Locations:

Monday, Aug. 18: US Highway 550 - Durango to Silverton Course

Tuesday, Aug. 19: US 550, US 160, CO 172 & several county roads - Durango Loops

Wednesday, Aug. 20: US 160 & CO 151 - Durango to Pagosa Springs

Thursday, Aug. 21: US 160 - Pagosa Springs to Wolf Creek Pass

Friday, August 22: US 160, CO 151 & CO 172 - Pagosa to Durango

View times and exact course details on [Colorado's Ride Course Description Webpage](#).

The Colorado State Patrol and local law enforcement will monitor and assist with traffic control. Drivers are reminded of the Three Foot Law when passing cyclists. "Drivers must give cyclists at least three feet of space when passing – even if it requires crossing the centerline, if it is safe. Not doing so, could risk a ticket," urges Capt. Angela DeGuelle, Colorado State Patrol.

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

LOCK UP FASCIST CRIMINALS AND REBUILD AMERICA

Editor:

We need to imprison the fascist criminals currently running the federal government and begin the process of rebuilding the country so the right-wing authoritarian takeover we're now experiencing is never possible again. Any elected Democratic official who doesn't comprehend this should be primaried by a candidate who understands the totalitarian threat we're facing.

I'd prefer to advocate forgiveness toward such lawbreakers. It's what the best of religious tradition calls for. However, President Donald Trump and his Republican allies have made it clear they can't be swayed by appeals to reason or morality. The only thing they respect is raw power. Democrats must exercise this — if, with any luck, they're provided another opportunity to do so.

Former President Joe Biden took what might be termed 'the high road' with ring-leaders of the Make America Great Again movement, largely attempting to turn the page on their numerous crimes, including an attempted coup. Look where that approach has brought us. Now the fascists are once again in control of the government. Every day they push us closer and closer to dictatorship.

Beyond prosecuting Trump and his allies, Democrats must begin a rapid process of

remaking this country to eliminate the threat of a similar right-wing power grab. One important step is packing the Supreme Court, which is fanatically conservative and deeply out of step with the American people. The existing justices will be an impediment to any forward progress we seek to make.

Ideally, Democrats would work to abolish the Senate, which advantages small, Republican states to an outrageous degree. At a minimum, they should try to add new, potentially liberal-leaning states to the Union, like Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. Democrats must aim to eliminate the Electoral College and create a modern, multiparty, parliamentary system.

To a certain extent, rage fueling the fascist movement is a product of economic inequality. The trouble is right-wing leaders are all too able to redirect this inchoate anger from where it belongs, on obscenely rich capitalists like Elon Musk, toward powerless groups, like immigrants and transgender people. Reducing economic inequality will, among other things, limit the appeal of fascism.

Personally, I'd like to see the United States move toward socialism, by which I mean democratic ownership and control of the economy. At the very least, however, some significant reforms of the capi-

talist system, on the level of the New Deal, are needed to stop the spread of right-wing authoritarianism. In order to save the country, Democrats must become genuine champions of the working class.

The anti-fascist coalition has a wide variety of policy goals. For instance, as an animal activist, I'd like to see a massive infusion of public funding into cultivated-meat research. If readers are unfamiliar with the term, cultivated meat is grown from livestock cells, without slaughter. I view the technology as the most promising means of reducing nonhuman suffering and premature death.

That said, no policy goals of the anti-fascist coalition can be achieved under a right-wing dictatorship. This is why elected Democrats have to be prepared to lock up the fascist crooks now running the federal government and rebuild the country so the ongoing totalitarian assault is never feasible again. Liberal politicians not on board with the broad strokes of the plan should get out of the way.

Jon Hochschartner, Granby, CT

*Jon Hochschartner lives in Connecticut. He is the author of a number of books, including *The Animals' Freedom Fighter: A Biography of Ronnie Lee, Founder of the Animal Liberation Front*. Visit his blog at SlaughterFreeAmerica.Substack.com.*



OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

BETRAYED BY THE BOARD: MONTROSE SCHOOLS' ILLEGAL SPENDING AND RADICAL TIES EXPOSED

Editor:

In the tight-knit community of Montrose, where families trust their leaders to steward public funds responsibly, a shocking scandal has unfolded under Superintendent Dr. Carrie Stephenson's leadership. The Montrose County School District misused nearly \$20,000 in taxpayer dollars to illegally promote a \$200 million bond measure for a new high school in the 2024 election. This violation of Colorado campaign finance law not only wasted hard-earned money but also demonstrated a troubling lack of transparency and accountability from Dr. Stephenson, who oversaw partial fixes that failed to fully address the wrongdoing.

Colorado statute is unambiguous on this matter. Section 1-45-117(1)(a)(I), C.R.S. (2024), bars political subdivisions, including school districts, from using any public money to urge voters to support or oppose referred measures. While neutral factual summaries with balanced arguments are allowed under § 1-45-117(1)(b)(I), the district crossed the line into advocacy. After referring the bond to voters, which they rejected, the district created a website section with positive spins on the measure, linked to a promotional video by a professional vendor, and distributed over 16,000 brochures urging approval. These materials included a superficial list of pros and cons, but overwhelmingly cast the bond favorably, aiming to sway public opinion.

The district's spending totaled \$18,913: \$14,272 on brochures and \$4,641 on the

video.

When resident George Kerber filed a complaint on September 15, 2024, alleging improper advocacy on the district's website and Facebook page, Dr. Stephenson's response was inadequate. The video was removed from public view, and arguments were made more prominent online, but the brochures were already out, and webpages retained biased content. This evasive approach highlights Dr. Stephenson's failure to be forthright, prioritizing damage control over full compliance.

The Elections Division of the Colorado Secretary of State filed a formal complaint on May 12, 2025, under § 1-45-111.7, C.R.S., charging the district with a prohibited contribution and seeking penalties per 8 CCR 1505-6, Rule 23.4.3, and § 1-45-117(4), C.R.S. Rather than contesting in a hearing, the district settled out of court. A Notice of Dismissal was issued on June 26, 2025, noting a settlement agreement approved by the Deputy Secretary of State. The terms, including any financial penalties, remain undisclosed, leaving taxpayers guessing how much more was spent to resolve this self-inflicted issue. Dr. Stephenson, as the superintendent named in service documents alongside Public Information Officer Thomas Matthew Jenkins, must be held accountable for this breach and the secretive resolution.

Adding to the concern are radical influences on the school board. Alice Murphy, now District C Director, has affiliations with Indivisible, a far-left group criticized for communist leanings and ties to the

Communist Party USA. Indivisible's Montrose/Ouray chapter has openly supported the recall of conservative county commissioner Scott Mijares, they also connect to figures like Governor Polis, who has shown contempt for the US Constitution through his support of legislation like SB25-003. Polis was featured prominently in the 2014 documentary "The Rocky Mountain Heist," which exposes how a group of wealthy left wing politicians, including Polis, employed dubious strategies to shift Colorado far left through coordinated funding and tactics. Murphy's involvement with such a mindset raises alarms about ideological biases infiltrating our schools, where education should remain neutral and focused on students, not politics.

As of August 2025, this scandal lingers as a reminder of eroded trust. Dr. Stephenson's oversight allowed illegal spending and incomplete remedies, while board members like Murphy bring questionable associations. Montrose residents, who value integrity and fiscal prudence, deserve leaders who uphold the law without excuses. It is time to demand full disclosure on the settlement and scrutinize board influences to protect our children's future. Anything less betrays the community that funds these institutions.

Michael J Badagliacco, "MJB"

Michael is a United States Air Force Veteran, father of five and grandfather of three, passionate about this country and the Constitution.

Editor-in-Chief, Colorado DOGE Report.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

MONTROSE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT TO HOLD ANNUAL "WELCOME LINE" EVENT TO KICK OFF NEW SCHOOL YEAR

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Still living with chronic pain? It's time for a multidisciplinary approach. The Spine & Pain Center at Montrose Regional Health features an innovative team of experts ready to help you feel better and get back to life.

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Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE—On Monday, Aug. 18, students across the Montrose School District will return to class with a warm welcome during the district's annual Welcome Line event.

Held at every elementary school in the district, the Welcome Line brings together high school student-athletes, club members and student leaders to greet elementary students as they arrive for the first day of school. Lining sidewalks and entrances, the high school students cheer, offer high-fives and help ease first-day nerves for their younger peers.

The tradition is designed to create a positive and inclusive start to the school year and foster connection across grade levels. It also provides high school students with a meaningful opportunity to serve as role models and support the next generation of Montrose learners.

Time: 7:30–8:15 a.m. (times may vary by school)

Location: All Montrose elementary schools

Please contact Mikayla Unruh, the Montrose County School District Public Information Officer, to confirm specific timing and location details for each school. 970-252-7901 | mikayla.unruh@mcsd.org



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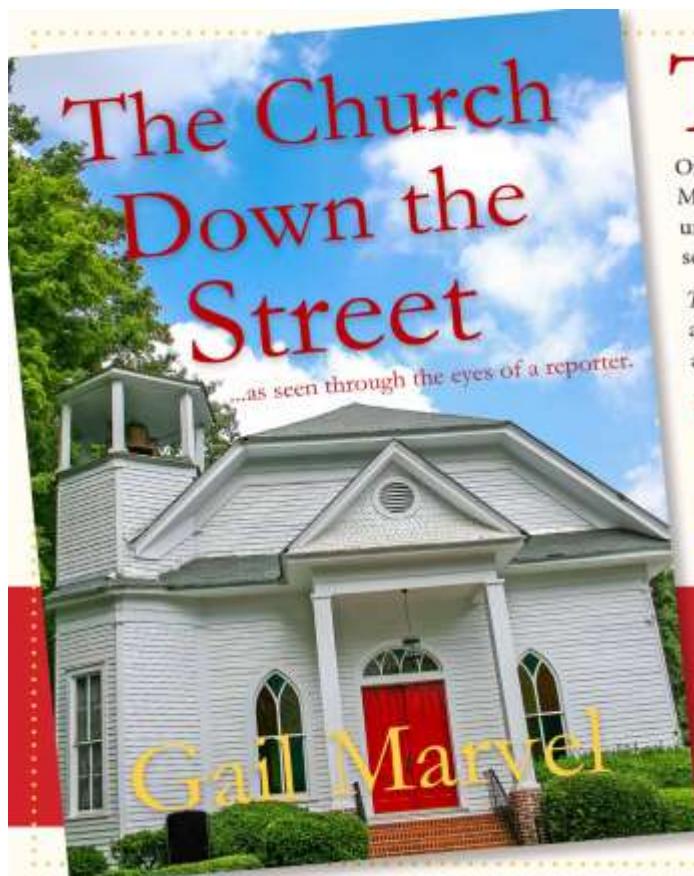
REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

MONTROSE COUNTY FAIR & RODEO BEEF DONATED TO LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS



Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-Montrose County Commissioner Sue Hansen, along with Fair Board members Molly Yorchak, Whitney Shelton, and Jennifer Sherwood, proudly picked up locally processed ground beef from Homestead Meats this week. This high-quality beef came from steers purchased by the County at the 2025 Junior Livestock Auction during the Montrose County Fair & Rodeo. After processing, the meat was donated to Sharing Ministries, Inc. and Shepard's Hand. Montrose County is proud to support local agriculture, youth in 4-H and FFA, and community-based organizations that make a difference every day. This effort reflects our ongoing commitment to investing in our future — from the ranch to the table. Thank you to all the volunteers and partners who made this possible!



The *Church Down the Street*, published pre-COVID, peers into the worship services of more than 70 churches, some of which have a weekly attendance of less than 10.

Organized in a topical format (Hospitality, Program & Source Material, Music, Meditations & Invitations, and The Message), the author uses an unbiased approach to allow readers to experience the worship service as seen through the eyes of a reporter.

The Church Down the Street contains anecdotes and stories from the actual worship services and asks thought-provoking questions that allow readers to draw their own conclusions.

Readers will:

- See strengths and weaknesses in the worship service
- Re-evaluate hospitality toward visitors
- Become more aware of source material used in the worship service
- Compare and contrast music presentations and selections
- Discern the value and content of the sermon.

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

GAIL MARVEL
Montrose Author & Reporter



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

SWEITZER LAKE BOAT RAMP REOPENS; CRAWFORD COUNTING DOWN FINAL DAYS OF 2025

Colorado Parks & Wildlife News Release

DELTA— Following the completion of dam restoration work and with water levels restored in the reservoir, Sweitzer Lake State Park opened its boat ramp to the public Aug. 8.

The ramp at Sweitzer Lake State Park will be open daily from 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. The park will reduce the hours from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. after Labor Day. The ramp will close for the season Sept. 28.

"It's great to see boats back out on the water here at Sweitzer Lake," said Park Manager Scott Rist. "We know our local community has been anxious to see the reservoir refill this summer, and we are excited to welcome boaters back during these last few weeks of the summer season."

Rist noted that the reservoir is still about a foot below full pool but continues to fill about six inches per week.

"Most boats under 18 feet won't have a problem right now," he said.

While the boating season is just getting started at Sweitzer Lake, it is quickly coming to a close at Crawford State Park roughly 35 miles east.

Crawford State Park aimed to keep its boat ramp open through Sept. 15, but with water levels quickly dropping, it is possible the boat ramp will be closed by the end of August.

"Based on current projections and unless we get some precipitation, we may have about 20 days left of boatable water," said Crawford State Park Manager Mark Lehman. "It's tricky not having a hard and fast closing date, but we want to let the public know that the ramp will be closed sooner than later this year. The Crawford boat ramp is currently open, but we advise caution because of low water levels. Hazards may exist at any water level, but cur-



Sweitzer Lake. Photo courtesy Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

rent conditions increase the risk of unseen obstacles just beneath the surface."

The Paonia State Park boat ramp closed July 17 because of low water levels. Hand-launched vessels are still permitted at the park, but access is very limited.

Crawford State Park is located in Delta County along Highway 92 southeast of Hotchkiss and northeast of the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park. The reservoir is known as a quality perch and crappie fishery and offers good chances to fish for warm water species such as largemouth bass.

Sweitzer Lake State Park is located in Delta County along Highway 50 south of Delta. The park features a 137-surface acre reservoir for day-use recreation. Sweitzer Lake is considered a good fishing spot for youth with plentiful catfish, bluegill, green sunfish and carp. The lake is a largemouth bass trophy fishery. Sweitzer Lake is a

catch-and-release-only lake. Fish in this lake contain selenium and are not edible. The park is also an excellent location for bird observation.

Paonia State Park is located in Gunnison County, 17 miles northeast of the town of Paonia along Highway 133. The 1,523-acre park is popular for camping and photographers interested in capturing wildlife and wildflowers.

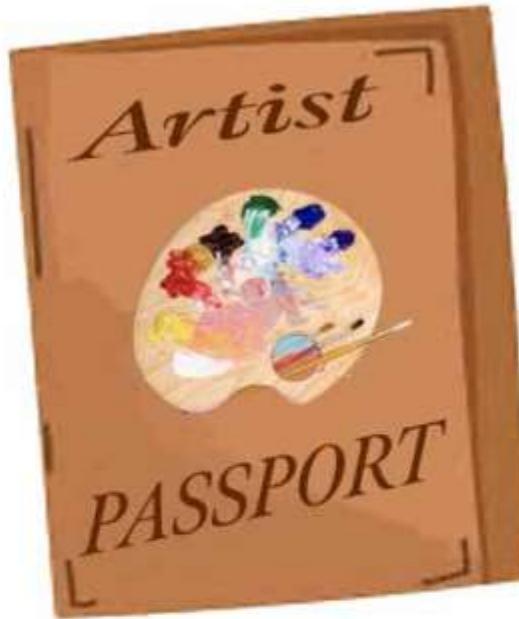
Campsites reservations can be made through the Colorado Parks and Wildlife website at: <http://cpw.state.co.us>. Join us in keeping Colorado, Colorado. Get a \$29 Keep Colorado Wild Pass with your next vehicle registration and support state parks, search and rescue teams, avalanche safety, wildlife conservation and outdoor education.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

CDOT BEGINS CULVERT REPLACEMENT PROJECT ON US 50 NORTH OF MONTROSE

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE— The Colorado Department of Transportation, in partnership with Ridgway Valley Enterprises, began work on the U.S. Highway 50 culvert replacement project on Aug. 11. This project is located north of Montrose near the airport, from Mile Post 89.7 to MP 90.

Work consists of replacing existing steel culvert on Cedar Creek with concrete box culverts under US 50. Shoulder closures and single-lane closures will be utilized until the detour route is built.

The detour will divert northbound and southbound traffic to the east on the frontage road to maintain flowing traffic in both directions.

These culvert replacements will accommodate higher accumulations of rainfall, lower the risks associated with flooding, and help maintain the integrity of the roadway and help maintain safe driving conditions.

Motorists and area residents can expect the following impacts during construction:

- Work will occur during daytime hours, Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Single lane closures, double lane closures



Map showing where the project is located on US 50 north of Montrose from MP 89.7 to MP 90. Courtesy image.

and shoulder closures will take place within the work zone.

- Reduced speeds in the work zone.
- Plan ahead and expect short delays.

Construction schedules are weather dependent.

The project is expected to complete in June 2026.


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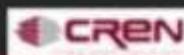
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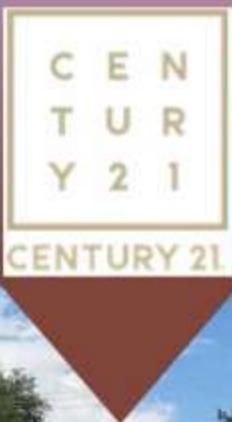


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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

DELTA HEALTH AND MONTROSE REGIONAL HEALTH ANNOUNCE JOINT VENTURE TO STRENGTHEN OB/GYN SERVICES FOR THE REGION



Delta Hospital photo courtesy of Delta Health.

Special to the Mirror

DELTA—Delta Health is proud to announce a new joint venture with Montrose Regional Health that will expand access to high-quality OB/GYN services for families across the region. This collaborative approach will combine the strengths of both organizations to deliver exceptional care from pregnancy through delivery and postpartum recovery.

Under the new model, expectant mothers will receive their prenatal visits, screenings, and workups close to home at Delta Health, while deliveries will be supported at Montrose Regional Health's labor and

delivery unit—recognized for excellence in maternal and newborn care. This ensures families in Delta County have access to advanced facilities, specialized staff, and comprehensive support throughout their childbirth experience.

"This is an exciting step forward for maternal care in our region," said Jonathan Cohee, MHA, OT, President and Chief Executive Officer for Delta Health. "By joining forces with Montrose Regional Health, we can maintain local access for the majority of pregnancy care while giving our patients the benefit of a dedicated, high-volume birthing center when it comes

time to deliver. It's the best of both worlds—personalized care close to home and the highest level of resources when families need them most."

The joint venture reflects a strategic response to evolving community needs, including shifting birth volumes and a nationwide shortage of specialized obstetric providers.

By working together, Delta Health and Montrose Regional Health are ensuring that every mother and newborn in the service area continues to receive safe, compassionate, and expert care—without compromise.

"We are honored to partner with Delta Health to ensure expecting mothers continue to receive the highest quality prenatal care close to home, while having access to the resources and specialized support needed for safe deliveries in Montrose," said Jeff Megenhausen, MBA, Chief Executive Officer for Montrose Regional Health. "This Collaboration is about putting patients first, and ensuring that moms and babies in our region have the care they need, when and where they need it."

Delta Health will continue to offer a full range of women's health services locally, including gynecology, well-woman exams, family planning, and prenatal visits. Patients with questions about their care or upcoming deliveries can contact their Delta Health physician clinic or visit deltahealthco.org.



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In short, working with an ABR-certified agent provides specialized expertise, better representation, and a smoother home-buying experience.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

GRAND MESA, UNCOMPAHGRE AND GUNNISON NATIONAL FORESTS ENACT STAGE 2 FIRE RESTRICTIONS

Special to the Mirror

DELTA-All lands managed by the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison (GMUG) National Forests will be under stage 2 fire restrictions/prohibitions beginning August 14 at 12:01 a.m. through December 31, unless rescinded.

Under stage 2 fire restrictions, the following are **PROHIBITED**:

Igniting, building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire, campfire, charcoal barbecue, or grill, except if using a device solely fueled by liquid or gas that can be turned on and off in an area barren or cleared of all flammable materials within three feet of the device. 36 CFR § 261.52(a)

Smoking, except in an enclosed vehicle or building. 36 CFR § 261.52(d)

Welding or operating an acetylene or other torch with open flame. 36 CFR § 261.52

(h)

Using an explosive. 36 C.F.R. § 261.52(b) Possessing or using a motor vehicle off established roads, motorized trails or established parking areas, except when parking in an area devoid of vegetation within 10 feet of the vehicle. 36 CFR § 261.56. See full restrictions/prohibitions order and map here: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/r02/gmug/alerts/stage-2-fire-restrictions-prohibitions-effect>

Fire managers base decisions about fire restrictions/prohibitions on specific fuel moisture measurements in vegetation and other risk factors such as predicted weather and current fire activity. Fire danger is increasing, and these restrictions/prohibitions will be implemented to protect public health and safety due to the current and anticipated elevated risk of

wildfire. Fire managers will continue to monitor conditions and assess the need for further action, including additional restrictions/prohibitions if the weather remains hot and dry or lessening if a wetter weather pattern develops.

Violation of these regulations is punishable as a class B misdemeanor, by a fine of not more than \$5,000 for an individual or \$10,000 for an organization, or imprisonment of not more than six months, or both. Anyone negligently or willfully starting a wildland fire could also be held responsible for the costs of that fire.

For information and updates on current fire restrictions/prohibitions, conditions and recreation opportunities on the GMUG visit the forest website or call the GMUG fire information line at 970-874-6602.

Where Wallflowers Grow is the coming of age story of a shy, introverted, 12-year-old girl. A 1960's latch-key kid, Gail's mom agreed to let her leave her home-alone existence and live in her grandma's boarding house.

The Shelly Boarding House, located in rural southeastern Colorado, was home to male pensioners and Social Security recipients who themselves were loners and had nowhere else to go.

For three years Gail lived in this unconventional family environment where she comes of age, while the old-timers age in place.

GAIL MARVEL
Montrose Author & Reporter

Where Wallflowers Grow is available online at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) and [wingedpublications.com](https://www.wingedpublications.com).

REGIONAL NEW BRIEFS

CITY INTRODUCES PRE-APPROVED ADU HOUSING PROGRAM

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE— The City of Montrose is proud to introduce its pre-approved Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Program, a forward-thinking initiative designed to provide residents with accessible and affordable housing options while enhancing the vitality of our neighborhoods.

An ADU is a secondary residential unit on the same lot as a primary home. Often referred to as a "granny flat," "in-law suite," "backyard cottage," or "casita," an ADU can be attached to the main house — such as a basement apartment or garage conversion — or detached, like a standalone dwelling.

The pre-approval program presents residents with a cost-effective option to efficiently add ADUs to their properties, which will increase property values, add potential rental income, and add more flexibility with family living arrangements. From a community perspective, the increased use of ADUs will help address the local housing shortage, add density to neighborhoods to promote infrastructure efficiencies, support multi-generational housing, and boost the local economy.

"This program has been implemented to help streamline ADU development and incentivize infill in Montrose," said Com-

munity Development Director Jace Hochwalt.

Program Overview:

1: Select a Pre-Approved Design: Choose from three professionally designed ADU plans.

A: The Retreat: A single-story 609 square-foot, 1-bedroom, 1-bathroom plan best suited for aging parents, recent graduates, and young professionals.

B: The Perch: A 648-square-foot, 1-bedroom, 1-bathroom, over-garage apartment with an interior staircase great for guest housing or long-term rental income.

C: The Loft: A 900-square-foot, 1-bedroom, 1-bathroom, expanded living space with lofted flex space. This design is great for small families, remote workers, and creative professionals.

2: Review Placement Requirements: Ensure that your chosen design complies with local building regulations and zoning of each applicable property.

3: Submit for Permitting: Since the plans are pre-approved, the permitting process is expedited. While architectural plans are pre-approved, an applicant will still be required to submit a site-specific site/utility plan, engineered foundation design, floor framing layout & details, and an engineered roof truss design.

4: Construct Your ADU: Engage a licensed contractor to complete the build.

After extensive community outreach and participation, in 2021 the City of Montrose adopted the Envision 2040 Comprehensive Plan, which included a new vision, guiding principles, goals, and objectives to address community issues. One of the primary goals of the Envision 2040 Plan is to encourage a variety of housing types, tenures, and densities to meet the needs of the community. Following the adoption of the Envision 2040 Plan, the City of Montrose completed its Housing Needs Assessment. The purpose of the assessment was to evaluate current housing conditions and needs, project future housing needs, and provide recommendations for policies, practices, and regulatory changes that could be implemented to address gaps between housing needs and supply. In 2024, following up on the work of the Envision 2040 Plan, and the Housing Needs Assessment, the City of Montrose completed a land development code update that specifically focused on housing initiatives and included several code amendments focused on ADUs and other housing types in residential zone districts. For more information visit CityofMontrose.org/ADU

Join us for the 'Haunting of the Downtown' Ghost tour August 22nd at 7:00 pm

The Montrose County Historical Museum takes a walk on the Spooky Side with tales of spooks, ghouls, and ghost stories. The museum's ghost authority mingles history and legends on a walk of down Montrose's shadowy Main Street and dark alleyways. The ghouls will be present as they follow patrons enjoying the mysterious tales of the town's eerie history of paranormal activity and perhaps have their own experiences to share afterward.

There are limited spaces for this family-friendly tour, to reserve a space call 970-249-2085 or email info@montrosehistory.org
Tickets are \$10.00/person

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COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

COLORADO BREWERS PREPARE FOR FRESH HOP BEER SEASON

Special to the Mirror

DENVER — This week, hop growers begin the first round of harvest, with fresh hop beer season soon to follow as brewers pick up fresh hops for a once-a-year beer experience.

"Going out to the hop yards and selecting what you want is a truly unique beer experience, where we get to smell and envision our next creation," said Marni Wahlquist, head brewer at Odell Brewing Company Sloan's Lake Brewhouse. "Fresh hop beer season is a labor of love but it's worth it when we see customers enjoying this highly seasonal beer. At Odell Brewing Company, we're excited to be using fresh Amarillo and Cryo Krush hops in this year's brews. We invite folks to come out and enjoy these beers in early October."

According to U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington state produces the most hops with 31,701 acres, followed by Oregon with 5,421 acres and Idaho strung 5,109 acres. While most of America's hops are grown in the Pacific Northwest, Colorado's beer industry helps create 1,400 agriculture jobs within the state. And Colorado is still home to Billy Goat Hop Farm,

which is growing 22 acres of hops this year.

"The annual hop harvest produces hops that are used by breweries all year long, with the vast majority of hops processed into hop pellets that have a multi-year shelf life when held in cold storage – all yielding delicious results that give beers their unique aroma and taste," said Michelle Palacios, executive director of the Oregon Hop Growers Association. "But during harvest, some brewers create fresh hopped beers to showcase the unique characteristics only fresh hops can impart. It's a special time of year for beer nerds and I encourage everyone to seek out these brews to support your favorite local brewery."

Depending on the variety of hops, some begin harvest as soon as next week, while others will go well into September. As beer sales decline, so has hop production. Last year, hop acreage declined -18% nationally. With the Brewers Association projecting craft beer sales down -5% halfway through 2025, hop production is similarly down -4-5%.

"What is so cool about fresh hop beers is

they are a direct connection of agriculture and the brewing industries," said Audrey Gehlhausen, co-owner and farmer of Billy Goat Hop Farm. "As the craft beer scene struggles, local Colorado farms have been directly impacted.

Over 50% of the dwindling hop acreage that remained in Colorado was lost last year directly because of decreased Colorado beer production. The issue of dying hop farms in our state is the entire reason we started the Southwest Fresh Fest -- to start educating the public on the necessity of agriculture in the brewing industry, and in turn the importance of craft beer for the ag industry.

Colorado's nearly 450 breweries help create 61,000 jobs, \$4 billion in wages and \$13.1 billion in economic activity for the state each year.

According to the Colorado Brewers Guild, Colorado lost 85 breweries, taprooms or brewpubs in recent years. Brewers are dealing with inflation, supply chain issues, employee shortages, tariffs and fewer people drinking beer overall. Fresh hop beer season is a way to help support this vital, local industry.



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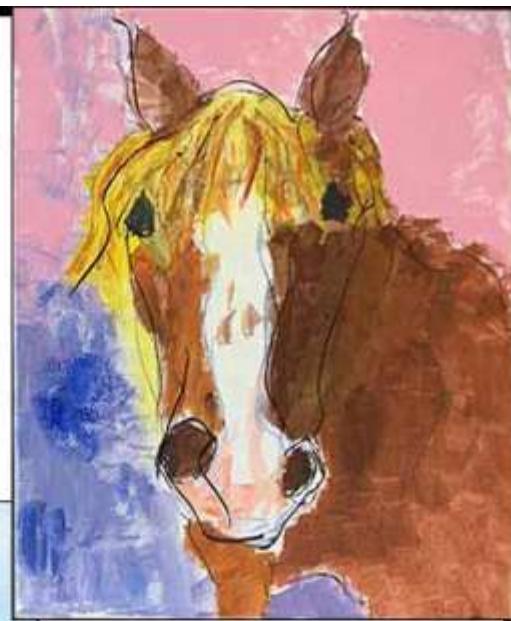


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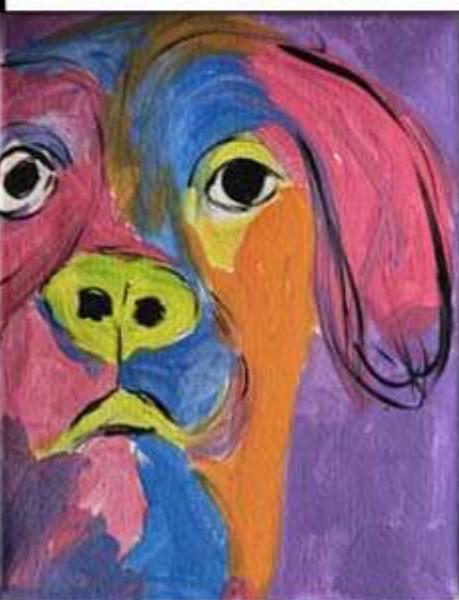
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COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

SHIRLEY JEAN CARSON

May 17, 1932 - August 5, 2025



Shirley was born May 17, 1932, in Council

Bluffs, Iowa, to Louis S. and Iva G (Hauser) Moore. On January 21, 1950, she married Jack Edwards and eventually moved to Denver, CO. They were blessed with three daughters, Judy, Connie, and Patti. Jack unexpectedly passed away in January 1964. She later met and married Gordon Carson Jr. October 23, 1964, moved to Montrose, CO, and were blessed with another daughter, Bobbi.

Together, Gordon and Shirley raised four daughters and one grandson. They owned the "Accent House" in Montrose, and she worked for several Doctors in the area. In 1987, they moved to California and Shirley found herself drawn toward Doctors' offices again.

They enjoyed many years of playing golf, but they found themselves missing family

and moved back to Montrose in 1999. She worked at "Gale's Cards and Gifts," and helped Bobbi with her Daycare where she became "grandma" to all the kids. She went to work at Brown's Shoe Store until she finally retired.

She enjoyed boating at Sweitzer Lake, bowling, golf, playing cards, and dancing with the love of her life, Gordon.

Shirley was a very devoted wife, mother, grandmother, and friend. She is survived by her four daughters: Judy (Gary) Way, Connie (Mike) Worthington, Patti (Bill) Kolb, and Bobbi (Mark) Keep. She had 12 grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren, two great-great grandchildren with another on the way. Shirley lived a blessed life and was ready to go home with our Lord and Savior.

ROBERT "BOB" DEVINNY

March 24, 1949 - August 12, 2025

ROBERT (BOB) DEVINNY, passed away unexpectedly on August 12, 2025. Bob was born on March 24, 1949, and raised in Montrose Colorado. Bob went through all of his school years in Montrose before joining the United States Army in 1968. Bob served in Vietnam from 1969 to 1970. Bob was honorably discharged in 1973.

After the Army, Bob worked for the Iron Workers Union for 45 years before retiring. Bob enjoyed hunting, fishing, and spending much of his time outdoors. Bob loved being around his family and friends. Bob is survived by his two daughters, Christine (Husband Tim) Follis of Greeley Colorado, Stacy DeVinny of Montrose, Colorado. Four grandchildren, Ethan Scott of Montrose, Katie Follis, Parker Follis, and Ashley Lara all of Greeley Colorado. Two great-granddaughters, Rylee Follis and Wailani Myers, both of Greeley, Colorado. One brother, Larry DeVinny of Montrose Colorado. Bob is preceded in death by his parents, Ralph and Fern DeVinny, his grandparents, John and Stella DeVinny, and his siblings, Elain and Mike DeVinny of Montrose, Colorado.

Grave Side Services at Grand View Cemetery on Sunset Mesa
Friday August 29th at 11 am.



COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

ROBERT "BOB" LEROY WEBB

May 21, 1939 — August 9, 2025

ROBERT "BOB" LEROY WEBB, a devoted husband, father, grandfather, dairyman, and community leader, passed away peacefully on August 9, 2025, at the age of 86.

Bob was born on May 21, 1939, in Montrose, Colorado, to Donald and Della Webb of Olathe. His early childhood was shaped by the hardship of his father serving in World War II. While his father bravely served overseas, enduring the Bataan Death March and surviving as a prisoner of war, Bob, his mother, and sister lived with his grandmother in Olathe. He went six years without seeing his father. When they were not living with his grandmother during the war, he lived in Montrose.

Bob attended Olathe Elementary and Johnson Elementary in Montrose before continuing his education at Olathe High School. He was an active student who played basketball, ran track, and was an avid outdoorsman. Hunting and fishing were lifelong passions—whether it was elk, deer, antelope, bear, bobcats, pheasants, geese, or bighorn sheep, Bob embraced Colorado's great outdoors with enthusiasm.

During high school at Olathe, he met the love of his life, Charlotte Sumner. In 1958, Bob graduated from Olathe High School. Bob and Charlotte married on November 7, 1959, in Delta, Colorado, and shared 66 years of love and partnership while raising three children.

Bob attended Pueblo Junior College, earning a degree in Diesel Mechanics while working at Colorado Fuel & Iron (CF&I). He later began engineering studies at Colorado State University but chose to

return home with Charlotte to start their family and worked on the family farm in Pea Green, Colorado. At the time, the farm raised chickens, turkeys, and dairy cows, producing poultry for much of the Western Slope of Colorado. Bob discovered his true calling in dairy farming and, in 1963, purchased the dairy operation, relocating two miles west of Olathe.

Together, Bob and Charlotte built one of the region's most respected dairy farms, milking more than 1,200 Holstein cows and farming around 600 acres to support the herd. Their son, Jim Webb, and son-in-law, John Gibson, were both part of Webb Dairy. In 2008, they launched Rocking W Cheese & Milk to bring added value to the Webb Dairy operation. For over 63 years, Bob poured his heart into Webb Dairy, caring for his cows, stewarding the land, and nurturing a legacy rooted in hard work, dedication, and family pride.

Bob was deeply involved in his community—serving as a 4-H leader for many years, playing city recreation basketball in Delta and Montrose, and being a lifetime member of the Montrose Elks, serving on the Olathe Potato Growers' Co-op Board, Olathe FFA Ag Advisory Board, member of the Western Colorado Dairymen's Association. Above all, he was a proud supporter of his family's activities, rarely missing an athletic game for his children and later cheering on his grandchildren in both high school and college sports.

In addition to his love for farming, Bob enjoyed riding horses in the mountains, going side-by-side riding to explore Colorado's rugged beauty, and swimming. Later in life, he participated in the Senior



Olympics as a competitive swimmer. Bob is survived by his loving wife, Charlotte (Sumner) Webb; daughter Sonya (Webb) Hood and her husband John, and their daughter Margo (Hood) Lenz and husband David, and their two children (David and John Lenz); daughter Caryn (Webb) Gibson and her husband John, and their children Terrica (Gibson) Garrison and husband Cutter Garrison, and their three boys (Riggin, Reece, & Real Garrison); Tasha Gibson and Dakota Coats and their daughter (Tazie Coats) and ; Taylor Gibson; son James (Jim) Webb who passed away in 2022 daughters Skylyn Webb; Joycie Webb; and Melissa Webb. Bob's life was a testament to resilience, love, and dedication. His legacy will live on through his family, the land he cared for, and the values he instilled in all who knew him.

CELEBRATING LOCAL BEAUTY.

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ISSUE 535 Aug. 18, 2025

ART&SOL

YOUR BRAIN ON NATURE – EVOLUTION AND DOPAMINE



By Lauren Hall Ruddell, PhD. Courtesy photo.

Greetings Mirrorites!

OLATHE-I recently heard a super informative podcast from Nate Hagens of The Great Simplification about the role of dopamine in reward response and learning. It's a real double-edged sword that we inherited from our mammalian ancestors. It was so intriguing, I wanted to unpack the principles here and add a bit to them. The host relayed that dopamine levels have been shown to rise and fall in response to both planned and unexpected rewards. He cited a study on monkey brains by Wolfram Schultz that illustrated that monkey dopamine spiked immediately when receiving a random food treat, but afterwards only spiked when the announcing stimulus (a musical beep) indicated that the same food reward *was about to be presented*. Once the behavior of responding to this conditioning was encoded, dopamine remained the same while the treat was being gobbled down.



Image courtesy of Dreamstime.

This internal dynamic is critical for learning and responding to our environments effectively. Survival depended upon a pleasant cognitive hit that attuned our actions to receiving some sort of reward. This made all the sense in the world for our species, up until now.

Constant stimulation through social media, screen entertainment, and other 24/7 access to potential rewards has altered the dopamine landscape, according to some researchers. This has happened to such an extent that some health gurus are promoting the idea of a dopamine fast as the ultimate mental health detox. As with so many fads, there is a grain of truth that has been blown out of proportion. The

core idea is that we are overstimulated to the point that our dopamine baseline is permanently raised, making it harder to feel good with the same amount of reward that we might have been happy with a few years ago. The host's premise is that mindless time with social media pursuits or even constant bombardment with emails can act as a sort of 'gateway' drug, the way people used to think of cannabis. The host advises lowering one's baseline by time in nature, just short periods throughout the day. There is some merit in this, but I want to tweak that prescription just a little bit based on my own research, life experience, and the work of others examined for this article.

Continued next pg

YOUR BRAIN ON NATURE – EVOLUTION AND DOPAMINE From previous pg

While it might be true that eschewing screen time of all kinds in favor of more boring pastimes will eventually lower your dopamine baseline, time in nature may not do so. The reason for this is that time spent in restorative environments is inherently pleasurable, just at a lower volume. It's way, way, safer in many ways as well. As Desai et al state... "There is evidence to suggest that excessive dopamine stimulation from activities like social media, video games, and junk food can lead to desensitization of the brain's reward system, ultimately contributing to issues like addiction, impulsivity, and difficulty in maintaining attention. By taking a break from these stimuli, individuals may experience improved mental clarity, reduced anxiety, and a renewed ability to find pleasure in simple, everyday activities... There are concerns that extreme forms of dopamine fasting, such as prolonged periods of isolation or severe dietary restrictions, could have negative implications for mental and physical health."

Side effects can include acute anxiety, social withdrawal, poor sleep, and even revenge binging. So Dr. Hagans seems to be absolutely correct in calling out constant indoor overstimulation as being a bad thing, but a few minutes of putting away the cell phone and gazing at a pleasant view a couple of times a day probably isn't going to affect your dopamine all that much. My research for this article concluded that long-term lowering (safely) of dopamine levels can take weeks. So, it's

wise to bear in mind that, along with all sorts of other neurotransmitters we require, dopamine is just one of many that are needed in the correct portions for perfect mental wellness. Tweaking dopamine through random denial of pleasures can be quite toxic in its own right.

"Most advocates of dopamine fasting *think* they're reducing the levels of that specific neurotransmitter in their body, which they (incorrectly) believe is a good thing. They believe that too much dopamine makes life less enjoyable. By setting aside pleasurable behaviors, their logic goes that you reduce your "dopamine tolerance," so you don't need to be overstimulated all the time to be satisfied with your life," states psychologist Dr. Susan Albers.

For readers who suspect that they are becoming anhedonic (finding less and less pleasure in previously delightful events and actions), due to screentime, getting out into nature daily for at least 30 minutes is my recommendation. It will take 15 minutes to decompress and enter the default mode network, and then another 15 minutes to do any useful cognitive gymnastics suggested by this playground space.

My own experience confirms that the 15-minute rule is valid, but more is needed to really benefit. These positive aspects of the human condition are blocked by the hyper-arousal of screen-oriented endless activities and take a bit to reassert themselves after decompression has occurred.

As one researcher and therapist states..." Dopamine is released in response to novelty, curiosity, and achievement — all of which are naturally stimulated in outdoor settings. A walk that involves spotting wildlife or seeing beautiful and awe-inspiring views can activate the mesolimbic pathway, the brain's reward circuit, increasing dopamine transmission. Nature-based mindfulness, which encourages curiosity and non-judgmental observation, fosters this dopamine activity without the overstimulation typical of screen-based rewards." This is the Goldilocks moment of dopamine release, when the portion is just right. So rather than viewing dopamine as the bad guy and pleasure as an indication of addiction and total lack of self-control, take Dr. Hagans advice with a grain of salt.

He's not wrong, and he has a serious problem correctly identified, but the solution will take plenty of time away from your devices and in the company of pleasant others in pleasant outdoor settings to affect the desired balance of all of those brain chemicals. Remember, back in the ancestral environment, people were bored much of the time until something stupendous happened. A little gentle boredom or soft fascination is not such a bad thing.

Get a bit bored in nature today as an experiment with your own dopamine levels and see what conclusions you come to about your 'happy place'.

Best regards, The Mindful Naturalist

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COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

MONTROSE CENTER FOR ARTS PRESENTS *ELEMENTS OF FALL* PLEIN AIR AND WOODWORKERS EXHIBIT

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-The Montrose Center for Arts is pleased to welcome Plein Air artists, the Montrose Area Woodturners and the Woodworkers Guild of Western Colorado as the featured artists in September. The exhibition opens September 6 and runs through October 4 during regular gallery hours. Be sure to stop by the opening reception for the exhibition, which will take place during the second Thursday MONTROSE ART CRAWL (September 11) when MCA plein air and woodworking artists will be presenting Art Talks and discussing their work. In addition, check the MCA calendar of events for additional Art Talk information. *En plein air* is a French expression meaning "in the open air," and refers to the act of painting outdoors with the artist's subject in full view. Plein air artists capture the spirit and essence of a landscape or subject by incorporating natural light, color and movement in their works.

At the same time, visitors can enjoy the wonders created from wood. To a regular soul a downed tree is nothing more than firewood or perhaps garden mulch. But to the woodworkers, the tree is a work of art to ponder. Will it be a bowl? A wall-hanging? A delicate hollow form? A gorgeous bench or table?

Visitors are invited to come and admire the artistic vision of these unique artists. Let the plein air artists transport you to new destinations, and the woodworkers show you the amazing complexity and



Courtesy image is by Anita Winter.

beauty they find in a humble hunk of wood.

Visitors will also want to explore the Cottonwood and Ponderosa galleries (the two side galleries), where the "Animal Life" artwork by MCA artists is being showcased.

About Montrose Center for Arts

MCA is a non-profit organization totally served by volunteers and is always looking for volunteers to help with a wide variety of activities, from manning the

reception desk, to helping with events and planning and developing the future of the organization. If you are interested in helping bring art to the Western Slope, you can call or email MCA to volunteer. The MCA depends upon support from membership, contributions, sponsorships, grant funding and the local community. To support the MCA and local artists on the Western Slope, become an MCA member by stopping by the gallery or visiting our website.

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COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

HOPEWEST: TRANSFORMING FEAR INTO CONFIDENCE



Kirsten Vogelsang, a HopeWest nurse practitioner, finds purpose in the meaningful conversations she shares with patients. Courtesy photo

Special to the Mirror

REGIONAL-When facing life challenges related to aging, illness, or grief, it's common to feel a sense of worry or uncertainty about what lies ahead. Navigating medical and daily needs can be overwhelming, and for some, asking for help may feel like

you're "giving up" or even "failing."

At HopeWest, we want to assure you that seeking support is none of that. In fact, it's often a necessary step toward peace of mind.

Through programs like PACE, dementia support, hospice, palliative care, and grief and bereavement services, we've seen firsthand how the right care can transform fear into confidence.

For more than thirty years, families have trusted HopeWest to show up, listen, and walk alongside them through life's most challenging seasons.

Kirsten Vogelsang, a HopeWest nurse practitioner, finds purpose in the meaningful conversations she shares with patients, especially during admissions.

"Seeing people go from being fearful to really embracing our services over the course of our conversations is really powerful," she said.

Teammates like Kirsten guide families through open, honest conversations to help them understand what to expect and how our programs can support them.

"HopeWest is providing that personal touch with individual plans of care. We are not treating people as a disease or illness. We are treating them as an individual," she said. "Everything is tailored to the patient, we are there for you."

This approach is the thread that runs through every part of HopeWest. From grief and bereavement support to PACE

(for those aging safely at home), dementia, palliative, and hospice care, we've built specialized teams that work together to care for the whole person and their family. While these are familiar paths to us, we recognize that they are often new and difficult journeys for families. That's why education, listening, and responding with compassion are so necessary.

"I feel successful when the families I talk to feel calm, empowered, confident about the plan going forward," said Kirsten. "It's our job to make sure our people are safe and taken care of in all aspects of their care, even beyond medical needs."

Whether someone is navigating complex decisions or simply trying to manage pain or fatigue, our team helps ensure that care aligns with their values and priorities. This philosophy is part of what has made HopeWest a trusted part of our community. In fact, a recent family satisfaction survey showed that 94% of families would recommend HopeWest to others, reflecting the trust and connection that defines our work.

If you're caring for someone with dementia or someone who wants to remain safe in their home, managing a serious illness, grieving the loss of a loved one, or simply needing support, you don't have to do it alone. HopeWest is here to support you with compassion, confidence, and care that transforms feelings of fear into confidence.

KENNETH GIFFORD GRADUATED FROM MSOE IN SPRING 2025

Special to the Mirror

MILWAUKEE, WI-- Kenneth Gifford, from Montrose, graduated from Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE) in Spring 2025. Gifford received a Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering with High Honors.

Students with a cumulative GPA of 3.70 or above are listed as having graduated with "High Honors." Undergraduate students with a cumulative GPA between 3.20 and 3.69 are listed as having graduated with "Honors."

Milwaukee School of Engineering (www.msoe.edu) is the university of choice for those seeking an inclusive community of experiential learners driven to solve the complex challenges of today and tomorrow. The independent, non-profit university has about 2,800 students and was founded in 1903. MSOE offers bachelor's and master's degrees in engineering, business and nursing. Faculty are student-focused experts who bring real-world experience into the classroom. This approach to learning makes students ready now as well as prepared for the future. Longstanding partnerships with business and industry leaders enable students to learn alongside professional mentors, and challenge them to go beyond what's possible. MSOE graduates are leaders of character, responsible professionals, passionate learners and value creators.

LESLEY GORE WITH CENTURY 21 ELEVATED PROPERTIES



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This beautifully updated 3-bed, 1.5-bath home in Garnet Mesa is a must-see! Nearly everything is new, including the kitchen (cabinets & appliances), bathrooms, doors, floors, blinds, and fresh paint inside and out.

The smart layout features upstairs laundry, and an enclosed front porch ideal as a mudroom or summer sleeping area.

The home is move-in ready, clean, and efficient, with windows replaced 15 years ago. Enjoy a fenced front yard, detached garage with concrete floor, low-maintenance gravel yard, and HOA-provided irrigation water. Close to schools, medical facilities, and all that Delta offers.



\$339,900.00

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1.5 bathrooms**

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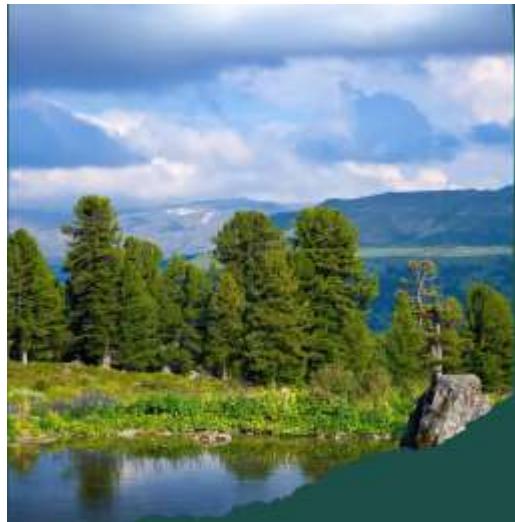
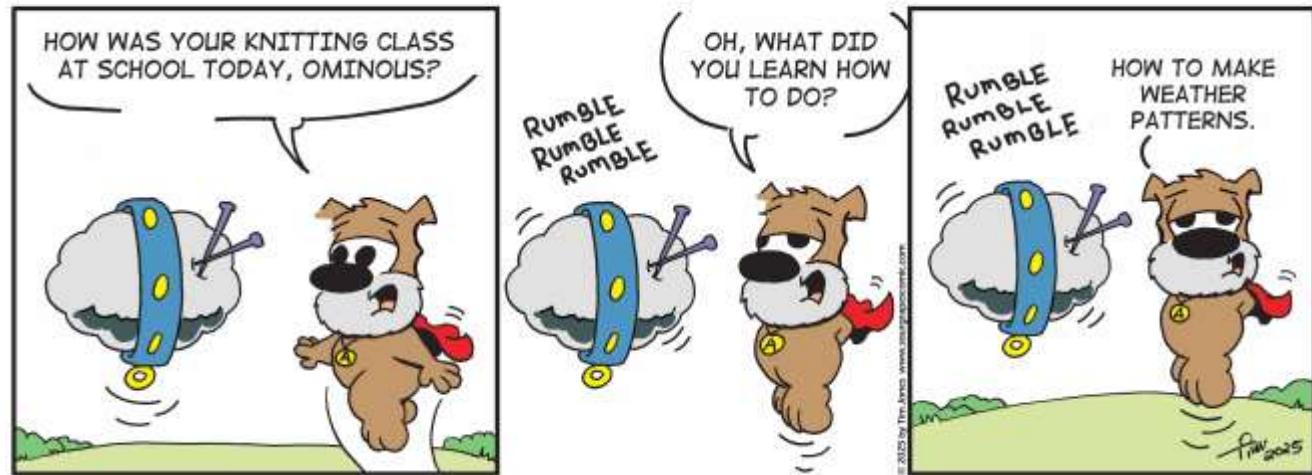


CARTOON BY TIM JONES

WEEKLY CARTOON

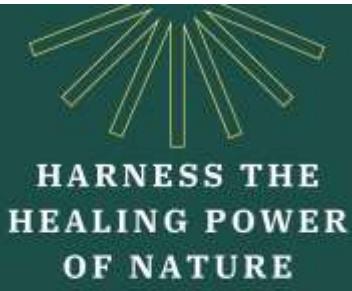
SOUR GRAPES

by Tim Jones



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<https://www.allsaintsmontrose.org/> Rector: The Rev Preston Gordon, pgordon@allsaintsmontrose.org

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All Saints Anglican Church is an Evangelical Anglican Church committed to the ministry of Word, Sacrament, and Spirit. Our music is a combination of traditional hymns, contemporary, and modern songs.

We invite kids preschool and up to join our kids worship time during the 9am Sunday service. We would love to welcome you here. Following the service, join us for snacks and conversation. On the third Sunday of the month we celebrate a potluck meal together.

Vision: We see Jesus Christ restoring hope: in us and in our world.

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Wednesday Bible Study/Prayer 7 p.m.

CELEBRATION CHURCH

Denomination: Southern Baptist Church (SBC – Southern Baptist Convention)

Address: 2900 Sunnyside Road, Montrose, CO 81401

Office Hours: By appointment

Phone: (970) 497-4925

Email: celebrationmontrose@gmail.com

Website: <https://celebrationmontrose.org/>

Worship Service Times: 9am and 10:45am

Senior Pastor:

Pastor Brandon Mathis

Church Description/Mission: Celebration Church makes disciples that make disciples. Our core values include the Scrip-

ture, discipleship, community, service, prayer, love, and unity.

Demographics: Multi-generational

Celebration Kids: (age birth to 5th grade) programs offered both services.

Student (middle & high school) at 9am.

Adult -Discipleship classes 8am and 10:45am.

CHRIST'S CHURCH OF THE VALLEY

Name of Church: Christ's Church of the Valley

Denomination Affiliation: Non-denominational Christian Church/Church of Christ

Address: 10 Hillcrest Plaza Way. Montrose, CO 81401

Office hours: Tuesday & Wednesday 9am-noon and by appointment.

Contact information:

Phone: 970-249-0530

Email: CCVMontroseCO10@gmail.com

Website: ccvmontrose.org

Name of current Senior Pastor: Ken Lawrence

Worship service times: 10:30 a.m.

Mission: Christ's Church of the Valley is a loving and welcoming church whose purpose is to help people to know and grow

in our Lord Jesus Christ to the glory of God.

Description: CCV is a multi-generational church family. While we are currently predominately seniors, we are becoming more multi-generational.

Sunday School & Childcare: CCV has adult Sunday School at 9 a.m. and Youth Church during the 10:30 a.m. worship service.

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Denomination: Christ Lutheran Montrose

Affiliation: Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

Address: 1980 N. Townsend Ave., Montrose, CO 81401

Contact: 970-633-0226

Website: www.montroselutheran.org

Email: montroselutheran@gmail.com

Pastor: Tim Onnen

Worship: Sundays at 9 AM

Sunday School and Adult Bible Class at 10:15 AM; Women's Bible Study Fridays at 9 AM. At Christ Lutheran Montrose you will

find friendly people gathered in a welcoming environment being comforted and encouraged by the forgiveness and love of Jesus, and sharing that with one another. We are a small congregation of seniors and middle-aged, sprinkled with young children and teenagers.

COMMUNITY SPIRIT CHURCH

United Church of Christ (UCC)

Address: 504 N. 1st Street (HAP Building)

Office hours: Call or text for appointment

Phone: 970-765-7070

Email: spirit@communityspiritucc.org

Website: communityspiritucc.org

Current Pastor: Rev. Wendy Kidd

Worship service: Sundays at 11am

Mission: Our commitment to a more inclusive and accepting world is steadfast, and we will continue to work towards a future

where everyone can live freely and authentically.

Demographics: We are a small congregation of mostly adults and seniors, however, we are always ready to welcome families and children.

COVENANT HEBRAIC FELLOWSHIP

Denomination affiliation. No affiliation

Address Office hours N/A

Contact: 720-951-9941,
office@ccfmontrose.net,
www.ccfmontrose.net

Name of current Senior Pastor. Led by elders

Worship service times. Noon on Saturdays. Children's Church will be offered as needed.

Covenant is a Hebraic roots community

that studies the Torah as well as the rest of Scripture. We learn about the Hebrew roots of the language and believe that the Lord's feasts are for today. We are predominantly made up of older folks, but have some young blood, too.

MIRROR CHURCH DIRECTORY From previous pg

FIRST CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

Denomination: Church of the Nazarene
Address: 705 South 12th Street
Office Hours: Tuesday - Thursday 9 am - Noon and by Appointment
Contact Information: Office Phone 970 249-9213, mncfirst@gmail.com, www.montrosenazarenechurch.org

Pastor: Interim Pastor Ian Hyde
Services Sunday: Worship 10:30 AM, Discipleship Hour: 9:30 AM. Discipleship Hour has classes across all age groups. Nursery for children UNDER 3 is available during Worship.
Mission Statement: Montrose First Church of the Nazarene exists to make

Christlike disciples in Montrose Colorado and around the world. Demographics: Our church consists of older and younger people. We have younger families with children and young teens and older adults as well. We also support the work of Calvary Ranch Colorado and its addiction recovery ministry.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

MONTROSE

Affiliation: Presbyterian
Address: 1840 E Niagara Rd. Montrose CO. 81401 **Office Hours:** M-Thu 9AM - 12PM

Contact: 970-249-4732, inform@fpcomtrose.com, www.fpcomtrose.com

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Jesse G. Mabanglo

Worship Service times: 9:30AM, *We strive to encourage, challenge and*

support one another through spiritual growth, worship, and service in our community, country, and world. We also encourage children and youth to grow their relationship with Christ through our children and student ministries.

HILLCREST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Denomination affiliation: United Church of Christ
Address: 611 South Hillcrest Drive, Montrose, CO 81401
Office hours: By appointment
Contact information:

Phone number: (970) 249-9047
Email address: office@montroseucc.org

Website: montroseucc.org

Current Pastor: Rev. Wendy Kidd

Worship service times: Sunday, 10 a.m. Hillcrest Congregational UCC is a welcoming, open and affirming church, open to all no matter who you are or where you are

on life's journey.

Church demographics: HCUCC welcomes all ages to worship with us. (predominately family, youth, seniors, singles)

We offer inter-generational worship with a children's "prayer-ground" and activity packets. A cry room is also available.

MONTROSE MISSION OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

Affiliation: Orthodox
Meets: 2057 S. Townsend, Montrose, CO

81401 and Cimarron Creek Clubhouse.

Worship Services: The Montrose Mission of the Orthodox Church meets every Saturday night at 7 PM at All Saints Anglican

Church for Vespers, and we currently meet only on the third Sunday of each month for Divine Liturgy in Montrose at 9:30 AM at the Cimarron Creek clubhouse.

MONTROSE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Denomination Affiliation: United Methodist
Address: 19 S. Park Avenue Montrose CO. 81401
Office Hours: M-Thu, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Contact Information: 970-249-3716, office@montroseumc.org, [mont-](http://montroseumc.org)

[roseumc.org](http://montroseumc.org)

Current Senior Pastor: Rev. Kevin Young

Worship service times:

8:30 a.m. Sanctuary & Virtual

9:45 a.m. Christian Education & Fellowship

11 a.m. Sanctuary

Montrose UMC is a leader in being fully inclusive, loving, and just servants of

Christ. Our church family welcomes people from various cultural and faith backgrounds: single, married, remarried, with or without children, from diapers to dentures.

Wherever you are on your spiritual journey we invite you to come discover hope, joy, peace, purpose.

ROSEMONT BAPTIST CHURCH

Affiliation: Southern Baptist
Address: 1598 E. Niagara Road, Montrose, CO 81401
Office Hours: Tues-Thurs, 9am-4pm
Contact information:
Phone: 970.249.4887
website: www.RosemontBaptist.org
email: office@rosemontbaptist.org
Senior Pastor: Rolland Kenneson
Worship Service Times: Our engaging and relevant Sunday Worship Service is at

10:45 AM. We also have Bible Study for All Ages Sunday mornings at 9:15 AM. We provide a professionally-staffed nursery throughout both.

Rosemont Baptist's desire is to passionately bring people face-to-face with the life-changing power of Jesus Christ.

We are a multigenerational church from different walks of life who love Jesus, love each other, and love our community. Everyone comes dressed in whatever is comfortable. We love meeting new people no

matter what stage of life they are in.

Children's services: We have a fun Sunday School for children from four years old through youth. We provide Children's Church during the Sunday Worship Services where children four years old through 9 years can learn to be worshippers of Jesus.

We provide a nursery for children under four years old with paid staff providing excellent care during Sunday Morning Bible Study and Worship Service.

MIRROR CHURCH DIRECTORY From previous pg

SPIRITUAL AWARENESS CENTER

Denomination affiliation: Independent Spiritual and Interfaith Community
Address: Services at Lions Park Community Building, 602 N. Nevada, Montrose
Office hours: Tues-Fri, 9 am to 4 pm, Home Office – 970-252-0908
Contact information: Rev. Dr. Arlyn Macdonald, 970-252-0908, arlyn@spiritaware.org, www.spiritaware.org
Name of current pastor: Rev. Dr. Arlyn

Macdonald, Senior minister; Rev. Ruby Salaz, Assistant Minister. Spiritual Counseling available.

Worship service times: In-person Sunday Unity Service at 11 a.m., (Social Time begins at 10 a.m.); Quiet Meditation at 10:30 a.m. Virtual Afternoon Service on Zoom at 2:00 p.m., 2nd Sunday of each month; Chai Chats, a Wednesday morning midweek informal spiritual gathering at 10:30 a.m. at Pun Hill Himalayan Restaurant, Mont-

rose; Everyone is welcome. The Spiritual Awareness Center is an interfaith spiritual community welcoming spiritual seekers and people of all faiths, providing a safe place to explore and nurture the individual's unique connection to the Divine through Unity services, classes, family and community projects. People of all ages are welcome.

There are currently no Sunday School or nursery services provided but craft supplies are available for youth.

ST. STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

Denomination: Anglican-Reformed Episcopal Church (REC)
Address: 2405 Sunnyside Road, Montrose 970-249-4868
Contact: ststephensmont-

rose@yahoo.com

www.ststephensmontrose.com

Rev. Dec. Garrett Agajanian

St. Stephen's is a community of caring Christians rooted in the godly traditions of the past, focused on the challenges of the

present, hopeful for the future, continuing in the Faith once delivered to the saints, using the 1928 Book of Common Prayer.

Sunday: Holy Communion 10 am.

Fellowship following service.

Children's nursery available (unstaffed).

VICTORY BAPTIST CHURCH

OF MONTROSE

Denomination Affiliation: Independent Baptist
Address: 2890 N Townsend Ave., Montrose, CO 81401
Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8am-12pm
Contact Information: Phone (970) 249-

6874; email at info@vbcmonrose.org; website: vbcmonrose.org

Current Pastor: Roland Kassales

Worship Service Times: Sunday School at 9:30am, Sunday AM Service at 10:30am, Sunday PM Service at 6pm, Wednesday Night Service at 6:30pm (all services include childcare)

Victory Baptist Church exists to exalt God, edify saints, and evangelize the lost.

Demographics: Victory Baptist serves everyone with age-appropriate classes, groups, and activities. Families with children make up the majority of VBC with young adults, singles, middle-aged couples, and seniors comprising the rest.

Church Directory

Mirror Editorial Staff

MONTROSE-As a way of serving the faith community in Montrose, the Montrose Mirror is in the process of establishing a Church Directory. If your congregation or fellowship would like to be included in the directory, please supply the following

information to the Montrose Mirror:

Name of church

Denomination affiliation

Address Office hours

Contact information (phone number, email address, website)

Name of current Senior Pastor

Worship service times

Please give a one sentence description of your church and its mission in the Montrose community.

Brief description of your current church demographics (predominately family, youth, seniors, singles).

Do your church services include Sunday School and childcare?





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The Satisfied Woman

LOVE WITHOUT LOSING YOURSELF: HOW SATISFIED WOMEN NAVIGATE RELATIONSHIPS



By Gia Pirelli.
Courtesy photo.

Romantic relationships have always been a cornerstone of human connection, but the way women experience love [today](#) looks very different from the generations before us. For those who have lived through cultural shifts and personal transformations, one question often lingers:

how do you love deeply without losing yourself? How do you achieve connection without attachment? How do you maintain healthy boundaries without being controlling? How to be accommodating without being a doormat? When we're younger, none of these things seem so important. Love conquers all and really that's all the matters. Until one day you realize you have no idea who you are, why you're there, and how on earth your standards sunk so low James Cameron couldn't even dig them up.

The answer lies in emotional security that's deeply rooted in self-awareness and independence. You have to be your own person, and be solidly okay with who you are. In past generations, women were often socialized to prioritize partnerships above all else. Identity and fulfillment were commonly tied to roles as wives and mothers, with limited societal support for individual ambitions. Dependency—financial and emotional—was the norm. Controlling behavior, paranoia and fear were a common consequence.

Fast-forward to [today](#): women are more independent, both financially and emotionally. They're pursuing careers, passions, and personal growth, and they expect relationships to enhance—not define—their lives. This shift has fundamentally changed how love is navigated. Modern relationships thrive on partnership rather than possession.

Emotionally secure women approach re-

lationships from a foundation of self-worth, self-respect, and self-awareness. They know their value isn't contingent on their partner's approval, which makes their intimacy richer and less fraught with fear. They know they can simply express their preferences, desires, or boundaries without fear of rejection. Security from within allows them to choose love rather than cling to it, and this choice creates freedom for both parties.

Key traits of emotionally secure women in relationships:

—Comfort with autonomy—This is huge. Secure women enjoy time alone (or with friends) as much as time together. They don't turn on his location services every time one of them leaves the house, nor do they install a wireless nanny cam in his truck. If you're that woman? Stop it. He's a grown-ass man and he can feed himself and find his way to the grocery store. If you're worried he's cheating? Leave. Period. Quit hovering. It's weird.

—Healthy boundaries—Emotionally secure women can say "no" without guilt and "yes" without fear of losing themselves. Don't go fishing if you hate it. Don't say yes to four-wheeling if you think it's lame. Be you, confidently, bravely, and without fear that somehow you're not going to be enough. You are enough. He already chose you. Pretending to be someone you're not simply proves you're not trustworthy.

—Self-validation—Secure and confident women find contentment and stability within themselves. They don't need constant reassurance. "Am I ok? Are we ok? Is this ok? Do I look ok?" If you absolutely need that level reassurance, get counseling. There are likely much deeper issues at play. The ability to simply be yourself makes space for him to be who he is and to enjoy who you are. One of the most striking differences in [today](#)'s relationships is the emphasis on individuality. By the time they're about 40, most women have experienced, at least once, self-erasure in

a relationship. It's just part of the personal growth journey. It's part of discovery and the development of our adult, empowered identity. Learning to maintain that identity is not selfishness—it's sustainability. A relationship thrives when both partners remain whole.

When you're a whole person you choose love rather than settle for it. The strong, satisfied woman is in the driver's seat in her romantic life. She isn't looking for a savior, she's looking for a partner. Agency in a relationship means making intentional decisions, from setting boundaries to initiating meaningful conversations about needs and desires. This autonomy doesn't diminish romance—it elevates it. When love is a conscious choice rather than necessity or habit, it becomes a source of joy, not survival.

The happiest relationships [today](#) are built on interdependence—a balance where both partners rely on each other without losing independence. This is different from codependency, where identity dissolves into the relationship and fosters building resentment. Interdependent couples support each other's growth while maintaining their own. This means mutual respect for space and individuality; shared responsibilities without rigid roles; open, honest communication without fear of rejection. The bottom line is to love without losing yourself isn't just possible—it's a powerful relationship standard. [Today](#), you can be both deeply connected and fiercely individual. That's not only liberating—it's so much more satisfying. Love becomes what it was always meant to be: a partnership between two whole people, walking side by side, lifting each other up; not one behind the other, dragging like an anchor. Ideally, when we're lucky, we fall in love to find ourselves, not lose ourselves. It is a kind of coming home, sharing your life with the mutual intention of becoming your highest and best selves, while experiencing all the love, joy and adventure you can gather along the way.

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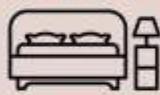
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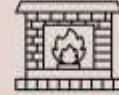
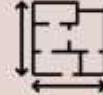
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SAVE THE DATE! LOCAL EVENTS CALENDAR

ONGOING

BLACK CANYON AUDUBON SOCIETY provides a monthly program on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 7 pm at the Montrose Field House, 25 Colorado Avenue, Montrose. blackcanyonaudubon.org

COLUMBINE QUILTERS meet at Welcome Home Alliance Warrior Resource Center, 4 Hillcrest Plaza Way Montrose. 1st Saturday except for July at 9 am.

FRIENDSHIP QUILTERS meets at the Montrose County Events Center, 4th Thursday Jan - Oct, 3rd Thursday Nov - Dec, 9am.

HEALING COLLECTIVE OF WESTERN COLORADO-Every 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month from 12-1pm the Healing Collective of Western Colorado meets at 220 N Stough Ave. It is open to all wellness providers in the area who would like to collaborate with and learn from other local practitioners.

MONTROSE FARMERS MARKET (970) 249 0705 Centennial Plaza, 433 S. 1st St. Montrose, CO 81401 www.valleyfoodpartnership.org. Year-Round Farmers Market, Saturdays 9am-1pm (Summer), every other Saturday 10am-1pm (Winter). Accepts SNAP and Double Up Food Bucks.

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 Field House on the corner of Colorado Avenue and Rio Grande Avenue at Noon.

FREE THINKERS meet 1st Sunday of the month for information call 970 417-4183

BOSOM BUDDIES BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP, Wednesdays noon-12:45, 645 S. 5th Street

MONTROSE HISTORICAL SOCIETY meets 1st Wednesday of the month @ Montrose Events Center, 1036 No 7th Street 7 pm (970) 249-2085 www.montrosehistory.org

MONTROSE AREA WOODTURNERS Montrose Area Woodturners meet second Saturdays 9 am. Chapter of the American Association of Woodturners. For location and information contact: Al Head 970-209-0981 or aheadaviation@outlook.com

NURSE FAMILY PARTNERSHIP-Breastfeeding Support Group on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of every month. An infant scale will also be available to check your baby's weight. Breastfeeding Support Group (Bring your questions and your family!) Montrose County Event Center (1036 North 7th Street Room 3) 10am - 12pm. Questions? Please call 970-252-5015.

BINGO EVERY FRIDAY, SATURDAY, SUNDAY at 7pm at the American Legion Post 24 Olathe doors open at 5:30. Sunday Bingo will start at 1:30pm. More info call Tom 970 260 8298.

MONTHLY

Aug. 21-Medicare Information Session, 6-7:30 p.m. in the Library Meeting Room, Montrose Regional Library, 320 S 2nd St. Montrose, CO 81401. www.montroselibrary.org 970-249-9656.

Aug. 22- Paint Garden Rocks at the Senior Center with Kate Burke. Friday Afternoon Art, Montrose Rec District 50+ program, \$40. Signup at MRD <https://comontrose.myvcloud.com/webtrac/web/iteminfo.html?Module=AR&FMID=27628197>

Aug. 24- Decorate a Birdfeeder at LaNou Dubois Winery Everything including bird seed provided plus snack and glass of wine or NA drink. Free Wine Tour with Tasting. Senior Discount Available. Instructor, Kate Burke. 67289 Trout Rd. Register at <https://kathrynrburke.com/product/082425ln/>

Aug. 24- The Fortuna Tierra Club is hosting the tenth annual Log Hill Hustle, Fun Run and fundraiser on Sunday, August 24 at 8 AM starting and finishing at the Divide Ranch and Club Clubhouse at 151 Divide Ranch Circle, Ridgway, CO 81432. This year to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Log Hill Hustle, we are providing t-shirts. Please visit <https://www.fortunatierra.com/> to register and find out more information about the Fun Run. Fortuna Tierra's major fundraiser provides scholarships for Ridgway secondary school graduates.

Aug. 28-Paint Your Pet at Mosaic Montrose. Step-by-step instructions and everything provided plus snack and adult beverage or NA drink. Instructor, Kate Burke. 21 N. Cascade Ave. Register at <https://kathrynrburke.com/product/082825m/>

Aug. 28-Friendship Quilters of Western Colorado will meet Thursday, Aug. 28, at the Montrose County Event Center, 1036 N 7th Street. The meeting starts at 9am with social time, followed by a business meeting, program, and show and tell. Denim is our theme of the month. Wear your jeans and show off your coolest projects using denim. After the meeting, Caroline Ellermann will present a mini-workshop on Sharon Shamber's machine applique technique. Cost for the workshop is \$10. Call 360.448.0153 for questions.

Sept. 2-Tuesday Sept. 2nd Citizens/ Climate lobby meets at 5 at Hispanic Affairs Project (HAP) 504 N 1st Street. Non-partisan environmental, local renewable drive. info 970 765 9095, All Welcome.

Sept. 11-Montrose and Delta's biggest and funnest celebration for seniors, baby boomers and their families is back! BeaconFest, Colorado's largest senior expo, returns to the Montrose Pavilion on Thursday, September 11, 2025, from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Admission is For more information about BeaconFest, visit BeaconFest.com or call 970-243-8829.

Sept. 13-14-The highly anticipated Tribute to Aviation, Montrose Regional Airport's signature event, is officially scheduled for Sept. 13-14, 2025. As one of the largest static aircraft displays in the western United States, Tribute to Aviation will showcase both military and civilian aircraft. For more information, please contact Vendla Stockdale at vstockdale@montrosecounty.net or 970-964-2479 or visit www.tributetooaviation.com

Sept. 20-Lake City Uncorked Wine & Music Festival will be held Sept. 20, 2025. Gates open at 10 am seven bands, art booths, beer booth, 125 wines for tasting. <http://www.lakecitydirt.org>

MIRROR IMAGES: OUT & ABOUT



Photo by B. Slate.
MONROSE As summer comes to an end, locals turned out to enjoy fun on the river and elsewhere on Saturday, Aug. 16., which also marked Youth Appreciation Day in Montrose. At left, a river surfer on the Uncompahgre.



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