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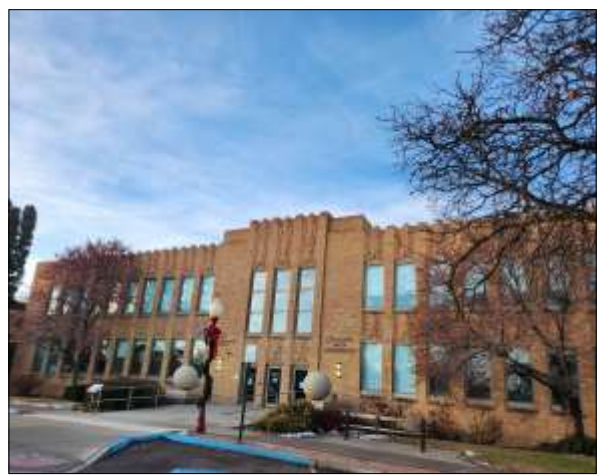
the Montrose Mirror

STATISTICS OFFER INSIGHT INTO LOCAL ECONOMY

Mirror staff Report

MONTROSE-As 2024 draws to a close, some statistics can offer a snapshot of the economy in comparison to the previous year. Numbers compiled by the Colorado Association of Realtors show that in November of 2024, the number of new single family home listings in Montrose County had increased by 33.3 percent over November of 2023. The inventory of homes for sale is also greater than it was in 2023—there were 187 single family homes on the market here in November of 2024, compared to 178 single-family homes for sale here in November of 2023. In November of 2024 the average sales price for a single-family home in Montrose County was \$470,421, down slightly from November of 2023, when the average sales price for a single-family home in Montrose County was 490,769.

The [quarterly economic report](#) released by Colorado



Colorado Mesa University (Montrose Campus, above) issues a quarterly report that helps provide a snapshot of the local economy.

Mesa University for the third quarter of 2024 shows that Montrose has a labor force of

Continued pg 3

WHERE TO CELEBRATE THE ARRIVAL OF 2025



Mirror Staff Report

MONTROSE-Looking for ways to ring out the old year and ring in the New? Despite a midweek New Year's Eve, there are some opportunities to get out and celebrate:

The Montrose Elks Lodge (801 South Hillcrest Drive) will host a celebration with Cimarron Entertainment, from 8pm to 12:30pm.

Seeking comfort food? Ray's Corner Café (347 East Main Street) is taking reservations for New Year's Eve Dinner for parties of up to six guests. Call 970.417.4340.

At 1415 Hawk Parkway, the Stone House Restaurant will feature a modified menu for New Year's Eve beginning at 4pm—reservations required, call 970-240-8899.

And at Shelter Distilling (947 Mayfly Drive), the New Year's Eve Celebration will run

Shelter Distilling (947 Mayfly Drive) is one of the places that will host a celebration to welcome in the New Year, complete with champagne toast at midnight. Mirror file photo.

Continued pg 4

UPDATED GUIDELINES FOR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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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

Published every Monday since 2010 in Montrose, Colorado to a readership of over 20,000 residents of Western Colorado.

We encourage contributions and commentary. Submitted content may not necessarily reflect the opinion of the publisher.

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Holiday Closure

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STATISTICS OFFER INSIGHT INTO LOCAL ECONOMY From pg 1

21,999, of whom 21,186 are employed. "Key job gains were in construction and healthcare sectors," the report notes.

New business filings have decreased here compared to November of last year; there were 753 new business filings in 2024, down from 947 in 2023.

Also down is student enrollment in Montrose County School District RE-1J. Newly released numbers show that District enrollment as of Dec. 5 is 5,978 students, which is 76 students fewer than this time last year.

Enplanements at Montrose Regional Airport have risen in 2024, with 196,429 by November compared to 182,681 for the same time period in 2023, an increase of 7.53 percent.

The CMU quarterly report also notes, "The Montrose County labor market continues to add jobs, with summer 2024 employment numbers surpassing summer of 2023..." Also, "Montrose County sales taxes were up 2.89 percent compared to last year and city sales taxes were up 3.93 percent as of July."



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WHERE TO CELEBRATE THE ARRIVAL OF 2025 From pg 1

run from 9:30pm on Dec. 31 to 1am on Jan. 1, 2025, and will feature DJ Shockert beginning at 10:30pm. There will be a champagne toast at midnight.

San Juan Brews (512 East Main Street) will usher in 2025 with the Black Canyon Boys and Friends, doors open at 7:30pm, Music begins at 8:30pm.

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

RESPONSE TO MCSB'S DENIAL OF MONTROSE CLASSICAL ACADEMY

Editor:

After ruminating on the events of the December 10 school board meeting, it seemed that the denial was well-planned before the vote; like a well-choreographed performance. All along some of the board members had placed stumbling blocks in order to stop the MCA application process. For instance, most of their issues with the application were not valid, but the MCA Board went along and tweaked what they requested.

Second, the Board resisted having an external charter reviewer since September 24, and finally voted to have one at the November 12th meeting. The external charter review from CACSA was sent to the Board only four days before the vote, and

no one called upon CACSA to discuss the review during the meeting of the vote, even though a representative was available.

Third, Board members who voted for the denial did not give valid reasons. Concerns about the requirements for special-needs children being met was brought up by Ms. Hovde, but Mr. Valerio correctly reminded her that a charter school cannot accept or reject any student, regardless of special needs. Decisions were made based on what might happen without giving MCA a chance to succeed or fail.

Fourth, Ms. Murphy made the decision to deny because she (and Mr. Bush) felt there were so many conditions for MCA to meet in order to go forward. If the Board was

truly "impressed" and "grateful" for all the time, effort, blood, sweat and tears that went into the planning and application process, they would have voted to approve MCA and allow THEM to meet those conditions, not make the decision for them. That was very disingenuous.

Fifth, Ms. Fishing waffled back and forth about whether she should oppose the denial, but I sensed that she knew the outcome beforehand, so it would look really impressive to the parents if she were to vote against denial and save face. In addition, her response to Ms. Balleck about Latin not ever being useful in her life was totally inappropriate as a professional. If Ms. Fishing had pursued a medical or English career, Latin would have been very helpful.

Sixth, the Denial Resolution used several points from the CACSA review to justify the denial, even though CACSA made no recommendation to deny OR approve. They only recommended one condition (along with seven milestones that typically are in the contract) if the Board were to approve MCA. Also, the Denial Resolution included inaccurate numbers regarding EOIs. It was clarified in the October 22 Board meeting, but the resolution included that incorrect information justifying the denial.

Seventh, on December 10th, the night of the vote, there was not a single person who spoke in opposition to MCA at this critical time, not to mention the DAC recommended to approve MCA, the majority of the speakers on community night in November approved, 63% of Montrose approved Prop 80 for school choice, but the Board, who is supposed to serve their electors, ignored all that and denied it anyway. Could the opposition already have known the votes to deny MCA were in place so did not need to show up?

What the majority of the Board forget was that they were voted in by the people and are supposed to represent them. The support/interest for MCA was apparent, but the people's voices were ignored.

There is an election in 2025 for four Board seats. May those who truly want to serve the families of Montrose County be elected.

*Sincerely,
Leah Vandersluis*

FACTS & FICTION



Is it true the City of Montrose is providing a new platform for locals to stay informed and engaged with all of the great things happening here in Montrose?

Yes... "Montrose Lifestyle" is a digital magazine for Montrosians, neighbors, visitors, businesses, and other stakeholders, a digital city square, and an action catalyst for personal and professional success, relocation, and visitation. The City has partnered with Montroselifestyle.com to provide current and timely community information, a community calendar, a community job board, a podcast, an online marketplace for "Made in Montrose" products, and so much more. It is a new campaign and it is a work in progress. As you move through our new platform, please reach out anytime to offer suggestions or to ask any clarifying questions. We are really trying to create a system of communication for locals to hear from locals, but in a safe, positive and comfortable environment. There will be no place at Montroselifestyle.com for negativity and chaotic misinformation. We are so excited about this new project and we hope you are too!

We have a few hundred followers so far, but we would love to cross the 1,000 mark before the end of January. If you want to be "in the know" on all city projects and want to learn the "why" behind the many things going on in Montrose, you will want to sign up for our Montrose Lifestyle website and newsletter. Please visit: montroselifestyle.com and click on subscribe to get started. Have a wonderful holiday season!

Questions? Call Bill Bell, City Manager at 970-901-8580



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

CITY TO CLOSE FOR NEW YEAR'S HOLIDAY

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-City of Montrose offices will be closed on New Year's Day, Wednesday, Jan. 1. Police Department offices will be closed both days, however, officers will be on duty and responding to calls. Montrose City Hall, Visitor Center, Municipal Court, Animal Shelter, Montrose Pavilion, Black Canyon Golf Course, and City Shop will be closed.

The adjusted trash collection schedule for Jan. 1 will be as follows:

- For routes north of East Oak Grove Road, trash pickup will occur on Monday, December 30.

- For routes south of East Oak Grove Road, trash pickup will occur on Tuesday, December 31.

Recycling collection for customers with Wednesday, January 1, pickup will instead occur on Friday, January 3.



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: COMMENTARY

URBAN HIP-E MIGHT BE THE PLACE FOR MANY

By: Bill Cunningham

Cooking and the subsequent washing of pots, pans, and dishes are not on my list of favorite pastimes. Which is one of the reasons I eat out. Everyday. Breakfast and dinner – for many years: most times in the

plentiful eateries of Montrose and occasionally in Delta at Cassie’s Bees or Papa’s Grill. I enjoy the various tastes and service I have found in the establishments I frequent.

When I am fortunate enough to discover

a new place, I usually find the need to try various of the menu items – not all at once, of course. At times I find something unusual and tasty while occasionally something else turns out to be not to my taste. I’m okay with that. Often the cook (or chef) has a new approach to food preparation, often of something I had not experienced.

I do not pass myself off as a gastronome but am adequately independent when it comes to my choice of establishments where I will dine. Nevertheless, although I will pass on a compliment of a place I like, I will not burden one I do not find pleasurable with fustian, opinionated comments that can damage their reputation. This can be especially true to a new business. A degrading opinion can become a disastrous event to a new operation. The time taken for adjustments to food preparation is usually dependent on customer response – sometimes a necessary occurrence. On my first visit to Urban Hip – E I received a dish that was not quite what I had ordered. The server, once notified, whipped the dish away and soon returned with the exact item I had asked for. And it was good. I returned twice and although the space in which to sit and dine is small, it is adequate. Parking space was a good surprise.

The food was excellent and though of new tastes for me, was good. It is very nice that the salads are fresh and not tinged with brown tips.

In the past (years ago) I visited cafes designed for “Hippies.” I sat among ragged people who were dirty and smelled offensive. The coffee was gritty and the food quite miserable. And you got to sit on questionable cushions on the usually dirty floor.

Urban Hip – E is not like that. It is clean, well lighted, and comfortable. Based on my experience there I shall return. And by the way, the desserts are outstanding. A notable item was that the prices are in alignment with other restaurants. It just depends on what is ordered and how much of it. For me, it was filling, tasty, and a fun experience. You should visit there and make up your own mind, based on your own opinion.



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Neighbors Lifting Up Neighbors

Montrose Community Dinners wants to thank the more than 50 volunteers who cooked, prepped, and delivered holiday meals on Christmas Day. Over 420 meals were delivered to senior homebound residents, senior housing neighbors, and the Axis Crisis Center. The dinner recipients' joy, which the delivery drivers shared with the MCD Board, made us all smile and say, "That is why we do this: neighbors lifting up neighbors."

A special thanks to Montrose County for allowing us the use of Friendship Hall. We also want to give a big shout-out to our Santa's Helpers, whose donations helped to underwrite our first year of serving holiday dinners:

- Chow Down Pet Supplies
- Dr. Renee Rumrill, DVM – Alta Vista Animal Hospital
- Pro-Woman Action Group (PWAG)
- Montrose Forest Products
- Montrose County Democratic Party

The MCD Board looks forward to next year when we will once again serve our community with both Thanksgiving and Holiday dinners.

REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

DMEA WELCOMES KATIE YERGENSEN AS MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

Special to the Mirror

REGIONAL-DMEA is pleased to announce the appointment of Katie Yergensen as the new Marketing and Communications Director. Yergensen brings a wealth of experience in strategic communication, public relations, and community engagement.

Yergensen joins DMEA following her role as Communications Director for Montrose County. Her expertise includes managing digital communications for multiple

platforms, leading crisis communication, and fostering relationships with community partners. Previously, Yergensen served as Media and Public Relations Manager for USA Shooting, managing media and outreach at national and international events.

Kent Blackwell, DMEA's Chief Administrative Officer, expressed enthusiasm for Yergensen's arrival, stating, "We are pleased to welcome Katie Yergensen to the DMEA family. Her strong communica-

tion and relationship-building background will further our commitment to serving members and fostering strong connections with our communities. Katie's

experience will be instrumental in advancing our goal to provide reliable and innovative services while strengthening the bonds that make our cooperative unique."

"I am honored to join DMEA and contribute to its legacy of community-focused service," said Yergensen. "I look forward to working with the award-winning marketing and communications team to enhance member communications and outreach."



DMEA is pleased to announce the appointment of Katie Yergensen as the new Marketing and Communications Director. Courtesy photo.

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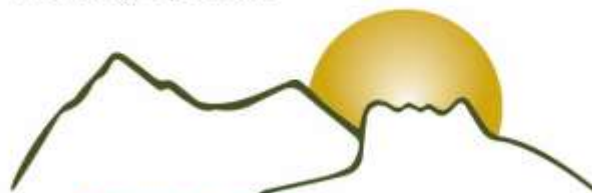
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COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

AVIAN DISEASE IS KILLING INVASIVE EURASIAN DOVES ALONG LOWER ARK RIVER

Special to the Mirror

LA JUNTA— An avian virus is causing a significant die-off of invasive Eurasian collared doves in the lower Arkansas River valley near La Junta and Rocky Ford, Colorado Parks and Wildlife has reported.

Wildlife Officer Jordon DePriest said CPW offices in the region are receiving a high volume of calls about hundreds of the non-native birds that have died recently.

He said CPW sent two dead collared doves to the CPW wildlife health lab for testing and they came back positive for Avian Paramyxovirus-1 (PPMV-1). "This is something that primarily affects collared doves and pigeons," DePriest said. "We want the public to know the reason for the die-off so they don't have to worry about it."

PPMV-1 is different from the influenza viruses that have circulated in wild birds in recent years. The virus was first found in wild birds in Colorado during the winter of 2014 when it caused a die-off of Eurasian collared doves. Humans generally are not affected by PPMV-1.

"We believe this virus will be limited to Eurasian collared doves, for the most part, and will run its course in a few weeks," DePriest said. "Of course, we don't recommend people handle sick or dead birds and keep your children, pets and domestic birds away from them."

It's also a good idea to clean backyard birdfeeders weekly, in general. You can even take birdfeeders down altogether if you are concerned about attracting sick wild birds.

Eurasian collared doves have large bodies with small heads, dark bill and a long, square-tipped tail. Their upper bodies are sandy brown with a black crescent on the back of the neck.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) is an enterprise agency, relying primarily on license sales, state parks fees and registration fees to support its operations, including: 43 state parks and more than 350 wildlife areas covering approximately 900,000 acres, management of fishing and hunting, wildlife watching, camping, motorized and non-motorized trails, boating and outdoor education. CPW's work contributes approximately \$6 billion in total economic impact annually throughout Colorado.



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COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF STATE ANNOUNCES YEAR-END HOURS OF SERVICE FOR BUSINESS FILING

Special to the Mirror

DENVER- In observance of the New Year holiday, the Colorado Department of State will be closed Wednesday, Jan. 1. Due to yearly maintenance, online filing applications for new businesses will be unavailable from 11:30 PM on Tuesday, Dec. 31 until 12 PM on Wednesday, Jan. 1.

Please plan ahead and file earlier by using a delayed effective date and time if necessary for filings that must be effective on December 31. Filing deadlines will not be extended.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

ALPINE BANK PROVIDES FUNDING TO EXPLORE FINANCIAL PLANNING PROGRAM AT WESTERN COLORADO UNIVERSITY

By Seth Mensing

GUNNISON-As the demand for financial planning professionals continues to rise, Western Colorado University is excited to announce a \$26,000 seed grant from Alpine Bank to support the development of the Western Slope’s first Certified Financial Planner (CFP) program.

The funding enables Western’s School of Business to begin designing a curriculum aligned with the standards of the CFP Board certification process, which includes coursework, an exam, industry experience, and an ethics agreement that students must complete for certification. The School aims to admit students to the program in the Fall of 2026.

With more than 30 million Americans expected to retire in the next decade and more than 100 million already over the age of 50, the need for financial planners is greater than ever. Western’s new program is tailored to meet the demand by equipping students with the knowledge and skills to provide retirement planning and financial advice to people across the country.

“The introduction of the Certified Financial Planner program marks a significant milestone for Western’s School of Business,” Paula Mann, Associate Dean of the School of Business, said. “This initiative is made possible through the generous contribution from Alpine Bank to provide start-up funding, which allows us to design a curriculum that fosters career-ready financial planners capable of making a positive impact in their communities.”

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COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS



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COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE TO AWARD \$1.1 MILLION TO PROJECTS THAT RESTORE WETLAND HABITAT

Special to the Mirror

DENVER — Colorado Parks and Wildlife is seeking applications for wetland and riparian restoration, enhancement and creation projects to support the Wetlands for Wildlife Program.

This year, CPW will award over \$1.1 million in funds from Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) and Colorado Waterfowl Stamps to projects in Colorado that support the Wetlands Program Strategic Plan’s two main goals:

- Improve the distribution and abundance of ducks, and opportunities for public waterfowl hunting. Applications supporting this goal should seek to improve fall/winter habitat on property open for public hunting (or refuge areas within properties open for public hunting) or improve breeding habitat in important production areas (including North Park and the San Luis Valley in Colorado, and other areas contributing ducks to the fall flight in Colorado).

- Improve the status of declining or at-risk species. Applications supporting this goal should seek to clearly address habitat needs of these species. See the identified threats, recommended conservation actions, and progress to date for these species in the Colorado State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) Conservation Dashboards.

Wetlands for Wildlife application guidance and instruction is available at: cpw.state.co.us/wetlands-wildlife-grants. The application deadline is Monday, Feb. 10.

About the program

The Colorado Wetlands for Wildlife Program is a voluntary, collaborative and incentive-based program to restore, enhance and create wetlands and riparian areas in Colorado. Funds are allocated annually to the program and projects are recommended for funding by a CPW committee with final approval by the Director.



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS: BUSINESS & EDUCATION

VISTA CHARTER SCHOOL WEB UPDATE IMPROVES FUNCTIONALITY, PERFORMANCE

By [Janae Peterson](#), [BPetersonDesign](#)

MONTROSE-At [BPetersonDesign](#), we take pride in being a trusted website designer for schools, and we're thrilled to announce the launch of the redesigned website for [Vista Charter School](#) in Montrose. As their website design partner since 2020, we've not only provided managed hosting but have also been part of their digital journey to ensure their online presence meets the needs of their students and community.

Who is Vista Charter School?

Vista Charter School is a public school in Montrose, Colorado, dedicated to providing a supportive and flexible learning environment for high school students. Known for its innovative approach to education, Vista Charter School focuses on helping students achieve their academic and personal goals through individualized learning plans, small class sizes, and a dedicated faculty. They serve a diverse student body, offering resources and programs that ensure every student has the opportunity to succeed.

The Importance of a Website Redesign Every 3-5 Years

Web technology and user expectations evolve rapidly, which is why we recommend a website redesign every three to five years. A redesign ensures that your website remains modern, functional, and aligned with your organization's goals. For Vista Charter School, their website had started to show signs of aging. Most notably, their PageSpeed Performance score on mobile devices had dropped to 48/100. This decline can negatively impact the school in several ways:

Poor User Experience: Slow-loading websites frustrate visitors, especially students and parents who need quick access to critical resources.

SEO Penalties: Search engines prioritize faster websites, so a low performance score can hurt search rankings, making it harder for new families to discover the school.

Mobile Accessibility: With more users accessing websites on mobile devices, a low mobile performance score can alienate a significant portion of the audience.



Vista Charter School's web site has been updated. Courtesy image-screenshot.

Enhancing the Brand with a New Design

As part of this redesign, we updated Vista Charter School's branding to reflect a more modern and professional look. We shifted to a blue and gray color palette, creating a calming and trustworthy aesthetic that resonates with the school's mission. Additionally, we replaced the old fonts with Montserrat, a clean, serious typeface that conveys professionalism and readability. Montserrat's versatility makes it an excellent choice for educational institutions as it balances modernity with approachability.

Key Features of the Redesigned Website

Our goal for Vista Charter School's website was to prioritize user experience and functionality. Here are the highlights of the redesign:

Streamlined Homepage Design

The homepage now features the most popular links prominently at the top. Since most students visit the site to access these links, this adjustment saves time and enhances usability. Additionally, we added an "Upcoming Events" section to the homepage, making it easy for visitors to stay informed about school activities.

Improved Calendar Functionality

We incorporated a digital calendar that allows students, parents, and staff to quickly view events online. For those who prefer offline access, a downloadable PDF

version is also available. This dual functionality ensures that everyone can stay organized in the way that works best for them.

A Cleaner, More Efficient Design

The redesigned website boasts a cleaner layout, making navigation intuitive and visually appealing. Quick access to frequently used links and resources ensures that visitors can find what they need without frustration.

BPetersonDesign as an Education Website Designer

As an [experienced education website designer](#), we understand the unique needs of schools like Vista Charter School. This redesign not only reflects their updated branding but also ensures their website is fast, user-friendly, and ready to serve the community for years to come. By addressing both form and function, we've helped Vista Charter School take another step toward providing an excellent online experience for students, parents, and staff.

Explore Vista Charter School's redesigned website at <http://www.VistaCharter.org> and see how a modern, thoughtfully designed website can make a difference! [View Vista Charter School's New Website](#) [View our Nonprofit Website Design Packages and Prices.](#)

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COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

'THE TIN WOMAN' BY SEAN GRENNAN TO OPEN AT MAGIC CIRCLE THEATRE JAN. 10

Article by LaDonna Bubak

MONTROSE-A second chance at life isn't always as simple as it seems. When Joy O'Malley (Molly Benson) wakes up in the hospital with a stranger's heart beating inside of her chest, she can't help wondering why she deserved to live while Jack Higgins (Dustin Glass), the young man whose family still mourns his tragic passing, didn't. In Magic Circle Players' deeply moving and darkly humorous rendition of The Tin Woman, opening January 10, the lives of these strangers intersect, leaving the audience reflecting on life, love, and the power of human connection.

As Joy struggles with survivor's guilt and the weight of a gift she can't fully accept, her best friend Darla (Aylin Marsella) encourages her to reach out to Jack's grieving family. The result is an emotionally charged and hilariously awkward meeting, as Jack's parents, Hank (Scott Pollak) and Alice (Amy Priest), as well as his sister Sammy (Eden Hassell), are still deeply raw from their loss. The unlikely encounter is a delicate dance of humor, sadness, and shared pain as each character navigates the complex aftermath of death and the process of moving forward.

With Jack's silent spirit watching over the cast throughout, The Tin Woman is a poignant, darkly funny rollercoaster that will make you laugh through your tears and leave you questioning the fragile connections that bind us all. Don't miss this unforgettable show about love, loss, and the power of a second chance — sometimes, the heart can lead us back to where we truly belong.

Directed by Merrilee F. Robertson and Stasia Allyn. Opens January 10, 2025 and runs for three weekends. Tickets available at magiccircle-players.com

5 WAYS TO SUPPORT LOCAL ALL SEASON LONG



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- Dyslexia Foundation
- ElderAgo Financial
- Elevate Internet
- Elite Dog Walking
- Elk Ridge Rehab
- Etwood Staffing Services
- Experience on Demand
- Fairfield Inn & Suites By Marriott
- Farm Bureau Insurance
- Fairmont Furniture
- Flower Motor Company
- Forest Insurance
- Glass Doctor
- High Desert Haulers
- HorseFly
- Hot Water Productions
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- Inject Wellness
- Innovative Visions
- Jaz Print & Promo
- Jetton Legal
- KKCO 11 News
- KREX TV
- Lifespan Psychiatry of Colorado
- Local Focus
- MarillacHealth
- MEDC
- Miss Suzy's Educational Services
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- Montrose Community Foundation
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COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

START THE NEW YEAR WITH A FIRST DAY HIKE AT COLORADO STATE PARKS



available in state parks around the country.

The distance and rigor of the hikes vary from park to park, but they all aim to create a fun experience for the whole family. Savor the beauty of the natural, cultural and historical resources our state parks offer, and be inspired to take advantage of these local treasures throughout the year.

Hikers can choose guided hikes that fit their comfort levels including mountain and hill climbing, walks along lakes, exploring trails that wind through forests, wildlife expeditions, and even adaptive adventures at various parks.

From boating to fishing and horseback riding, or simply enjoying a peaceful moment from a park picnic table or bench, there is something for everyone in state parks.

To discover winter recreation activities at Colorado state parks and park pass options, visit cpw.state.co.us.

Join us in keeping Colorado, Colorado. Get a \$29 Keep Colorado Wild Pass with your next vehicle registration and support Colorado state parks and outdoor education programs for local communities.

Learn more at cpw.info/keepcoloradowild

Colorado Parks and Wildlife Courtesy Photo.

Special to the Mirror

DENVER – Celebrate the New Year with fresh air and scenic views by participating in a First Day Hike at one of Colorado’s state parks.

These guided hikes are organized annually to encourage individuals and families to start the year on the right

foot – by getting outside and connecting with nature.

On Jan. 1, 2025, Colorado Parks and Wildlife invites you to participate in a First Day Hike at a Colorado state park. For a complete list of participating parks, visit the [CPW Event Calendar](#).

This year, more than 1,000 hikes are

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 and wingedpublications.com.



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

BIDEN'S RANK CORRUPTION, DESTRUCTIVE PRESIDENCY EXPOSED FOR ALL TO SEE

.Editor:

The leftist radicals controlling the Biden White House gave us another parting outrage this week by commuting the sentences of 37 of the 40 murderers on federal death row. Included were a man convicted of murdering 12 people, including a family of six; two others convicted of murdering a young mother, father, and their 4- and 3-year old boys; a man convicted of raping and murdering two little girls, ages 8 and 9, and later murdering a 20-year old female naval officer and raping others; another drug dealer participated in the murder of 11 people; nine others were deemed so dangerous they had to be kept from other inmates; at least one murdered a cop; another murdered a prison guard; others murdered bank employees. All were among the nation's most violent murderers. All received the full legal process and deserved the legally proper sentence they received.

In Biden's statement, he claimed to be acting out of principle and conscience. A gift of life to those sentenced to death --- what a great human being this Biden is! Oh, but wait. His conscience only applies to hardened murderers and rapists, not to innocent in-utero babies. His Catholic faith and "conscience" can only go so far --- certainly not to tens of thousands of babies murdered by abortionists. That faith and conscience were also nowhere to be found when his DOJ targeted Biden's fellow Catholic citizens peacefully protesting outside abortion clinics.

Biden's statement indicated the shocking clemencies were part of an effort to "ensure a fair and effective justice system." The fact that the federal government had 40 people still on death row ten or more years after they were sentenced is clear evidence of how ineffective that justice system is. The three on Biden's "still-deserving-death" list included the Boston Marathon bomber who killed three and injured 200+, the person that murdered 11 in a synagogue, and the person who murdered 9 in a black church. In a fair and effective justice system those three plus the other 37 would have had their sentences carried out within a reasonable time period, and long before Biden suddenly thought he had a conscience.

This week provided us with a reminder of how absurd Biden's talking about conscience or a fair justice system really is. After a long series of delays by the Biden-Harris administration, America First Legal was able to obtain and release some damning photos further exposing Biden's lies about involvement in his son's corrupt business dealings. The pictures show father and son Biden meeting with Hunter's Chinese "business associates," as well as Chinese President Xi Jinping during then VP Biden's China trip. The Biden family received about \$24 million from foreign sources between 2014 and 2019. Interesting enough, when Biden decided to pardon his son, it not only covered the relatively minor gun and tax avoidance crimes he had been convicted of, but any and all crimes he might have committed between 2014 and 2024. And Biden can still talk about conscience and a fair justice system with a straight face?

This is the same justice system that a California judge just ruled that a male housed in a female prison because he "identifies as a woman," and who is on trial for raping women in that prison, must be referred to as "she/her" during trial because he "deserves dignity." In our "fair justice system" he will be sent back to women's prison to rape more women. Female inmates clearly deserve no dignity in our justice system.

In our great state of Colorado, the Aurora police chief is blasting the Biden administration for allowing illegal gangs to pour across our southern border. The chief indicated that when he spoke to someone at the White House, he was told that once illegals cross the border, the administration really doesn't care what happens to them. Last week in Aurora 14 illegal migrant gang members from Venezuela kidnapped, tortured, and robbed two other migrants in an apartment complex. The victims, a male and a female, were beaten and stabbed. The woman had her fingernails pulled out. The Aurora mayor is accusing the mayor of sanctuary city Denver of secretly dumping illegals in neighboring cities. The Associated Press reports that Denver has spent at least \$4.3 million in city funds to send illegals elsewhere. Colorado's working families struggling to pay for their health insurance

cost will be pleased to know that, beginning in January, the tax dollars deducted from their paychecks will now fund Medicaid for illegals. Colorado taxpayers will be spending \$51 million for illegal migrants to give birth in Colorado thanks to Governor Polis. A fair and effective justice system would hold this nation's current President accountable for his blatant disregard for the rule of law in creating this invasion.

In an ideal world, Joe Biden and his co-conspirators would be held legally accountable for their crimes. Realistically, that is not going to happen because the Trump administration has multiple goals more important than prosecuting Democrats --- like sealing the border, deporting criminal illegals, ending the Ukraine war, decreasing the bloated bureaucracy, reestablishing our energy independence, etc. It is, however, critically important that Biden's rank corruption and destructive presidency be totally exposed for all to see. The American people deserve the truth, and that truth must be revealed in such a way that Biden can never again show his face in public, much less make utterances about his conscience or how much better off we are today than when he took office. The Democrat party must pay such a high political price that they are forced to abandon their extreme destroy-America policies and return to the ideals of the Democrat party of our grandmothers.

On a lighter side, after four long years of soaring prices, open borders, violent crime, catastrophic new wars, government corruption, and censored speech, we can now look forward to Trump delivering on Biden's promise of a return to normalcy. On January 20, 2025, America will (quoting Kamala) truly "be unburdened by what has been." Oprah, Michelle, Beyonce, and other celebrities important only to themselves, can all return to their multi-million dollar estates provided to them by the free-market capitalism they all abhor. And Kamala can perhaps re-think telling Teamsters president Sean O'Brien: "You better get on board!" and "I'm going to win with or without you!" as she returns to the McDonalds job she never had in her "middle class" upbringing.

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: COMMENTARY

LIVING RENT FREE IN THEIR HEADS

The Saga of Montrose County Commissioners Rash, Caddy & Hansen

By David White

In the past few months, when the mood strikes them, all of the current Board of County Commissioners (Keith Caddy, Sue Hansen and Roger Rash) seem to love to make public comments which second guess and blame County Commissioners of long ago for their trials and tribulations (many of them self-created). Scapegoating and/or second guessing has become an art for these folks, and, as I've opined in the past, Rash, in particular.

Rash is as rash as his name implies. He plays the Joe Biden card known as "lets blame Trump (or County Commissioners from days gone by) for all of my screw ups," a lot. He had been warned a good 7 ½ years ago, that as a public official, to stop slandering private citizens who had been in public office as he would bring a lawsuit against the County and himself for his comments if not careful with his rash words. He had complied (at least in public) with his County lawyer's legal advice, but he's been back at it again these last few months. Thank goodness he's disappearing into the void of the unknown and soon to be forgotten in a little over two weeks as folks are just tired of it all. Just in time, 2025 promises a fresh start with a new slate of Commissioners taking office next week.

As a review, Commissioners Rash and Caddy ran for office in 2016. Both as Republicans. Both were unopposed. Both were unvetted. Rash was a complete unknown. He was never present for Commissioner Work Sessions or Board meetings for most of the election cycle and Caddy wasn't at many either, yet with little to no understanding of the job they were running for, they entered office with an agenda to fire key County staff without any attempt to acquaint themselves with the job or the personnel who were working at the County which then triggered lawsuits, contractual payouts and other legal expenses for the lawyers they hired and you, the citizens paid for, even before they took their oath of office.

It seems as though Mr. Rash and Mr. Caddy (career bureaucrats) along with Ms. Hansen, think that their agenda(s) for County governance and their priorities for the County over these last 8 years are somehow the only ones that should have been considered by previous Boards and I'm guessing, the incoming Board (Scott Mijares and Rick Dunlap with Hansen holding on for another 2 years until she's termed out) are expected to continue with them too.

Rash and Caddy, when they took office, had no clue as to what their predecessors were dealing with regardless of the time, circumstances, conditions, etc. while those Commissioners were in office because they never felt compelled to put in the work to educate themselves on those issues in advance of becoming Commissioners in January of 2017. Instead, they relied on hearsay, rumors, innuendos, etc. to formulate their opinions. Of course, their constant barrage of comments and insults toward former Commissioner Glen Davis (a respected long-time community and business leader elected in 2014 with a term that overlapped theirs) led to his resignation from office and the appointment of Hansen who, as time has passed, has come to emulate, in a way, the behavior of Mr. Rash.

Today, they continue, in the same way as seems to be their nature, to publicly attack and verbally assault local citizens. A particular target is businessman and incoming County Commissioner Scott Mijares. The last Commissioner Board Meeting of 2024 (held almost two weeks ago) was rife with negative comments flying out of Rash's mouth regarding past Commissioners as well as Hansen stating that Commissioner Elect Mijares' comments at the meeting (which she termed as "accusations") were "unwelcome and unwarranted" when he spoke about an agenda item (which they approved) to spend over \$24,000,000 for a new office building for County employees (this project was discussed in an editorial in last

week's *Montrose Mirror* and their comments can be viewed here: [Board of County Commissioners](#)).

Not content with being in total control of the messages the public receives from not only the Commissioners but also the County's Manager's Office as well as with their justifications for questionable decisions, bad mouthing their detractors, etc., their thin-skinned natures now require more public relations cover in the form of not only a replacement for departed County Communications Director Katie Yergensen (who went over to D.M.E.A. as their Marketing & Communications Director ([DMEA Welcomes Katie Yergensen as Marketing and Communications Director](#))) in the form of Ms. Yergensen's assistant, Erika Story, but an expansion of their Public Information/Communications Office. The office, under current plans, will grow to a total of three (3) individuals to include a new Community Engagement Specialist ([Community Engagement Specialist | Career Opportunities](#)) with combined salary and benefits packages sure to exceed \$200,000 per year for these 3 employees. Really? As long as taxpayer money is rolling in, they must figure that they can use YOUR money to tell YOU how things are rather than you finding out otherwise. Hence, the reason why I bring information and opinions to these pages is to try and balance out the propaganda machine's ability to drive the narrative in their direction on most subjects.

I'll end this by saying that it was time to set things straight for those that have succumbed to the beleaguered old nonsense these politicians use in their "blame game." Seemingly, as the old saying goes, their predecessors live on, "rent free in their heads." Maybe it's time to send them a bill.

Mr. White is an active citizen & community leader as well as a business owner, entrepreneur, former Colorado Springs City Councilor and Montrose City Councilor as well as Montrose Mayor. He was a two-term Montrose County Commissioner and has served on many boards and commissions during his career. He & his wife are the parents of six children

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

WHAT GOES AROUND FINALLY COMES AROUND

Editor:

It is interesting how what goes around finally comes around. Eight years ago when Commissioners Elect Rash and Caddy were set to take office they strongly criticized their soon to be predecessors for approving a massive capital expense with the Event Center instead of leaving that major decision to the new BOCC of which they would be a part.

Now eight years later the proverbial shoe is on the other foot as they have just ramrodded a \$24 million capital expenditure for the North Campus over objections and concerns by incoming Commissioners Elect Mijares and Dunlap, who will be left to deal with this massive expenditure.

When this issue is considered in conjunction with the recent fast tract hiring of a new County Manager absent full transparency, it is certainly obvious that hypocrisy reigns in Montrose County Government.

Dee Laird, Montrose



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COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

FISHING IS FUN GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR PROJECTS THAT IMPROVE ANGLING OPPORTUNITIES IN COLORADO



Fishing is Fun grants make it easier for everyone to take part in the outdoors. Photo courtesy of CPW.

This program provides matching grant funds annually to local and county governments, park and recreation departments, water districts, angling organizations and others for projects to improve angling opportunities in Colorado.

“CPW is always looking to empower partners to take steps to increase or improve fishing access,” said CPW Grant Manager Travis Long. “For more than 35 years, the Fishing is Fun program has supported 375 angling improvement projects across the

state, from the smallest towns on the Eastern Plains and the West Slope to the largest cities along the Front Range.”

A fillable application form and additional program information can be found at: cpw.state.co.us/fishing-fun-grants. The completed application form must be submitted by Jan. 31, 2025.

Contact CPW Grant Manager Travis Long at travis.long@state.co.us with additional questions about eligibility, program guidelines and any other related questions.

Special to the Mirror

DENVER — Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) is excited to announce the 2025 round of funding opportunities for the Fishing is Fun Grant Program. The goal of this program is to provide funding to projects that expand fishing access across the state and provide more angling opportunities. CPW awards around \$700,000 in Fishing is Fun grants annually.

The Fishing is Fun program supports projects such as stream and river habitat improvements, access improvements, perpetual easements for public access, pond and lake habitat improvements, fish retention structures, development of new fishing ponds and amenity improvements such as shade shelters, benches and restrooms.

Recent projects include ADA fishing pier installations, habitat improvements, river restorations and dredging projects.

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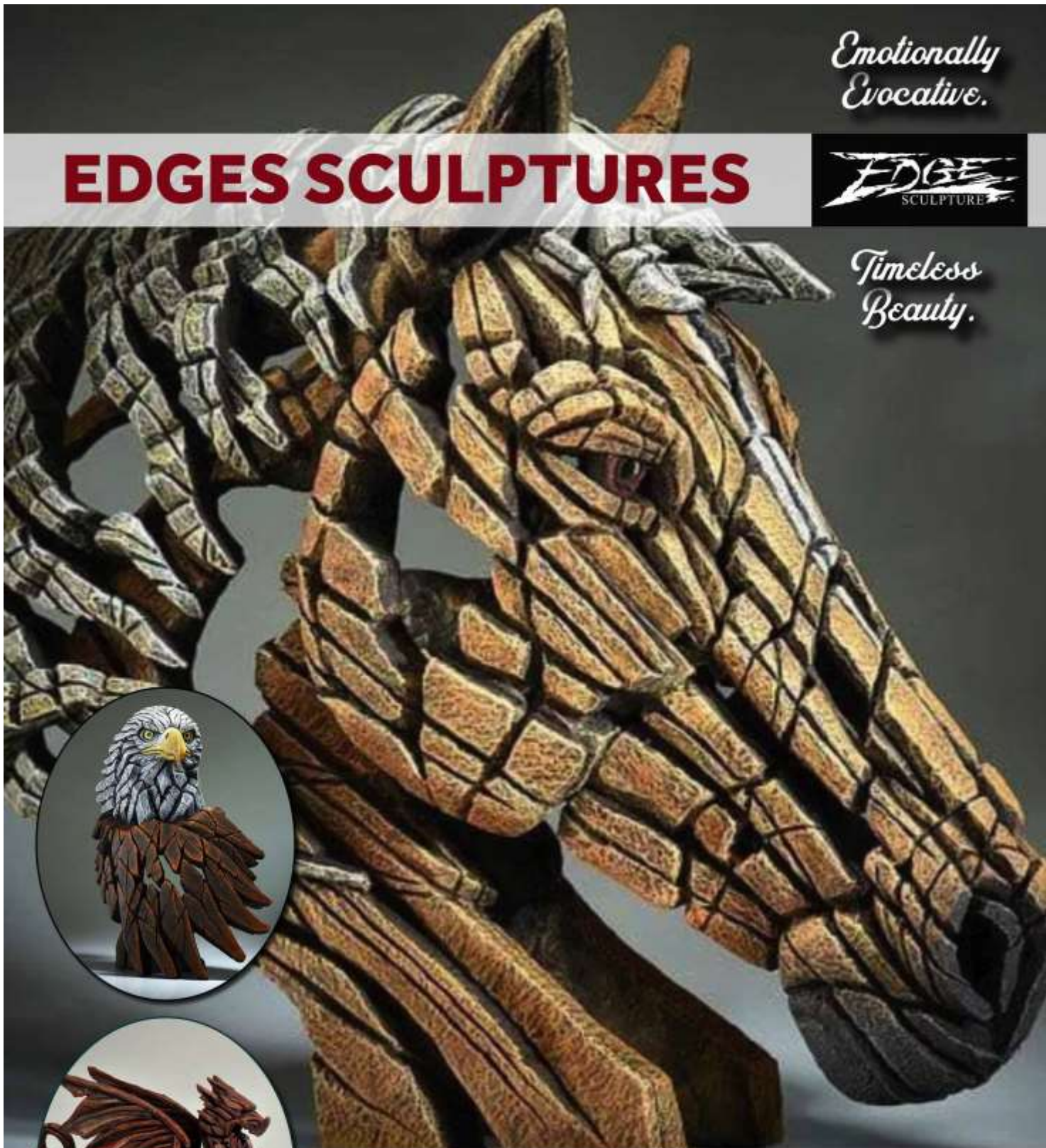


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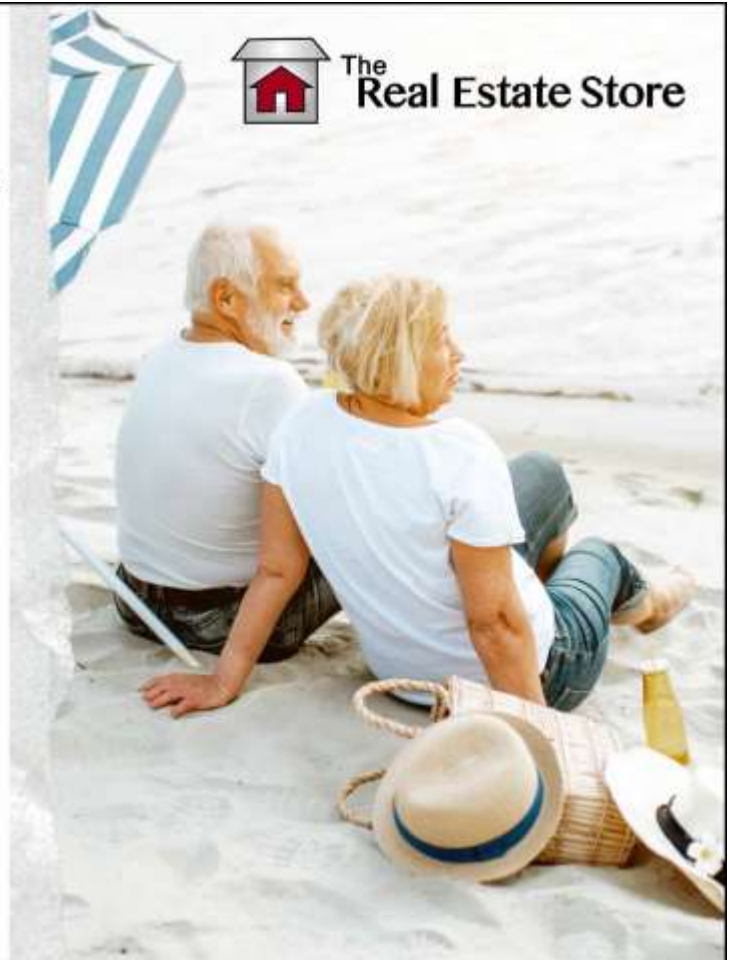
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NEW 'ENDLESS PASTABILITIES' OFFERS VARIETY OF ITALIAN CHOICES



By Carole Ann McKelvey

MONTROSE--Well, ask and you shall receive? A new Italian restaurant has arrived in the south end of the city. Endless Pastabilities offers a unique menu for lunch and dinner with authentic Italian cuisine. Its price points are not bad and the food is certainly worth giving a try... I've dined there several times already and have found the food and service pretty good.

My son, Ian, and I went for dinner just after the place opened. Ian went for a lighter meal ordering Spaghetti and a coke. He thought the restaurant's chairs were uncomfortable. I agreed. I would have liked to go for my traditional favorite, lasagna. But this evening just didn't feel like eating that heavy, so I went for the tortellini which I found pretty good. I wasn't wowed, but I would go back to Endless Pastabilities to try another dish. Also, of course, had a glass of Merlo. Yum. No desserts tonight although they looked tempting.

Now, wanting to give them a second look, I did go back by myself for lunch about a week later. I had a bowl of the Zuppa soup (a favorite of my husband George, who is no longer with us). It was delicious with a lot of Italian sausage and veggies. (As good as the old favorite at Olive Garden, well . . .) Came with two pieces of crusty Focaccia bread. Nice lunch.

My recommendation to Endless Pastabilities: We're glad you're here. To wow customers you might want to up your game and put out some more really delicious meals. Montrose diners expect more.

The choices here are many:

Appetizers: Build Your Bruschetta -- Toasted house-made focaccia slices served with a bowl of fresh, diced tomatoes, finely chopped garlic, and basil

leaves, topped with a swirl of balsamic and EVOO olive oil; Stuffed Mushrooms, Savory button mushrooms generously filled with Italian sausage, fresh herbs, Italian cheeses, and breadcrumbs.

Soups, from \$5-\$8 (large or small) Choose from Zuppa - chunks of Italian sausage, tender potatoes, and vibrant kale, all simmered in a creamy, flavorful broth; or Pasta Fagioli, Tender, cannellini and kidney beans, carrots, celery, onions, kale, and cavatappi pasta simmered in a zesty veggie and tomato broth.

Salads, from \$7-\$13 Add a small to any entree / 5

Large salads served with toasted house-made focaccia bread. Insalata della Casa, house salad - a simple fresh mix of tender greens and tomatoes, topped with shredded parmesan. served with your choice of dressing.; Signature Caesar, Crisp romaine lettuce, freshly grated Parmesan, tossed in creamy Caesar dressing, and topped with house-made croutons; Mamma Mia. Roma tomatoes, black olives, red onions, fresh greens, and house-baked baguette croutons, all topped with shavings of Parmesan cheese. Served with Italian dressing; 50-50 Unique salad combines rotini pasta with romaine lettuce and grape tomatoes. Topped with thickly shredded Mozzarella and pepperoni. Served with a balsamic vinaigrette; Antipasto Pasta salad, features rotini, fresh greens, Kalamata olives, grape tomatoes, artichoke hearts, slices of salami, and chunks of Provolone cheese. Served with an Italian dressing.

Entrees: \$12-\$40

Spaghetti & Meatballs, spaghetti paired with homemade meatballs and house-made marinara sauce. Small - three meatballs & Large; Fettucine Alfredo, fettucine paired with house-made garlic Alfredo sauce. Also fresh parmesan, cream and butter; Pesto Farfalle, home-made pesto featuring fresh basil, Parmesan, and pine nuts - over bowtie pasta. Topped with toasted pine nuts; Tuscan Mushroom Tortellini, cheese-filled tortellini tossed in a red wine mushroom sauce, featuring earthy mushrooms and aromatic herbs;

Carbonara, cavatappi pasta coated in a rich, creamy sauce made from fresh eggs, pancetta, red peppers, and fresh Parmesan; Garlic Shrimp Linguine, linguine coated in a rich, house-made white garlic sauce; Pesto Farfalle, home-made pesto featuring fresh basil, Parmesan, and pine nuts - bowtie pasta. Topped with toasted pine nuts; Tuscan Mushroom Tortellini, cheese-filled tortellini tossed in a red wine mushroom sauce, featuring a medley of earthy mushrooms and aromatic herbs; Available Fridays ONLY Prime Rib & Pasta (\$40) 12 oz oven-roasted prime rib with a side of spaghetti coated in choice of sauces: alfredo, garlic white wine, or marinara served with house vegetables and an Au Jus; Tender linguine coated in house-made white wine sauce, with butter and fresh garlic.

Topped with shrimp; Sicilian Delight, Al dente linguini covered in house-made marinara. Topped with sauteed eggplant, zucchini and mushrooms, sun-dried tomatoes, artichoke hearts, and black olives; Jumbo Ravioli, four jumbo ravioli in house-made marinara sauce. Garnished with a drizzle of EVOO olive oil, shaved parmesan and fresh basil (Add: Shrimp: 1/4 lb. / 5 1/2 lb. / Chicken / four Meatballs for an extra charge);

Pizza: From \$14-21

House-made pizza crust or substitute a gluten-free cauliflower crust: Four Cheese, Mozzarella, Provolone, Parmesan, and Romano on marinara; Add Pepperoni, Mediterranean Alfredo, or add bacon, sun-dried tomatoes, artichoke hearts, and black olives; Triple P, house-made basil pesto sauce, Mozzarella, pepperoni, and toasted pine nuts; Pizza Deliziosa. Italian twist on a supreme pizza starts with house-made marinara and Mozzarella. Topped with sausage, ham, mushrooms, artichokes, and black olives; Tomato Lover's Margh, House-made marinara, Mozzarella cheese, topped with basil; or try Spicy Divola, Spicy marinara, Mozzarella, spicy salami, fresh jalapeños.

Endless Pastabilities is located at [1544 Oxbow Dr Ste 198, Montrose, CO 8140](#); call [\(970\) 249-1394](#).

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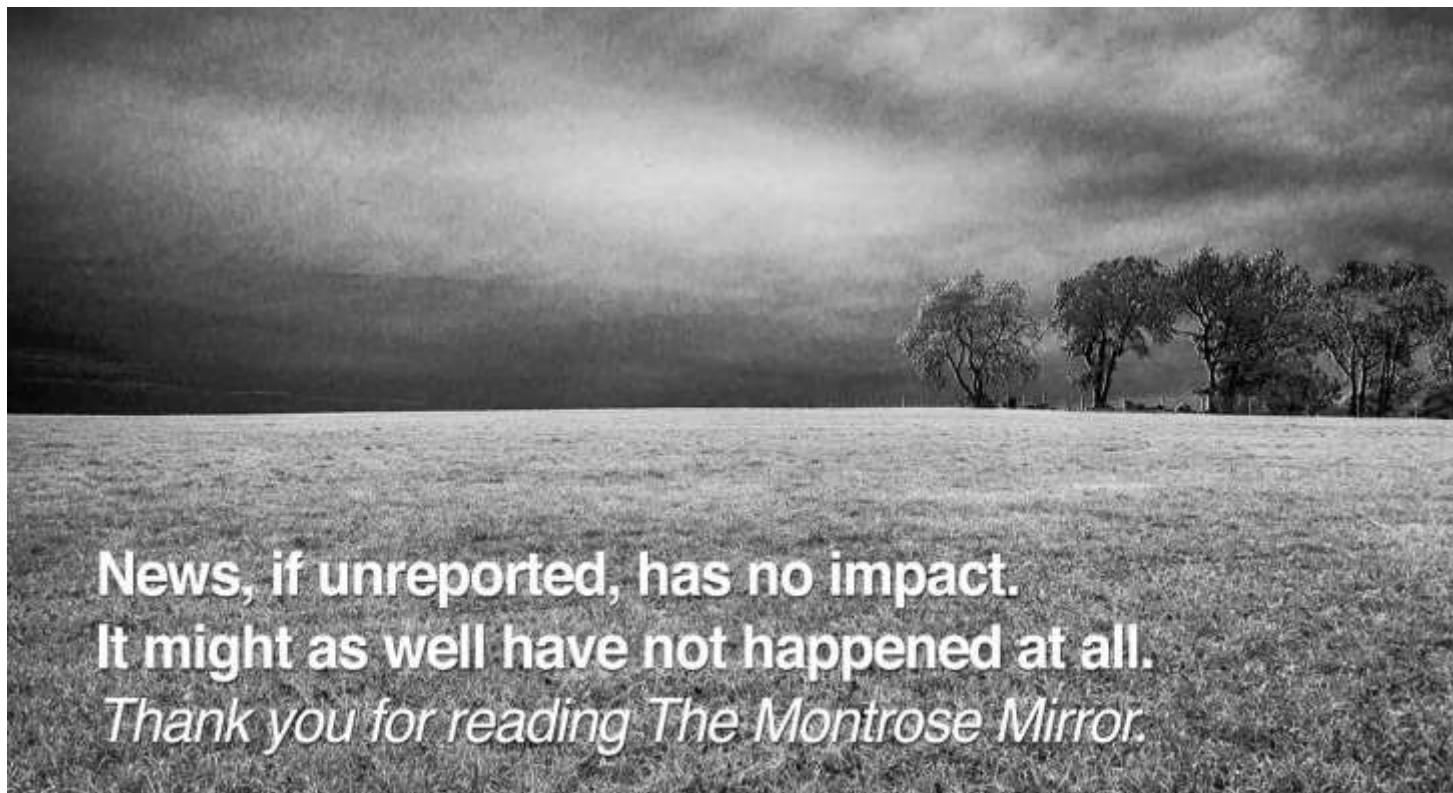
April 29, 1934 — December 23, 2024

ROSALIE (ROSIE) COHENOUR passed away peacefully on Monday, December 23, 2024 in Montrose, Colorado. She was 90 years old.

Rosie was born in 1934 as the “oldest by five minutes” half of the first set of twins born that year at Parkview Medical Center in Pueblo. She grew up in the Bailey, Colorado area where she attended and graduated from a one-room schoolhouse. She worked as a waitress at the former Rustic Inn Cafe in Bailey where she met, and later married, Fay M. (Bud) Cohenour in 1954. Rosie and Bud lived in Littleton, Colorado until they moved to Montrose in 1995. In Montrose she joined the local group “Montrose Caring Clowns” and enjoyed clowning for several years. She en-

joyed making holiday treats. Friends and family looked forward to receiving the exceptional peanut brittle and Christmas tree shaped popcorn balls she loved to share.

Rosalie is survived by her son Kevin Cohenour; granddaughters Heather, Colleen, and Kaitlyn; and great-grandchildren Emma, Ryder, Kaiden, Kara, and Teagan. Rosie was preceded in death by her father John, mother Lavona, brothers Gene and Dale, twin-sister Rosemarie, several half-sisters and half-brothers, and husband Bud. Rosalie’s wishes are for her remains to be cremated and interred in Denver alongside her husband Bud. A celebration of life service will be held in her honor with the time and date to be announced.



News, if unreported, has no impact.
It might as well have not happened at all.
Thank you for reading The Montrose Mirror.

COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

CARI DENISE RAISH

May 18, 1961 — December 15, 2024



CARI DENISE RAISH, beloved wife, mother, grandmother, and friend, passed away peacefully on December 15, 2024 at the age of 63 in her home in Montrose, Colorado. Born on May 18, 1961, in Sacramento, California, Cari dedicated her life to her family and the art of making every moment special.

Cari married the love of her life, Scott Raish, in 1988 and they recently celebrated their 36th anniversary. Cari was a homemaker who paused her career to

pour her heart into raising her family. Her children, Marissa Gaffney (Joe Gaffney) and Spencer Raish (Kayla Wilczek Raish), were her greatest joys, and she found new light in her precious granddaughter, Charlotte June Gaffney.

Cari had a passion for creativity, expressed through her beautiful quilting, sewing, knitting, and crocheting. Each stitch was made with love, and her creations will forever be treasured by those lucky enough to receive them. She had a passion for discovering new hobbies and interests, most recently perfecting baking with homemade sourdough. Beyond her crafts, Cari was an adventurer at heart. Cari lived in various parts of Colorado for much of the past 30 years, including the last two years in Montrose. In her early years, she lived in South Africa and Spain, later living in the United Kingdom, and many regions of the US across many states. She traveled extensively, exploring much of the world and embracing the beauty of each destination with her curiosity, wonder, and humor.

Though she faced health challenges throughout her life, Cari confronted them with remarkable strength and resilience. She taught those around her the meaning

of courage and grace in the face of adversity. Now, she is finally free from pain, resting in peace and comfort.

Cari was preceded in death by her mother, Ila Peterson of Lancaster, CA; stepfather Lorin Peterson of Kerrville, TX; mother-in-law and father-in-law, June Raish and Carl Raish, Jr of Montrose, CO.

She is survived by her husband, Scott Raish of Montrose, CO; daughter, Marissa (Joe) Gaffney and granddaughter, Charlotte June Gaffney of Olathe, CO; son Spencer (Kayla) Raish of Parker, CO; father, Duane Patten of Tucson, AZ; brothers, Clifton Patten of Mesa, AZ and Clayton Patten of Lancaster, CA; three nieces and two nephews.

Cari will be deeply missed by her husband, Scott Raish, her children, her extended family, and the countless lives she touched. Her legacy of love, laughter, and creativity lives on in all who knew her.

In lieu of services at this time, the family asks that you honor Cari's memory by cherishing your loved ones, finding joy in the little things, and perhaps stitching a bit of love into your own lives.

In lieu of flowers or any gifts, please donate to a charity of your choice in her memory.



ISSUE 501 Dec. 30, 2024

ART & SOL

TECH MEETS TRAILS: ENGAGE DIGITAL NATIVES IN THE OUTDOORS

by Abram Herman,
Friends of Youth and Nature

REGIONAL—In a world dominated by screens, getting kids to step outside and connect with nature can feel like a herculean task. Many parents and educators face the dilemma of competing with video games, social media, and streaming platforms for childrens' attention. However, understanding that incremental change can lead to more long-lasting results, what if we instead harness technology as a bridge to the outdoors?

Blending technology with nature-based activities offers a unique opportunity to engage today's "digital natives" while fostering a deeper appreciation for the environment. Through intentional use of these tools, we can inspire a love of exploration, curiosity, and stewardship in a way that resonates with tech-savvy youth.

While screen time is often, and maybe rightly, blamed for the growing disconnect between children and nature, technology can also be a powerful tool for fostering engagement. Apps like iNaturalist, Seek, and Star Walk allow children to interact with the natural world in interactive and educational ways. These platforms transform outdoor spaces into living classrooms, encouraging kids to identify plants, track animal behaviors, and map constellations.

Take geocaching, for instance. This modern-day treasure hunt uses GPS-enabled



Nature apps can help kids identify trees, insects, flowers and birds! Courtesy photo.

devices to lead participants to hidden caches scattered around the globe. It's an adventure that combines problem-solving, teamwork, and outdoor exploration, making it an excellent way to get children excited about spending time in nature. Technology can make the outdoors feel like a video game!

Critics often worry that using technology outdoors could detract from the benefits of unplugging, which is a fair concern. The key lies in moderation—by framing technology as a tool, rather than the main focus, parents and educators can encourage kids to use it as a stepping stone into

deeper, screen-free engagement with nature, while also building healthier attitudes and habits around the ideal role of technology in day to day life.

For example, apps like BirdNET allow users to identify bird calls using their smartphone microphone. Once a child gets excited about this exciting power to identify birds in their backyard, they're more likely to put down the phone and spend time observing birds with their own eyes and ears.

And blending technology and nature isn't just about fun—it's also a powerful way to nurture stewardship of our public lands.

Continued next pg

TECH MEETS TRAILS: ENGAGE DIGITAL NATIVES IN THE OUTDOORS

From previous pg

When kids use apps to identify plants or participate in outdoor programs, they develop a personal connection to the natural world.

Here on the Western Slope we value our public lands for all of the different ways we interact with them as hunters, anglers, bikers, hikers, or any other outdoor activities.

If we want to ensure continued stewardship of those public lands it's crucial that the next generation has a chance to experience them and create a personal attachment and value of their own.

Research supports this approach. A 2021 study published in *Frontiers in Psychology* found that children who used interactive technology to learn about nature were more likely to express interest in environmental conservation than those who only received traditional classroom instruction.

One of the greatest advantages of tech-assisted outdoor activities is their accessibility. With a smartphone and internet connection, even families in highly urbanized areas can explore local parks or their backyards with fresh eyes. Similarly, rural communities can use digital tools to connect with broader communities through activities like tracking monarch butterfly migration or monitoring water quality.

For families on a budget, many apps offer free versions, and community programs often lend GPS devices or binoculars to participants. These resources make it easier for everyone to enjoy the benefits of tech-integrated outdoor adventures.

If you're looking to combine technology and outdoor play, here are a few tips to get started:

1. Choose the Right Tools: Research apps or programs that align with your child's



Who doesn't love a treasure hunt? Geocaching takes one of those activities we all loved as children—treasure hunting—and makes it a global challenge appropriate for anyone with a love for exploring and finding the treasure! Courtesy photo.

interests, whether it's stargazing, wildlife tracking, or geocaching.

2. Set Boundaries: Establish clear limits for screen time during outdoor activities, encouraging moments of direct interaction with nature, without the devices in hand.

3. Start Small: Begin with simple activities like identifying backyard plants or spotting planets and constellations, before moving on to more complex projects.

4. Make It Social: Invite friends or classmates to join in, turning outdoor adventures into shared experiences that build community and cooperation.

By embracing technology as a tool for outdoor exploration, we can meet kids where they are while fostering a genuine love for nature. Whether through identifying birds with an app or hunting for geo-

aches in a nearby park, tech-integrated activities offer endless opportunities to inspire curiosity and creativity.

In a time when our public lands need defenders more than ever, these small steps can lay the foundation for a future generation of environmental stewards—creating a healthier form of connection with technology, and a greater connection to the wonders of the world around them.

Friends of Youth and Nature (FOYAN) is a non-profit organization that promotes opportunities for youth and families to go outside, experience outdoor activities and explore nature. For outdoor safety tips, trail game ideas, hiking trails, and other ways to get young people involved in the outdoors, visit the FOYAN website at www.friendsofyouthandnature.org



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ALL SAINTS ANGLICAN CHURCH

Address: 2057 S. Townsend, Montrose, CO 81401.

Office Hours: By appointment.

Contact Information: (970) 249-2451
<https://www.allsaintsmontrose.org/> Rec-
 tor: The Rev Preston Gordon, [pgor-
 don@allsaintsmontrose.org](mailto:pgor-

 don@allsaintsmontrose.org)

Worship Service Times: Sundays 9AM,

Sunday Worship. Wednesdays 11AM, Mid-
 week prayer and communion, Wednes-
 day, Noon, Multi-denominational Commu-
 nity Prayer Hour.

All Saints Anglican Church is an Evangelical
 Anglican Church committed to the minis-
 try 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 Sun-
 day service. We would love to welcome
 you here. Following the service, join us for
 snacks and conversation. On the third Sun-
 day of the month we celebrate a potluck
 meal together.

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

BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH

Independent Baptist
 112Main St.
 P.O. Box 262

Olathe, Co 81425

Tuesday-Friday Phone: 970-808-1021
www.biblebaptistchurcholathe.com

Pastor Gabe Skillo

Sunday School 9:15 a.m.

Sunday 10:30 a.m.

Sunday 6 p.m.

Wednesday Bible Study/Prayer 7 p.m.

CELEBRATION CHURCH

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

Address: 2900 Sunnyside Road, Mont-
 rose, CO 81401

Office Hours: By appointment

Phone: (970) 497-4925

Email: celebrationmontrose@gmail.com

Website: [https://
 celebrationmontrose.org/](https://celebrationmontrose.org/)

Worship Service Times: 9am and 10:45am

Senior Pastor:

Pastor Brandon Mathis

Church Description/Mission: Celebration
 Church makes disciples that make disci-
 ples. 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. Mont-
 rose, 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 Law-
 rence

Worship service times: 10:30 a.m.

Mission: Christ's Church of the Valley is a
 loving and welcoming church whose pur-
 pose 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 pre-
 dominately 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 Syn-
 od

Address: 1980 N. Townsend Ave., Mont-
 rose, 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 welcom-
 ing environment being comforted and en-
 couraged 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 inclu-
 sive and accepting world is steadfast, and
 we will continue to work towards a future

where everyone can live freely and au-
 thentically.

Demographics: We are a small congrega-
 tion 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 Satur-
 days. 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 pre-
 dominantly 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: Monday - Thursday 9 am- Noon and by Appointment

Contact Information: Office Phone 970 249 -9213, mncfirst@gmail.com, www.montrosenazarenechurch.org

Pastor: Buddy Cook

Services Sunday: Worship 10 AM, Adult Bible Study 11:30 AM Worship includes age-appropriate children's ministry during adult worship.

Wednesday: Prayer Boot Camp - 7 PM
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, info@fpcmontrose.com, www.fpcmontrose.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

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-](mailto:ststephensmontrose@yahoo.com)

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).

SUMMIT CHURCH OF MONTROSE:

Denomination affiliation: Southern Baptist
 Address: 10977 60.75 Rd. Montrose, CO 81403
 Office hours: Varies
 Contact information:
[email:summitchurchmontrose@gmail.com](mailto:summitchurchmontrose@gmail.com)
 website:
www.summitchurchmontrose.org
 Senior Pastor: Interim Pastor

Worship service times: Sunday Worship is at 9 a.m. followed by a time of fellowship and snacks.
 Beginning Sept. 8 we will have a family Bible study, "Who's in Charge?" following fellowship from 10:45-11:30 a.m. All family members are welcome.
 During the Sunday sermon we offer teaching for children ages birth to kindergarten, in a kid-friendly room called Base

Camp.
 We have communion on the first Sunday of each month and meet later in the day for a potluck dinner at 5:30 p.m., followed by a prayer session at 6:30 p.m.
 Please visit <https://www.summitchurchmontrose.org/events> for more information.
 Summit Church welcomes people of all ages!

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@vbcmontrose.org; website: vbcmontrose.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.

<p>Church Directory <i>Mirror Editorial Staff</i> 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</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>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?</p>
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www.thehiddenlakecommunity.com

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COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

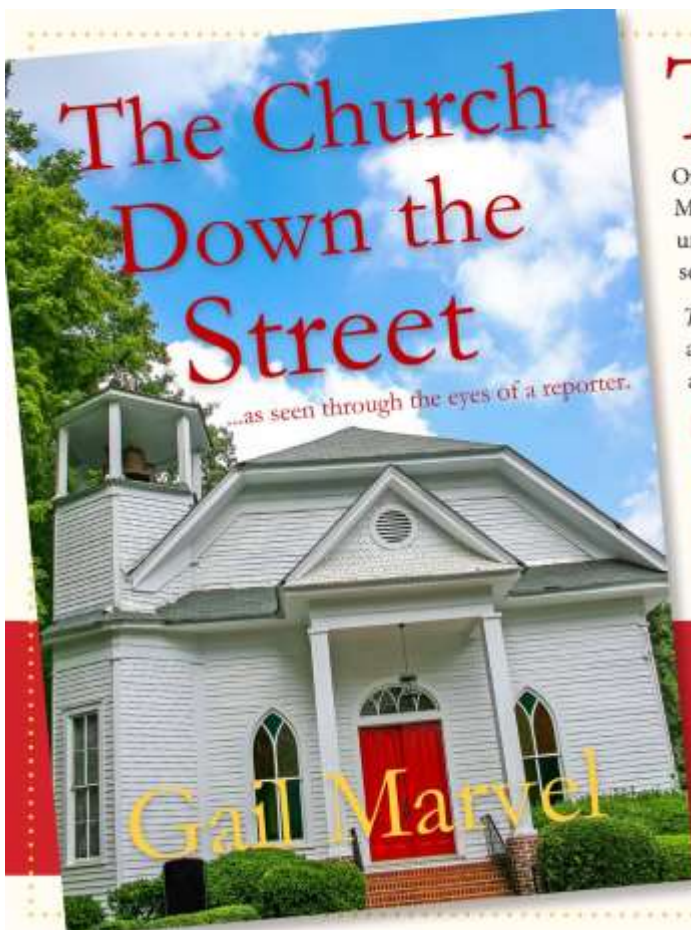
MAGIC CIRCLE PLAYERS: THE TIN WOMAN

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-Instead of relishing life after her heart transplant, Joy enters a downward spiral, unsure whether she truly deserves a second chance. Meanwhile, Alice and Hank mourn the loss of their son, Jack, whose heart was used to save Joy. At a friend's urging, Joy tracks down Jack's family to find closure. But are Alice, Hank, and their daughter Sammy ready to accept Jack's death? Based on a true story, *The Tin Woman* by Sean Grennan, uses humor and pathos to explore loss, family, and what it means to be given new life. Directed by Merrilee F. Robertson, Assistant Director Stasia Allyn. Tickets at magiccircleplayers.com. Magic Circle Players, 420 S 12th St, Montrose. Box office: 970-249-7838.

Performance dates:

- The Tin Woman-Friday, Jan. 10, 2025 - 07:30 PM MST
- The Tin Woman-Saturday, Jan. 11, 2025 - 07:30 PM MST
- The Tin Woman-Sunday, Jan. 12, 2025 - 02:00 PM MST
- The Tin Woman-Friday, Jan. 17, 2025 - 07:30 PM MST
- The Tin Woman- Saturday, Jan. 18, 2025 - 07:30 PM MST
- The Tin Woman-Sunday, Jan. 19, 2025 - 02:00 PM MST
- The Tin Woman-Friday, Jan. 24, 2025 - 07:30 PM MST
- The Tin Woman-Saturday, Jan 25, 2025 - 07:30 PM MST



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 and wingedpublications.com.

GAIL MARVEL
Montrose Author & Reporter



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Nicole Goza.....970-209-2548	Vicki Jones.....970-209-3018
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ONGOING-

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 CENTER FOR ARTS FIRST FRIDAY-New Art Exhibit opening with featured artists.4:30 - 7 pm First Friday of every month. 11 S Park Ave., Montrose. Free Admission. For more information: 970-787-9428 or info@mc4arts.com

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

Jan 1-Happy New Year!

Jan. 7-Tuesday Jan. 7 at 5 Citizens' Climate Lobby meets at Montrose library meeting rm. Progress on recycle building codes with Montrose County Commissioners. Nonpartisan, National, Environmental. All Welcome info 970-765-9095.

Jan. 20-Montrose Republican Women to host Trump Victory Gala Inauguration Celebration, 6-10pm, Montrose Elks Lodge. \$10 donation per person, cash bar.

Feb. 13-Greater Montrose Chamber of Commerce Business Expo 4-7pm at the Montrose Pavilion.



STRANDED SKIERS AT TELSKI RESCUED CHRISTMAS EVE



Kendall Cramer shared these Christmas Eve photos with the Mirror, "About 70 people had to be rescued from Lift 1 at Telluride on Christmas Eve," Kendall said. "I wasn't one of the trapped skiers. I had just skied down Double Cabin to the Meadows and witnessed it."



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