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the **Montrose Mirror**

CITIZENS SHOW UP, SPEAK OUT AT BOCC MEETING OF MARCH 12

By Caitlin Switzer
MONTROSE-With a roomful of citizens and all commissioners present, Montrose Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) Chair Scott Mijares opened the regular meeting on Wednesday, March 12. County Manager Frank Rodriguez led in saying the Pledge of Allegiance, and Planning & Development Director Tallmadge Richmond delivered the Invocation. "Our loving Heavenly Father we're so grateful to be gathered this morning at the board of county commissioners meeting...we are grateful for the good people in the community, please bless them, please bless us this morning as we discuss important items...that we will be quick to hear and quick to understand, slow to speak and slow to anger..." Richmond said.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD
First to speak during the Public Comment Period was Chair Scott Mijares. "...As many of you know I am your county commissioner for District 1...I am a conservative...I promised not to



Citizen Ken Dolezal, above, was among those who spoke to the BOCC. Meeting screenshot.

Continued pg 38

MONTROSE SPORTS SCOREBOARD: By Cliff Dodge



The Red Hawks Baseball Team sets to play defense vs the Eagle Valley Devils. Photo by Cliff Dodge.

VARSITY BASEBALL: (2-2)

- Discovery Canyon 13, Montrose Red Hawks 0
- Montrose Red Hawks 16, Roaring Fork Rams 9
- Montrose Red Hawks 7, Eagle Valley Devils 5
- Alamosa Mean Moose 11, Montrose Red Hawks 8

Highlights: The Discovery Canyon Thunder made 6 runs in the top of the first inning and added 7 additional runs in a game that lasted only 5 innings. The Red Hawks were unable to get a base hit off of Andrew Torres. The Thunder had 8 stolen bases and left 14 runners on base. Their offense consisted of 3 doubles and a home run along with 7 singles. Kaeden Clair pitched 4 innings and allowed 7 runs,

Highlights: The Red Hawks got into the win column as they defeated the Roaring Fork Rams 16-9. The Red Hawks pushed across 5 runs in

Continued pg 18

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

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Published every Monday in Montrose, Colorado, the Montrose Mirror reaches a readership of over 25,000 across the region.
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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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Korean Lantern Festival

Korean Lotus Lantern Festival & Craft
Thursday, March 20,
6:45 – 8:30pm
Library Meeting Room



The Korean Spirit and Culture Promotion Project will teach participants how to make a lovely lotus flower lantern using colored paper and a pre-made wireframe. Participants will also learn about Korea's unique history and culture. Please register with Taylor Evans, at tevens@montroselibrary.org, or **970-964-2540**.

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MIRROR IMAGE: SKI DAY!



Spring Skiing. Photo by A. Stranger



FACTS & FICTION



Show up to support your Youth Council and your local Non-Profits and WIN PRIZES!!

The City of Montrose Youth City Council will be hosting an Open House showcasing over 40 Montrose non-profit organizations and the services they provide to our community during the Nonprofit Showcase and Involvement Fair set for Monday, March 24, from 4:00pm to 7:30pm at the Montrose Pavilion.

The Showcase is a Great Opportunity for Residents to learn about these non-profits and to get involved as a Volunteer in many different ways to help the Montrose community. All attendees are eligible for Door Prizes!

The Montrose Youth City Council was established by the Montrose City Council in 2011 to encourage greater youth participation in the city's government. It is charged with providing thoughtful recommendations to the City Council on issues concerning youth and assisting city staff in considering youth perspectives in its planning efforts. We hope to see you on March 24th!!

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



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

GATHER AT PEACE POLE ON MARCH 20

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-The community is invited to a gathering at the Peace Pole in Ute Indian Park on Thursday, March 20, at noon to celebrate the Spring Equinox with prayers for peace and the healing of Mother Earth. Bring your drums and your prayers. More information, Spiritual Awareness Center, 970-252-0908. Everyone is welcome.



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MONTROSE COUNTY: COMMISSIONERS COLUMN

RESPECT, BROTHERHOOD, AND THE MISSION AT HAND

By Sean Pond, Vice Chair,

Montrose Board of County Commissioners (BOCC)

MONTROSE—Lately, there has been a lot of false information and misleading accusations directed at me personally, and I will not allow lies to define who I am or what I stand for.

Let me be absolutely clear: I do not and will not tolerate racism, sexism, or discrimination of any kind. These accusations are not only false but an insult to the values I have lived by my entire life.

There have also been completely false claims that I have threatened to fire Frank Rodriguez or have asked him to fire Dr. Ahmed. Let me make this crystal clear: I have never said that, nor have I ever made any such demand. These accusations are simply not true.

As a U.S. Navy veteran, I have served alongside men and women of every race, background, and belief system. In the military, there is no room for division—only respect, brotherhood, and the mission at hand. No one knows this better than Frank Rodriguez, myself, and every veteran who has ever put on a uniform. We are bound by service, not by race or politics.

I have deep respect for Frank Rodriguez, a decorated Army veteran and an exceptional leader, and I fully support the work he is doing for Montrose County. I also had a great conversation with Dr. Ahmed and look forward to working with him. My advice to him was simple: ignore the noise, focus on doing the job, and don't get caught up in the distractions of false narratives and political games. That's exactly what I intend to do as well.

I know that many people across the county—especially county employees—are in a difficult place right now. Transitions and change can be challenging, and my goal is not to add to the noise but to help heal, rebuild trust, and bring people together.

In times of change and uncertainty, we have a choice—to be divided by the past or to come together for a stronger future. My goal is to help us heal, rebuild trust, and unite around the values that make Montrose County a community we are all proud to call home.



BOCC Vice Chair Sean Pond. Courtesy photo.

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

WE THE PEOPLE WANT TO CHANGE DIRECTIONS

Editor:

In response to Kim Floyd's recent letter condemning the new leadership of the BOCC I am surprised that you pulled the sexist card. You may have a point that both Scott and Sean are new to the BOCC arena, but they were duly elected and appointed. The vast majority of the public want to change direction. Sometimes when changing directions you need a new driver who is willing to take a new direction. Not everything is between the

women and the men nor is it always about what ethnic background you come from.

It seems in this town between the MCSD, City Council and the BOCC have or had heads that came with their own agendas. Stop trying to race or sexist baiting the changes that the new Commissioners are making. Their constituents, WE THE PEOPLE, are looking to a new direction, a conservative approach to the affairs of the county that reflect the conservative views of the county.

We finally have two officials who wish to take care of the people's business by listening to their constituents direction.

How novel is that in any of the aforementioned groups.

I'm sure that Sue still has a lot to say to the new members and can offer a lot of advice on how they can do their new jobs, but for now they want to listen to the people first.

John Brown

WE THE PEOPLE

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RE-1J ENROLLMENT HAS DECREASED BY 109 STUDENTS



Sodexo Executive Chef Stefan Davenport was introduced at the RE-1J School Board meeting of March 11. Meeting screenshot.

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE-Enrollment in Montrose County School District RE-1J continues to drop, according to the Enrollment Report presented by Finance Director Emily Imus to the RE-1J Board of Education during the regular meeting of Tuesday, March 11. In other business, the board heard a Nutritional Services Report and considered revised board policies.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance; all directors were present including Board President Sarah Fishing (District E); Vice President Steve Bush (District G), District A Director Neisha Balleck; District B Director Ted Valerio; District C Director Alice Murphy; District D Director Tom West, and District F Director Jody Hovde.

Directors voted unanimously to approve the [meeting agenda](#).

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

RE-1J Public Information Officer Matthew Jenkins presented the Student Spotlight.

"We got some great things going on throughout this district...for Parent Teacher Conference week, we applaud all students taking the reins during student-led conferences," Jenkins said.

"Congrats to some of our student athletes: MHS Boys Basketball made it through the playoffs to the Great Eight, competing at the Denver Coliseum. Congratulations also to Olathe High School wrestlers Trevor Piatt, Monty Yarnell, and Tairyn Lowenberg along with Montrose

High School wrestler Aidan Gonzales for placing at the state wrestling tournament.

"Shout out to our CDE Social Media Take-over student celebrations. At the end of February, MCSD hosted the Colorado Department of Education Facebook page for a day. Students at several campuses led us through some awesome campus video tours (special thanks to Spencer at Peak, Titus at Johnson, and Jacob at Oak Grove). We were able to show off science instruction through our rivers, streams, and fish; students completing chores on their school farm; and much more!"

CELEBRATIONS AND RECOGNITION

Jenkins presented the Altrusa Apple Awards and the KREX Golden Apple Award. Altrusa awards were given to Columbine Middle School ESS Mild/Moderate Teacher Michelle Cimaglio and to Black Canyon High School Teacher Mallory Shaffer.

Johnson Elementary School Custodian Ana Rubalcaba received the KREX Golden Apple Award for March.

Jenkins said that Kurt Scriffiny will be serving on the Colorado Education Commissioner's Teacher Cabinet.

DONATIONS

The school district has received the following recent donations:

-The Delta Kappa Gamma Society donated \$100 to Outer Range.

-England Fence made a donation of \$1,000 for the Montrose High School Wrestling team.

-Friends of Youth and Nature donated \$804 to Northside Elementary Third Grade to cover the bus and trip to Eureka Science Museum in Grand Junction.

BOARD ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATES

District D Director Tom West said that the facilities Committee will meet next month, and that the Finance Committee met.

"There's a lot more to it than meets the eye, Mrs. Imus is going to have a fun time explaining it," West said, referring to [HB-24-1488](#), Colorado's new Public School Finance Formula. The formula has not been updated since 1994, West said. "It's really different financially, get ready...Montrose County School District will be okay, it's not like some districts..."

"...It's a little bit of a bait and switch," Fishing said.

District F Director Jody Hovde said that there is a lot of information out there, "I think it's crucial that we stay on top of it."

District C Director Alice Murphy said the District Accountability Committee would meet the following week. There are tours of the Teaching and Learning Academy available, she said. RE-1J Superintendent Carrie Stephenson said that the schools taking part in the Teaching and Learning Academy will give an update in April.

NUTRITIONAL SERVICES UPDATE

The Board of Education heard a [Nutritional Services Update](#) from Sodexo Executive Director Preston Weaver and Executive Chef Stefan Davenport.

COMMUNITY INPUT

Speaking during the time for Community Input was Leah Vandersluis. "...That was a really good lemon bar," Vandersluis said, "I think I'm going to start eating at school! Tonight, I am speaking about the ACA policy that's on the agenda tonight...one thing that was missing is the whole aspect of parents being involved. If a student identifies as a different gender, and changes his or her name, I really believe that parents should be notified. The district is not the parent as you know, and to keep the parent from knowing what is going on with his child is wrong...parents should be allowed to walk their children through this confusing time in their lives. The Montrose County School Board already has privacy and protection of confidential student information...the district is to be transparent with the parent about her child's data. Doesn't this apply to the ACA policy? Please do not leave parents out of this critical time of a student's life, Students are going through so many changes and are under so many pressures, and they need their parents involved in their lives."

OLD BUSINESS

The Board considered revised Board Policies [BE](#), [ACA-Names Changes](#), [AC-R-1 LBD-Relations with District Charter Schools](#), and [LBD-R- Relations with District Charter Schools](#) on Second reading. Policy BE was approved unanimously. Policy LBD was approved, as was Policy LBDR.

RE-1J ENROLLMENT HAS DECREASED BY 109 STUDENTS From previous pg

District F Director Jody Hovde spoke about revised board Policy ACA, regarding name changes, which she was tasked with writing. Hovde said she was advised that the policy needs to align with Federal and State laws. The school district's attorney and CASB had concerns, she said. "...The policy that I presented today comes from our lawyer, the information comes from CASB...the written notification of parents was a big thing. We can notify parents...we have to uphold the law; we have to balance the rights of students and parents..."

The Board spent time in discussion. District B Director Ted Valerio suggested an amendment to the original motion, to amend the definition of "chosen name," which was approved, and then the Board voted to approve the ACA policy as amended in a five to two vote, with Balleck and Valerio voting to deny. Policy AC-R-1 was unanimously approved.

CONSENT AGENDA

Consent Agenda items including Personnel Report were approved unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

The board considered the following re-

vised board policies on First Reading: AC, Nondiscrimination/Equal Employment; AC-R-3, Sexual Harassment Investigation Procedures; AC-E-1, Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity; AC-E-2, Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity; ADF & ADF-R, School Wellness;

GBAA, Sexual Harassment; JBB, Sexual Harassment; GCE/GCF, Professional Staff Recruiting/Hiring; GDE/GDF, Support Staff Recruiting/Hiring; JB, Equal Educational Opportunities; JF, Admission and Denial of Admission; GBA, Open Hiring/Equal Employment Opportunity; JICDD, Violent and Aggressive Behavior; JICDE, Bullying Prevention and Education; JFBA**, Intra-District Choice/Open Enrollment; JFBB, Inter-District Choice/Open Enrollment; JII, Student Concerns, Complaints, and Grievances; JIH, Student Interviews, Interrogations, Searches and Arrests - Added language regarding privacy protections during interviews; Clarified language; Technical edits.

ENROLLMENT REPORT

Finance Director Emily Imus delivered the Enrollment Report. Current District Enrollment is 5,971, which is one student more than last month, and 109 students fewer than last year at this time. Imus said that the decline is mostly within the lower grade levels.

With no further business, the Board of Education voted to adjourn.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

MOTORISTS TRAVELING US 50 BETWEEN GUNNISON AND SALIDA CAN EXPECT BRIEF DELAYS *One-way alternating traffic will be in place 24/7 as crews perform culvert replacements March 17 - 21*

Special to the Mirror

GUNNISON & CHAFFEE COUNTIES — The Colorado Department of Transportation will perform week-long culvert replacement operations on US Highway 50 approximately 23 miles east of Gunnison (Mile Points 181 to 182). Beginning March 17, motorists will be guided through the work zone by temporary traffic signals. The signals will be in place 24 hours a day and motorists should plan for full stops and up to 20-minute delays during daytime working hours through Friday, March 21. CDOT urges motorists to plan ahead and allow for additional travel time on US 50 between Salida and Gunnison. CDOT crews will work as swiftly as possible to complete the culvert replacement however operations are weather dependent.

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

MONTROSE CLASSICAL ACADEMY NEARS APPLICATION MILESTONE - YOUR SUPPORT NEEDED BY MARCH 24

Editor:

After thoughtful preparation and refinement, Montrose Classical Academy (MCA) stands ready to resubmit our charter application to Montrose County School District on April 1st, 2025. Our team has worked diligently to create a tuition-free public charter school vision and plan that will offer our community's children the benefits of classical education - an approach that builds strong foundations of knowledge while developing character and critical thinking skills. The support we've received from Montrose families continues to inspire us. Our revised application reflects countless hours of dedicated work and thoughtful planning: carefully crafted academic programs that will challenge and inspire students, thoughtful attention to creating an ideal learning environment, and thorough operational plans to ensure a strong foundation for long-term success for our com-

munity. We've enhanced and strengthened every aspect of this secondary application as we prepare for a fall 2026 opening.

Now, we need your help to bring this educational opportunity to life. If you have children who you have an interest in enrolling at MCA, please take a moment to **submit an Expression of Interest form by March 24th** through our website at www.montroseclassical.org (click 'Interest Form').

Even if you've submitted a form previously, we need you to complete a **new submission** to ensure we have current data for our application.

Our classical education model offers something unique to Montrose families: the Core Knowledge curriculum that systematically builds understanding across all subjects; proven reading instruction methods that develop strong literacy skills; Singapore Math for deep mathe-

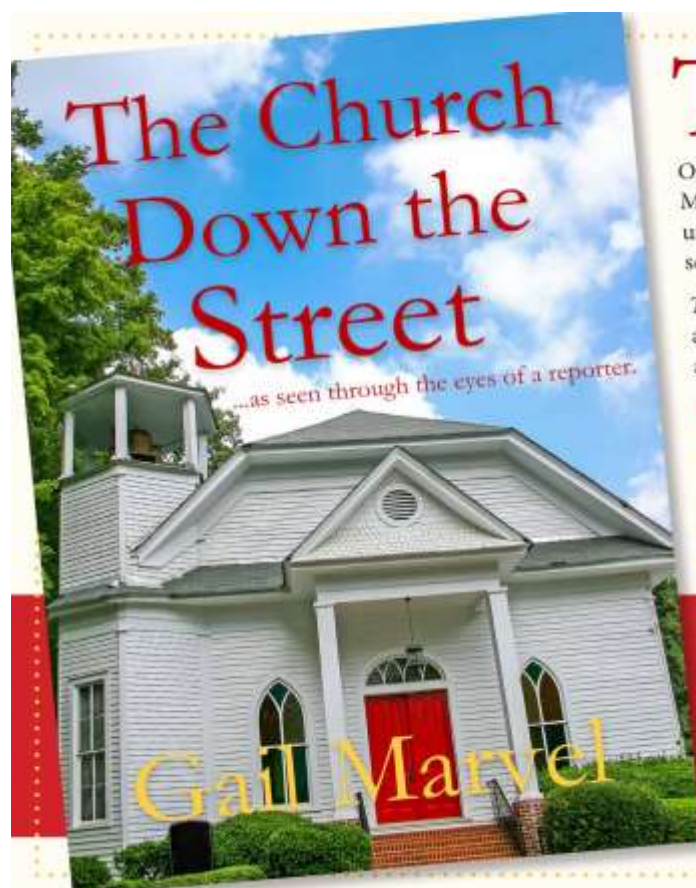
matical thinking; Latin instruction to enhance vocabulary and analytical abilities; and character development through classical virtues.

The conversations we're having with parents, teachers, and community members reflect a genuine desire for this educational option in Montrose.

We're grateful for the thoughtful feedback that has helped shape our proposal, and we're excited to see this vision become reality.

This is about creating an educational legacy that will serve Montrose families for generations to come. We invite you to be part of this important milestone. Visit www.montroseclassical.org today to learn more and **submit your Expression of Interest by March 24th**. Together, we can bring this educational option to our community.

In unity and gratitude,
The MCA Founding Board



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.

GAIL MARVEL
Montrose Author & Reporter



MONTROSE SPORTS SCOREBOARD: By Cliff Dodge From pg 1

the bottom of the first inning to set the tone for the contest. The Red Hawks scored their 16 runs on nine base hits as Chase Gleason and Ryan Pankey each had a two-base knock. Jayce England had 3 runs batted in to lead the Red Hawks in that department.

The Red Hawks stole 6 bases in the win. Porter Smith, Ryan Pankey, Garrett Wolfe and Cade Heiber pitched for the winning Red Hawks.

Highlights: The Montrose Red Hawks continued their winning ways as they defeated the Eagle Valley Devils 7-5 to push their win streak to 2 games. The Devils scored the first 3 runs of the game in the first inning. The Red Hawks scored 4 in the bottom of the second inning to take control of the contest. The Red Hawks had 5 hits in the game, the big blows to long triples by Aadin Gonzales and Cade Saunders. Gonzales also drove in 3 runs to the Red Hawks in that statistic. The Red Hawks stole 3 bases and played error-less baseball. Garrett Wolfe pitched 5 innings and allowed 3 runs.

Highlights: the Alamosa Mean Moose invaded the Montrose baseball diamond and left town with an 11-8 victory. Things stayed pretty even through three innings when the Moose broke the game wide open as they scored 7 times in the fourth inning. The Red Hawks and the Mean Moose each recorded 8 base hits. The Red Hawks had a home run from Ryan Pankey, a triple from Joey Benitez and doubles from Garrett Wolfe and Chase Gleason. Pankey and Gleason each drove in a pair of runs.

Varsity Girls' Soccer: (1-2)

-Montrose Red Hawks 3, Glenwood Springs Demons 0

-Palisade Bulldogs 2, Montrose Red Hawks 1

-Fruita-Monument 1, Montrose Red Hawks 0

Highlights: The Montrose Red Hawks girls' soccer team played host to the Demons of Glenwood Springs on Saturday at the Montrose pitch and defeated the Demons by a score of 3-0. The Red Hawks goals were scored by Junior Sadie Wareham, Freshman Jordy Dew and Senior Yuliana Almanza. The Red Hawks and the Demons played to a scoreless first half and then scored 3 times in the second stanza. Junior Anika Harris and Sophomore Angelina Alcazar each played one half of the game in goal for the Red Hawks.

Highlights: The Red Hawks hit the road for their second match, traveling to Palisade to take on the Bulldogs. The home-standing Bulldogs scored the first goal of the game in the first half to lead 1-0. The Red Hawks and the Bulldogs each added a goal in the second half to give the Bulldogs the 2-1 victory. The Red Hawks lone goal was scored by Junior Mayce Oberg. As in the previous game, Anika Harris and Angelina Alcazar shared goal-tending duties for the game.

Varsity Girls' Lacrosse (1-1)

-Montrose Red Hawks 5, Eagle Valley Devils 4

-Roaring Fork Rams 17, Montrose Red Hawks 1

Highlights: The Montrose Red Hawks girls' lacrosse team journeyed to Gypsum last Saturday and took on the Eagle Valley Devils in their first game of the young season. The Red Hawks prevailed 5-4 in the contest. Junior Kacy Stewart led all Red Hawks with a hat trick, three goals to

oversee the victory. Junior Abby Siegel, the Red Hawks goalkeeper, stopped 5 of the 9 shots she faced.

Highlights: The Montrose Red Hawks ran into a buzz saw on Tuesday as they travelled to Carbondale and took on the Roaring Fork Rams. Things got out of hand quickly as the Rams ran roughshod over the Red Hawks and put up 17 goals to cement the easy win. Junior Kacy Stewart scored the only Red Hawks goal and Senior Maggie Cline was credited with the lone Red Hawks assist.

Varsity Boys' Lacrosse (0-2)

-Grand Junction Tigers 13, Montrose Red Hawks 6

-Grand Junction Tigers 24, Montrose Red Hawks 3

Highlights: The boys lacrosse season got off to a slow start as the Grand Junction Tigers invaded the Montrose pitch and left town with a 13-6 road win. The Tigers scored in all four periods, including 5 goals in the 4th quarter to make the score 13-6. Junior Maverick Powers led the Red Hawks as he scored 3 of the 6 goals. Senior Zack Motley, Senior Eli Sauer, and Junior Elijah Womack had the other Red Hawk goals. Womack was also credited with an assist as were Senior Viet Tran and Freshman Nixon Shumway. Junior Goal-tender Patrick Alvarez was credited with 18 saves of the 31 shots he faced.

Highlights: Things went from bad to worse for the lacrosse team as they travelled to Grand Junction for a re-match with the Tigers.

The Red Hawks were unable to stay with the Tigers as they rang up 24 goals on the Red Hawks. Zack Motley, Maverick Powers, and Eli Sauer scored the only Red Hawk goals.

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

NOTHING THE LEFT CHAMPIONS MAKES AMERICA STRONGER, SAFER, MORE PROSPEROUS, OR MORE UNITED

Editor:

Democrats appear to be defined by losing positions and being out-of-touch with real people. Most Americans respond to common sense, not mad ravings. Washington state Democrats are readying a bill that would release juvenile murderers from jail early – so long as they didn't kill more than two people – and then give them free rent to live in your neighborhood. Texas Congresswoman Jasmine Crockett has become the new face of the Democrat Party. This is the person who praised Kamala Harris as our “female Moses” sent to lead us to the promised land. This week she parroted a line common with Democrats during the Biden-Harris administration: that white supremacy is the biggest threat to our nation. She falsely claimed “80% of the most extreme crime in this country are from white-supremacists.” It's much easier for Democrats to scream about “white supremacy” than bother coming up with solutions for actual problems in our communities. (Black males only make up 3% of our population, but account for 43% of all homicides. Over 90% of the black people killed in the U.S. are killed by other black people.) Oregon's Democrat governor announced that March 10th is to be celebrated as “abortion provider appreciation day.” So much for the old Dem narrative that abortion is a difficult and tragic decision that no woman wants to make. They are now celebrating death and the very “providers” playing a major role in the real pain suffered by post-abortive women.

Today's Democrat platform – what they do, not what they say – is actually pretty clear on a number of points.

They stand for concentrated power in an ever-increasing and powerful federal bureaucracy, suppression of our individual rights like free speech and gun ownership, open borders, and overregulation.

They believe in abortion through nine months.

They believe men who fantasize that they are women (but have the physical power that their male hormones have given them) have more right to women's sports and locker rooms than the girls themselves.

Nothing the left champions makes America stronger, safer, more prosperous, or

more united. Sane Americans now realize the Democrat message is not only pure hatred for anything that can be considered pro-Trump, but also hatred for anything pro-American.

The last two months have given clarity to the reasons for the insane Democrat policies and actions. Donald Trump, Elon Musk, and their DOGE teams have revealed the frightening truth about our federal bureaucracies. The American people are taxed relentlessly. Leftists create NGOs (Non-Government Agencies.) Those NGOs are funded with billions of dollars of taxpayer money through USAID and other federal agencies. Those NGOs then use those billions as a slush fund for extreme leftist projects throughout the world with no accountability and with no regard for the interests of the United States. The leftists in the NGO do no work, but the NGO pays them big salaries. Those leftists then donate big bucks back to the Democrat Party. So, everybody is happy – except the taxpayer of course. The politician gets richer on taxpayer money. The Democrat Party gets its coffers filled with taxpayer money. The woke “scientist” keeps studying transgender rats in his university lab on the taxpayer dime. So, it's not surprising that all those people are freaking out over Trump's efforts to eliminate government corruption and the outright theft of taxpayer dollars.

Meanwhile, Democrats show their anti-American colors by rallying support for a Hamas terrorist supporter who just had his green card yanked by ICE on the campus of Columbia University. Hamas shot up a music festival full of dancing kids, burned people alive in their homes, tortured and starved many of their civilian hostages, and murdered babies and their mother in cold blood, along with a lot of other innocent civilians. Well-funded and organized terrorist supporters occupied portions of the campus, accosted Jewish students and prevented them from going to class, destroyed property, and took janitors hostage. The far-left Columbia staff supported the anti-Semitic attacks and the university administration did nothing. The Biden administration straddled the fence and did nothing, not wanting to offend the far-left activists. Laughably, Democrats are fighting

for a pro-Hamas foreigner who has made life hell for Jews on campus. It is not a free speech issue. Support terrorists, you get your visa yanked. Period. Coming to this country is a privilege, not a right. In this case the victims of the hatred are Jews, so Democrats yawn and protest Trump's efforts to protect them from terrorist agitating. Jewish people might want to ask themselves: If white racists were organizing on a college campus wearing hoods to hide their identity and threatening black students with genocide, just how long would it take Democrat politicians to demand they be thrown in jail? The Dem narrative: “We support and love our Jewish citizens.” The Dem action: “Eh. Maybe not so much if it entails offending one of our coalitions of 'victim groups'.” One might also ask why our government provides a private university like Columbia, which has a \$15 billion endowment, with hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars? I am sure the fact those woke universities and their Marxist professors are a major base of support for the Dem's destructive agenda has nothing to do with it, right?

Our Colorado Democrats are doing their best to keep up with the national party's insanity. Colorado is facing a \$1.2 billion budget shortfall this year and is being forced to look at making cuts. It will be interesting to see what programs the Dem controlled legislature and Polis cut. The Delta community was totally shocked to learn of discussions about possibly shutting down the Delta Correctional Facility, which would have been a death blow to Delta County's economy. It appears that is not going to happen, but they are having to reduce spending and needed staffing. One thing the Dem legislators have made clear is that they are not willing to sacrifice the \$10 million they set aside to redecorate their personal offices on the Capitol grounds – \$4 million for their new furniture and \$6 million for office renovations. The narrative: “We support our police and prison guards.” The action: “Yes, but only if that doesn't inconvenience our Dem politicians, who are currently working on multiple bills to abolish your 2nd Amendment right to defend yourselves.” Ironic, but not funny. Definite hypocrisy.

Ed Henrie, Montrose

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The primary bedroom showcasing a vaulted ceiling and five piece en-suite bath with granite counter tops, tile finishes, private water closet and a generous walk-in closet. The guest hallway has an additional double door storage closet and 2 well sized bedrooms along with another full bath. The tandem 3 car garage has 578 sq ft of space and is perfect for your vehicles, recreational toys or even as a workshop. With this home conveniently located near the community's park and not far from downtown it's just waiting for your arrival.



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

YOUTH CITY COUNCIL TO HOST NON-PROFIT SHOWCASE MARCH 24

MONTROSE— The City of Montrose Youth City Council will be hosting an open house showcasing the Montrose area's non-profit organizations and the vital public service they provide to the community during the Nonprofit Showcase and Involvement Fair set for Monday, March 24, from 4 to 7:30 p.m. at the Montrose Pavilion.

Local non-profit organizations provide critical services throughout the Montrose community each and every day. To showcase this work and give residents an opportunity to engage with these organizations, the City of Montrose Youth City

Council came up with the idea to host an expo.

So far the Youth City Council has booked over 30 local non-profits to participate in the fair with the goal of having 40 local organizations represented. The expo is a great opportunity for residents wishing to volunteer their support for various organizations and their services to the Montrose community.

Any local non-profits who wish to participate in the expo are encouraged to reach out to Youth City Council Mayor Sydney Bell at sbell@montroseyouthcouncil.org for more details.

The Montrose Youth City Council was established by the Montrose City Council to encourage greater youth participation in the city's government. It is charged with actively providing thoughtful recommendations to the City Council on issues concerning youth and assisting city staff in considering youth perspectives in its planning efforts.

Members are selected near the beginning of each school year from a pool of applicants.




For information about the City of Montrose visit CityofMontrose.org.

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Excited yet?

Rubber stamping the \$55,000,000 (that's **\$55 MILLION**) bond float by City Council March 4th, we are off to the races with collateralized debt on top of 2017 and 2020 debt funded by us, our children, and now our grandchildren.

Just eight years ago, the City of Montrose long term debt = **ZERO**.

We will owe \$100,000,000 (that's **\$100 MILLION**), requiring \$200,000,000 (that's **\$200 MILLION**) in payments of principal and interest until the summer of 2055. **2055!**

How about the coming Locust housing project? • How about Project 7? • And how about the school project?

And how about those great "partnerships" with private investors who sell out and walk away with the goods in money buckets much larger than wheelbarrows? All funded by the taxpayers. Who is your sugar daddy?

The debt coming to us by our policy makers will be more staggering in just a few short years. Should the council members' comment be noted? "What, me worry?" "I'll be long gone in twenty years."

Young men and women, those too busy raising families and feeding them for 20% greater cost than a short time ago, take notice. **Raise your hand**, and step up now. You have an army of support behind you, so jump in to define your future, and the future of **ALL** Montrose families.

Votes matter. Candidates matter. Families matter. **Will you choose to matter?**

Montrose Citizens D.O.G.E. info@MontroseDOGE.org

COLORADO SUNSHINE - ENJOYING YOUR LOCAL PARKS



The Wave at Riverbottom Park always has good flows to challenge surfers due to year-round dam releases. Photo courtesy FOYAN.



A bouldering rock at a local park in Delta County is a very popular attraction. Photo courtesy FOYAN.

by David Padilla, Friends of Youth and Nature, and Partners Youth Mentoring REGIONAL- No matter what the weather brings, playing outside is good for kids in so many ways. There is much scientific evidence that playing outside improves our health and general wellbeing, and children of all ages love it. In Colorado, we really don't need to travel far to enjoy nature. We are usually only a few minutes' drive from a lake or local park. These parks are truly our Colorado Sunshine, providing the golden opportunity to get outside with our families!

Every town, no matter how small, has a local park that provides engaging trails, sports fields, and more. Variety is the spice of PLAY! Consider rotating to a different park every so often. Each park offers something different or unique such as forts, jungle gyms or slides, zip lines, fishing piers, story walks, pollinator gardens, nature trails to explore, bouldering rocks, or small creeks or fountains to wade in. Sometimes it is worth it to drive a little further to experience new features or different landscapes. Consider taking a milk crate full of toy dump trucks tractors, road graders, cars, and other toys and find a sandy area by a creek to play. After checking out different parks, your kids may then have a favorite that you can treat them too more often! Some gems that you might want to visit are Canyon

View, Eagle Rim, and Los Colonias parks in Grand Junction; Confluence Lake, Hotchkiss Fairgrounds, or Paonia River Park in Delta County; Olathe Community Park; Cerise or Riverbottom Park in Montrose; and Dennis Weaver Memorial Park, Fellin Park, and Cascade Falls Park in Ouray County.

Outdoor activities can include a picnic with family favorites such as Carne Asada seasoned with lime and salt eaten with homemade tortillas, hotdogs for the kids, and finger goods such as chips and vegetable trays. Having plenty of lemonade, iced tea, or Gatorade is important to stay hydrated in our dry climate. Just toss down a blanket on the soft grass, enjoy the breeze, the sound of the birds, and the fresh air. A good way to keep the older teenagers engaged outdoors is having a good game of kickball and having them pick their own teams, turn on some music, and let them enjoy. Other popular outdoor activities are fishing, sitting by the lake listening to the earth, listening to nature without talking, and catching some Colorado sunshine.

No matter what you're into, take some time with your kiddos and enjoy the outdoors at one of our many local parks. Unstructured physical activity is so important especially these days with so many over scheduled youth. It improves the physical and mental health of your child, encour-

ages creative play, bonding with peers and team building. It reduces the likelihood of obesity and weight-related health concerns, which are issues for families today. Most importantly, parks allow us to spend time with our families- all of them, our grandparents, uncles and aunts, baby cousins and friends- there is something for everyone at our local parks.

Get outside and build more family memories today by visiting your local park!

Friends of Youth and Nature is a non-profit that promotes opportunities for youth and families to get outside, experience outdoor activities, and explore nature. Follow our outdoor news blog and receive monthly tips on connecting your children to nature. Learn more, visit: www.friendsofyouthandnature.org

Partners of Delta, Montrose and Ouray is a nonprofit organization dedicated to building one-to-one mentoring partnerships between young people and responsible, caring adults. Youth with a mentor in the Partners programs benefit from increased self-esteem, academic improvements, pro-socio bonding. Having a mentor opens a world of opportunities for a youth, shaping a successful future one experience at a time. Partners serves youth ages 6 -17 that could benefit from a positive adult role model. Interested? Learn more at www.partners-west.org

COLORADO SUNSHINE ENJOYING YOUR LOCAL PARKS-From previous pg

COUNTY AND CITY PARKS NEAR YOU!

Mesa County:

The City of Grand Junction Parks and Recreation Department has a wonderful resource listing all 36 parks alphabetically in the Grand Junction area (www.gjcity.org/residents/parks-recreation/parks/). Under ‘Parks’ click on each park name and it will give you specifics about the size of the park and amenities available.

Fruita has a similar website (www.fruita.org/parksrec/parksites) that describes each of its 12 parks including a bike park with skill-building bike pump tracks.

On the east side of the Grand Valley, several five-star parks are available in Palisade. Enjoy walking or riding bicycles under the trees along the paved path at Riverbend Park, having a picnic near the play equipment at Veteran’s Memorial park, or romping in the green space at the Palisade Community Center park. Addresses can be found by googling Parks and Recs near Palisade, CO.

Montrose County:

The City of Montrose website (www.cityofmontrose.org/266/Parks-Trails-Sports-Facilities) lists 29 fabulous parks, open spaces, concrete and single-track trails, and a water sports park. By clicking on the ‘interactive map’ and ‘view larger map’ you can see each park with amenities.

Six parks in and near the town of Olathe are listed on their website (www.townofolathe.org/town-of-olathe-parks.html). A variety of facilities are available from Olathe Community Park at the south end of town to the Onion Park on Olathe’s north side. The Olathe Town Park on 5th street has a spectacular new playground purchased through a Colorado Health Foundation grant.

Delta County

The City of Delta has 11 parks on their interactive map (<https://cityofdeltanet.net/parksites>). Clicking on the name of the park, either on the map or on the list provided, takes you to a detailed description of each fabulous park,

The North Fork area includes a listing of 18 parks near the towns of Crawford, Hotchkiss, and Paonia (www.northforkrecreation.com/parks.html). These descriptions include the Black Canyon National Monument and Crawford State Park, as well as the Delta County Fairgrounds adjacent to the Doctor Maloney Nature Park and its new disc golf course. Crossroads Park next to the North Fork Pool on Bulldog Street, has two new bike skill-building pump tracks, as well as single-track trails maintained by the North Fork chapter of the Colorado Mountain Bike Association (COPMOBA).

The Surface Creek area, including Orchard City (Cory, Austin, and Eckert) and Cedaredge, have some beautiful parks and recreation facilities. Information can be found on the internet about these facilities: Orchard City Town Park (www.orchardcityco.org/36/Orchard-City-Town-Park), Cedaredge Town Park (350-398 SW 2nd Ave, Cedaredge, CO 81413), and the Surface Creek Trail in Cedaredge (www.hikingproject.com/trail/7058563/surface-creek-trail).

Ouray County has 10 parks including an ice rink, sledding park, Cascade Falls Park and the Uncompahgre River Trail. Find out the locations and amenities of each one by visiting City of Ouray parks.



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SUN April 27@ 1pm Youth Audition (7-13yo) ONLY @ Magic Circle

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

MONTROSE COUNTY TREASURER ROSEMARY MURPHY AND COMMISSIONER SUE HANSEN RECOGNIZED AT WOMEN OF DISTINCTION EVENT

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE— Montrose County proudly celebrated the achievements and leadership of two outstanding women at the annual Women of Distinction event, held on March 7 by event host Our Town Matters. The event, which highlights remarkable women leaders who have made significant contributions to their communities, recognized Montrose County Treasurer Rosemary Murphy and County Commissioner Sue Hansen for their unwavering dedication, leadership, and public service.

Rosemary Murphy, who is currently in her fifth term as Montrose County Treasurer, was recognized for her exceptional service in managing the county's finances with transparency and integrity. The award was presented to Murphy by Montrose County Clerk and Recorder Tressa Guynes in recognition of her dedicated leadership. Through her work in the Treasurer's Office, Murphy has ensured efficient operations and takes immense pride in serving the citizens of Montrose County.

Sue Hansen, in her seventh year as Montrose County Commissioner, was recognized for her visionary work in county government and named Woman of the Year, which was voted on by all current Women of Distinction nominees as well as Women of Distinction alumni.

"We are thrilled to celebrate the incredible achievements of these outstanding women," said Frank Rodriguez, County Manager. "Their leadership and unwavering commitment serve as an inspiration to us all, not only as public servants but as true pillars of strength within our community. The responsibility to guide and uplift a community is profound, and we are incredibly fortunate to have Rosemary and Sue as community leaders."

Both women, through their exceptional leadership, embody the spirit of the Women of Distinction award. They have paved the way for future generations of women to step into roles of leadership within the Montrose community and beyond.



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**April 25-27th, 2025
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Are you experiencing a loss? A person, a pet, a job, a relationship, or an identity due to a life change or injury?

Join us for a weekend in the Switzerland of America, Ouray, Colorado, to gain a new lens on love & loss.

With others by your side, process your individualized grief through photography, symbolism, story sharing, and cognitive reframing. Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing Therapy (EMDR) will be interwoven by trained mental health professionals. By the end of the weekend, expect to carry your grief and loved one in an entirely new way.

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Lindsey Ermatinger, LPC and
Rhonda Follman, Life & Leadership Coach

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: COMMENTARY

HITTING THE GROUND RUNNING—GETTING RIGHT TO WORK FOR MONTROSE COUNTY

By Sean M. Pond, Montrose County Commissioner, District 3

If you believe in hard work over handouts, freedom over red tape, and self-reliance over government dependence, then you're right where you belong—because that's the future I'm fighting for. Montrose County belongs to the people, not bureaucrats, and I intend to keep it that way.

From the moment I was appointed Montrose County Commissioner for District 3 on February 15th, I knew there was no time to waste. On that same day, I took my official oath of office, and by the 19th, I was already making my first mark—submitting a proposed resolution opposing the Dolores National Conservation Area, which was approved by a two-to-one vote. This was a decisive stand against federal overreach and unnecessary land restrictions, ensuring our public lands remain accessible.

That same week, I was in Denver at Colorado Counties, Inc. (CCI) steering committees, weighing in on critical legislation affecting land use, water rights, and rural economies. Our voice—rural Colorado's voice—must be heard, and I was there to make sure it was. The following week, I traveled to Washington, D.C., to participate in the National Association of Counties (NACo) steering committees, where I was actively involved in guiding federal legislation that directly impacts Western Colorado and rural values. Engaging with county leaders from across the country, I worked to ensure that the issues affecting Montrose County—such as public land access, infrastructure funding, and economic growth—are represented and prioritized at the national level. These discussions reinforced my belief that local government must take an active role in shaping policies that impact rural America.

While in Washington, D.C., I traveled to our nation's Capitol building, where I was graciously welcomed for meetings with Congresswoman Lauren Boebert and Congressman Jeff Hurd. We discussed critical issues facing rural Western Colorado, including the opportunities from this Energy First administration, as well as the pressing need for adequate staffing in wildfire mitigation and wildland firefighting resources. With our current drought and an above-average dry winter, it is essential that we are prepared for what lies ahead. Both representatives were engaged, receptive, and fully aware of the unique challenges we face in Western Colora-

do. These discussions were productive and encouraging, and I look forward to continuing to work alongside our federal representatives to ensure Montrose County is always heard in Washington.

Upon returning home, I set up my office at the Montrose County Sheriff's Office in the old Nucla-Naturita Elementary School. While meeting with West End residents, I learned of challenges that have been ignored for over two decades, and I plan to bring them to the forefront. I toured the Coroner's Office, Sheriff's Office, and Social Services to ensure these essential services are meeting the needs of our rural communities.

On Saturday morning, I attended the Paradox Community Pancake Breakfast, shaking hands and listening to the concerns of the most Western residents of Montrose County. The following Friday, I was at Family Link in the West End, unloading pallets of food and meeting residents who rely on its much-needed services. I spent the rest of the day traveling through cafes, post offices, and businesses, introducing myself to locals—letting them know that for the first time in 21 years, they have true representation and a voice at the table.

Then, on Saturday, March 15th—exactly 28 days from the day I took my official oath of office—I attended the Patriotic Flag Rally in Montrose, where I was a guest speaker. It was an honor to stand among passionate individuals and share my message to our rural Western Colorado values.

A Moment of Great Divide in Montrose County

When I stepped into this role, I knew there would be challenges—what I wasn't prepared for was the level of political division that has been festering within Montrose County. What should have been a productive and professional Monday working session quickly turned into an embarrassing public display of partisanship.

One of my fellow commissioners inappropriately and unfairly targeted us by insinuating racist remarks, igniting a baseless attack that never should have happened. This insinuation was a factless and unfounded accusation—one that never existed, nor needed to be made. Yet, it was irresponsibly introduced into the discussion, fueling division, misinformation, and unnecessary controversy.

The Montrose City Manager then ran with this false narrative, publishing a blog post directly targeting me with misleading accusa-

tions. Among the most outrageous claims was the accusation that we told the Montrose County Manager that he was “not American enough to serve.” What a disgusting, ridiculous lie—a complete fabrication designed to sow division and incite outrage. This reckless move spread misinformation and further inflamed the situation, turning an already divisive moment into an unnecessary public spectacle. The local media outlet, the Montrose Daily Press, irresponsibly ran with the narrative without verifying the facts.

And then came Wednesday morning. As I walked into our Board of County Commissioners meeting, I quickly realized I had been set up. The room was packed with over 60 people, a coordinated effort by those who orchestrated the misinformation campaign against me. Members of our own staff mysteriously showed up early to set up chairs, all while claiming they had no idea a crowd was coming. I was bewildered.

For three hours, I was forced to sit there and endure an onslaught of accusations, demands, and finger-pointing—all centered around a fabricated claim that I planned to terminate our County Manager and Public Health Director. The strangest part? None of it was on the agenda. None of it was ever discussed. I had absolutely no knowledge of what they were even talking about, nor did I see a single piece of evidence supporting any of their claims.

Whoever orchestrated that meeting, whoever spread that misinformation, and whoever weaponized our own staff to push a false narrative should be ashamed of themselves. That was an embarrassing public display of political division, and I will not be part of it—now or ever.

Despite this unfortunate moment, I remain committed to working for all citizens of Montrose County—regardless of political affiliation—to serve the needs of our community with integrity and fairness.

The First 30 Days—And the Road Ahead

That was just my first 30 days as a Montrose County Commissioner, and I am more energized than ever. This is just the beginning. I am committed to fighting for liberty, preserving our Western way of life, and ensuring that the Constitution remains the foundation of our government. Together, we will protect our land, our rights, and our freedoms for future generations of Montrose County.

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

DENNIS ANDERSON'S DISCONNECT FROM REALITY

Dear Editor;

In his coverage of the March 10, 2025, Montrose County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) Work Session—thinly disguised as an Op-Ed—Dennis Anderson, Editor of the *Montrose Press*, reveals a troubling detachment from reality. What should be an objective recounting of events devolves into a transparent display of personal bias. Mr. Anderson has repeatedly wielded his editorial platform to berate the majority of Montrose County residents, attempting—unsuccessfully—to convince them that the newly elected County Commissioners, particularly Scott Mijares, are unfit to lead. His vendetta against Commissioner Mijares, evident since Mijares' election, starkly contrasts with his apparent preference for Sue Hansen, a Republican In Name Only (RINO) whose tenure as BOCC Chair was recently—and justifiably—terminated.

Selective Outrage and the Myth of Sexism

The public outcry over Hansen's removal as Chair came primarily from Democrat Party officials, who flooded the *Montrose Mirror* and *Montrose Press* with Op-Eds decrying the decision. Cloaking their objections in accusations of sexism, they found a willing ally in Mr. Anderson, who eagerly amplified this narrative. Yet this selective indignation conveniently ignores the broader context: the changes at the BOCC were both warranted and long overdue. Scott Mijares, elected with a mandate reflected in a vote total more than double Sue Hansen's in her last election, is fulfilling the role of a decisive leader—taking charge and steering Montrose County in a direction aligned with the electorate's will. Elections have consequences, and Montrose County voters made their preference crystal clear.

Leadership 101: The Right to Restructure

As the group Montrose Citizens D.O.G.E. aptly stated in the March 10, 2025, edition of the *Montrose Mirror*: "When a new CEO, CFO, VP, Commissioner, or Councilor takes charge, it is imperative that they evaluate their organization from top to bottom." This is a fundamental principle of leadership—assessing operations, making adjustments, and charting a new course where necessary. One wonders if Mr. Anderson applied this same scrutiny when he became Editor of the *Montrose Press*. Did he adapt to his role? Did he reshape the staff or diverge from his predecessor's decisions? If so, he should recognize Commissioner Mijares' prerogative to do the same. If not, his criticism may reflect a lack of self-awareness rather than a reasoned critique.

Disdain for Democracy

Most striking is Mr. Anderson's apparent contempt for the democratic will of Montrose County's constituents, who overwhelmingly supported Scott Mijares in the last election. His relentless attacks on the new Commissioners suggest he believes his editorial perch grants him authority to override the electorate's choices—a notion as arrogant as it is misguided. Someone should remind Mr. Anderson that the citizens of Montrose County—not the *Montrose Press*—hold the power to select their leaders. They chose Scott Mijares, not Dennis Anderson, to serve on the BOCC.

Smearing the New Guard

Beyond his fixation on Commissioner Mijares, Mr. Anderson also targets the BOCC's newest appointee, selected to replace the late Rick Dunlap, who passed away unexpectedly, Commissioner Sean Pond. Mr. Anderson portrays both new Commissioners as inept, while others

might argue they are simply prudent, governing with care and attention to detail. For instance, he takes issue with constituents' questioning of the newly hired Director of Public Health, Mr. Ahmed, and consequently the hiring decision by the County Manager Frank Rodriguez over concerns about Ahmed's resume—including 24 years with the World Health Organization (WHO), an organization many in Montrose County view as misaligned with local values—are dismissed by Anderson as trivial. These concerns are amplified by President Trump's recent decision to withdraw the U.S. from the WHO. Further scrutiny reveals that Ahmed, while not required to be a U.S. citizen or Colorado resident for the role, holds neither status, nor does he possess a medical license. His Bachelor of Medicine from Bangladesh equates to roughly half the education required for a U.S. medical degree. These are legitimate issues that Commissioner Mijares and many Montrose County citizens rightly share. Yet Mr. Anderson, with his smug and pompous tone, brushes them aside as if the public's voice is beneath his consideration.

Journalism or Crusade?

The role of a journalist is to inform, not to dictate. By substituting objective reporting with a personal crusade against duly elected officials, Mr. Anderson undermines the trust his publication should strive to uphold. Montrose County deserves better than an editor who prioritizes grudges over the public's voice. It's time for Mr. Anderson to step back, reflect on the mandate delivered by the voters, and reconsider whether his platform is a tool for enlightenment or merely a megaphone for his own discontent.

**Michael J Badagliacco, "MJB",
Citizen, Montrose, CO**



REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

GMUG NATIONAL FORESTS ANNOUNCE SPRING ROAD CLOSURES

Special to the Mirror

DELTA-The Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison (GMUG) National Forests' have closed or are beginning to close gates on roads with annual springtime road closures. Depending on the location, the closures are necessary to ensure public safety, protect the roads from resource damage, reduce the need for additional maintenance and protect wildlife.

Many forest roads are closed this time of year due to muddy spring conditions and generally prohibit motorized public access until roads dry out. In some locations, off-highway vehicles are allowed. Please use the Motor Vehicle Use Maps (MVUM) referred to below to determine the type of access allowed or temporarily restricted. As a reminder, when trails and roads are muddy or soft, please STAY OFF. Anytime visible ruts are being formed, resource damage can be occurring. Ruts create channels where water flows, causing fine sediments to wash off the road and into aquatic habitat. Ruted roads can also significantly increase maintenance costs and can pose a safety hazard.

Information on which roads are closed and the season of closure can, in most instances, be found on the MVUM located at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/gmug/home/?cid=stelprdb5191814>. Check the relevant Ranger District map before you head out to avoid surprises.

There are some additional closures to those shown on Motor Vehicle Use Maps:

The Almont Triangle on the Gunnison Ranger District is closed to all public uses/human entry Dec. 1–April 30 to protect critical winter habitat for big game. More information on this closure is available at: https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd923224.pdf. In this same area, National Forest System Road (NFSR) #810 and its spurs open May 16 as shown in the Motor Vehicle Use Map for Gunnison Ranger District.

The portion of NFSR #869–Imogene Pass on the Norwood Ranger District, between Telluride and the Tomboy Mine Site, will be closed until a critical retaining wall is repaired. The route is expected to be open to hikers/bikers except during construction. A Forest Closure Order with corresponding maps will be issued later this spring. That Closure Order will be published on the Forest website when it is available. NFSR #536–Spring Creek road on the Ouray Ranger District is closed at mile point 0.053. NFSR #536 starts at NFSR #510–Dave Wood road near the Forest Boundary. It is closed to protect the road from resource damage and will re-open when conditions improve.

NFSR #713–Crystal road on the Paonia Ranger District will be closed from Nov. 25 to April 30 to ensure public safety during winter logging. This closure is expected to continue each winter for approximately five years.

Questions about roads should be directed to the appropriate Ranger District office:

- Grand Valley Ranger District–970-242-8211
- Gunnison Ranger District–970-641-0471
- Norwood Ranger District–970-327-4261
- Ouray Ranger District–970-240-5300
- Paonia Ranger District–970-527-4131



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THE ESSENCE OF STYLE



By *Gia Pirelli*. Courtesy photo

Go look at your closet. Right now. Throw open the doors and take a look at what's in there. What does it say? Anything with a drawstring waist or in sizes that describe a fast food item should be discounted. (Or burned.) Those things belong in a plastic bin under the bed, preferably where no one can see them. Not even you. Aside from the sad assortment of ironic "athleisure," what else have you got? Is it a random homage to your thriftiness and the clearance rack at Target? Or is it a bold reflection of your romantic dreams and professional goals? Do you shop for pleasure or for sensibility? Do you lean toward square lines in modern black, white and grey? Or do you tend toward the safety of beige with stacks of sensible shoes? Are you drawn to whimsical colors and delicate fabrics that gracefully sway as you walk? You can be Parisian without being French, you know. You just need the right shoes.

What you wear says a lot about you be-

fore you even speak. Fashion is a language all its own. It whispers to the world (or, in some cases screams) how you feel about yourself and your place in the universe. It silently communicates with those around you. It can be a way of celebrating or denigrating yourself. It can be an act of defiance or an act of joy. Do you wear Cartier to clean the cat box? That's the spirit! Or do you wear sweatpants to the store? If so, do you remember the actual moment you lost control of your life? The late Karl Lagerfeld declared, "Sweatpants are a sign of defeat."

So how do you dress yourself? And why? Have you ever really thought about it? Do you raise the white flag and dress in defeat every day? Do you dress purely for comfort and convenience or do you carefully select things out of visual, sensual and aesthetic pleasure? Getting dressed every morning gives us the wonderful opportunity to express and invent ourselves. What is it you want to say? What is the story you're telling the people around you? Are you feeling feisty and a little rebellious? Shimmy into something silk and sexy with some 5-inch Jimmy Choos. Are you hopeful and headed to a job interview that may determine the next chapter of your life? Try the pearl grey Calvin Klein, it says, 'I am dependable and emotionally stable. I have confidence and poise. I've never been to prison.' Or are you going on a date where you're hoping for that last first kiss? For all that is holy do NOT wear flip flops or a "moisture wicking" fabric. Get a hold of yourself! Dress like you care, about yourself and about the person you're with. Regardless of gender, always go for classic. Trend is the last stop on the road to tacky. If you're a man, choose something that actually fits you and says you're strong, confident and just a little dangerous. Maybe some well-cut jeans paired with a button-down in a sexy, touchable fabric. Your shoes should not be something you'd

wear for a 5k or to water the lawn. (Note: Crocs are large semi aquatic reptiles found in Australia, Africa and Asia. They are not an acceptable shoe choice. Ever.) Top it off with a hint of cologne. Don't marinate in it, just a single spritz. If you're a woman, choose something tight enough to show you're female and loose enough to show you're a lady. Pair it with devastating shoes that emphasize the curve of your calves, the slope of your low back and add a tantalizing tilt to the pelvis. Marilyn Monroe once said, "Give a girl the right shoes and she can conquer the world."

Your fashion choices reflect your mood, your confidence and a certain sensuality. It is a snapshot of what appeals to you, either in that moment or in general. Fashion is merely collections of shape, color, fabric, cut, all determined by someone else's imagination. Style is how you put it all together. Style reflects your own imagination. Fashion comes and goes but style is eternal. It is your essence. Style can still be trashy, which is ok. Think Miley Cyrus. She has a definite "style" but she is trashy as all get-out. But it works for her. Elegance, however, this is the keynote of style. Elegance comes from within. It is where grace and poise meet sophistication and class. It is the difference between making a cheap dress look expensive or making an expensive dress look cheap. Elegance is not something that can be bought, nor taught. It is an elusive quality that simply is. And you either have it or you don't. According to Karl Lagerfeld, "Elegance is a physical quality. If a woman doesn't have it naked, she'll never have it clothed."

An essential, and often-overlooked component of both fashion and style is the accessory. The right accessory subtly enhances style and elegance. It can shift the same dress from sexy to demure or from sophisticated to tacky. The wrong accessory is a vulgar and belching faux pas. It

Continued next pg

THE ESSENCE OF STYLE From previous pg

just goes from bad to worse. Accessories are jewelry, shoes, bags, scarves and in rare cases, hats. I have shoes that I would literally run into a burning building to save. Some things are worth third-degree burns. One great accessory designer, in my opinion, is Michael Kors, who says, "Accessories are the exclamation point of a woman's outfit." So true. Pair a \$20 dress with Giuseppe Zanotti heels and clutch and it still looks like a million bucks. Conversely, the wrong accessory can be a disastrous complement to an already awful ensemble. For example, at dinner the other evening, I'm sipping a lovely Cabernet and notice a woman wearing a tragic hat that looked like something from *Gorillas in the Mist*. Perhaps she was an anthropologist. We'll never know. But she was wearing a rainbow striped poet's blouse, reminiscent of a Mexican serape, and khaki pants that, er, emphasized her gender and, if I recall, some sort of water shoe. Collectively it was a train wreck but individually I bet those items were actually high quality and very expensive. That's where style and elegance come in.

Now more than ever, in a culture dominated by impersonal Amazon shopping and social media echo chambers, we are losing our connection to beauty as well as

our connection to each other. It's sad. Judging by the number of women who wear Yoga pants, yet never set foot in a yoga studio, or men who wear high performance running shoes but likely get winded by simply tying them, pride and pleasure have lost the battle to apathy and comfort. I have a theory that "athleisure" is directly proportional to involuntary celibacy. Style and confidence are sexy. Honestly if you wear Bermuda shorts and a Ban-Lon shirt the tide might not even take you out.

It can be easily argued that clothing is superficial and unimportant. Or that it's a shield to hide our insecurities and doubts. I suppose that's true. But it's also true that choosing the right clothing and accessories makes a person more confident, creates connections with people or maybe elicits a smile. I once had an old man follow me around the grocery store, trying to summon the courage to talk to me. When he finally approached, he shyly asked about my perfume. He said he wanted to buy it for his wife of 40 years. The scent made him feel something. It triggered an emotional response and maybe some dormant romance in his soul. Or recently I was meeting a girlfriend for lunch. I was late, of course, and

breezed past a table of two women dressed in brown, beige, taupe and pretty much every conceivable shade of sadness when one commented on how lovely I looked. I was wearing a red dress that draped me like a Grecian Goddess, silver bangle bracelets, shimmering with rubies and garnets that chimed with my every step and 5-inch MK wedges worthy of a runway in Milan. Years of misery and bitterness were etched into this woman's sad little face, yet she smiled at me, a wistful sparkle in her eye that I couldn't quite identify, and she told me I brightened her day. What was she thinking in that moment? Was she remembering a time long past? A time when she wore red and took risks and had dreams? A sunset stroll in Hawaii, a cruise along the Seine? Maybe. I bet she went out and bought a red dress that very afternoon. I'd like to think so.

Ralph Lauren says, "I don't design clothes. I design dreams." What a powerful idea. We dress for who we are, but sometimes, just maybe, we get to dress for who we want to be.

Gia Pirelli is a successful businesswoman and jewelry designer. Read more about her here. <https://giovannadesigns.myshopify.com>

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CITIZENS SHOW UP, SPEAK OUT AT BOCC MEETING OF MARCH 12 From pg 1

go along to get along, and to represent the citizens of Montrose..." Mijares said that two days prior there was a BOCC work session, which included a discussion on the recently hired public health director.

"...yes, it was controversial, yes it was passionate, but it was an open and honest exchange with testimony for and against the new hire...the mood changed when one commissioner accused the other two of being racist," Mijares said, saying he responded in a way of which he was not proud, asking the County Manager whether "he was a sexist" for not hiring a female. Mijares apologized to County Manager Frank Rodriguez for the comments directed at him and expressed hope that the relationship between commissioners and staff would be able to address issues with "thoughtful purpose."

"...This room is no place for that kind of discussion...we're much stronger when we work together, and I hope we can get to that point."

Next to speak was Les Williams. "...Thank you all for coming today to hear us say thank you," Williams said. "...I am the president of the non-profit that is building the Veterans Memorial. We've worked on this thing for two years. We have a lot of people who want to help, and a lot of people who do help. I am here to thank those who have helped, in specific Sue Hansen, Emily (Sanchez) and Frank (Rodriguez)...without this part of the team we could not have proceeded. We wanted to say on behalf of this board, thank you very much. Frank has come out of the desert, not on vacation but as a veteran. He has dealt with many things that he'll never want to talk about and you may not want to hear about...all three of these people have helped us immensely in getting this thing built...their character shines..."

Next to speak was Bobbie Kuns. Serving on the BOCC should be an honor and a humbling responsibility, she said. "As commissioners you represent the entire Montrose County community not just personal interests. Unfortunately, the BOCC has become a stage for political

vendettas rather than effective leadership," Kuns said. "From the start two newly-elected commissioners removed the experienced female commissioner from her role as chair and appointed a new member in her place.

"Now there appears to be an effort to remove both the county manager and the newly-appointed director of public health..."

Kuns said that all three commissioners had voted to approve the hiring of the new director of public health. She urged the BOCC to uphold the contracts of the county manager and director of public health. "Please give these professionals the opportunity to prove themselves. The BOCC should be about leadership and service, not personal vendettas..."

Next to address the BOCC was Republican Party Chairman Monty George. "...we have this kind of division right now going on in this county," George said. "What I want to remind people of is that 86 percent of this country geographically voted for Donald Trump... we're in a historically red county, we're conservative here, it's a farm community...all these attacks that are happening on people just don't seem right...there's a small core of people in this county that are causing a lot of division within us...let's work together...we have to work as a group, as a team to make it happen...we need to really set that aside and look for the greater good..."

Next, Jim Anderson spoke. "Having been involved in Montrose County politics for 30 years, there's a procedure used called an election, and there's another procedure used when you have an unfortunate situation that may call for vacancies. In both cases the people using the proper procedures have spoken. Therefore, we have the board that we have today."

Anderson said he has disagreed with the BOCC many times over the years. "...The one thing that I and others haven't done is...to try to go out and make enemies or do personal attacks on these individuals beyond the normal political processes..."

Anderson said that there is a new board in place, and that Commissioner Mijares,

as a duly elected commissioner in waiting, had asked to be involved and to have his comments heard. "From what I can tell, what I can see, is he was totally shut down and maligned...and now we have the appointment of new commissioner, Commissioner Pond, through the appointment process...and ever since he's been appointed, those who didn't like it have been very vocal."

Anderson said that the county's two direct hires, the County Manager and the County Attorney, are not "Islands upon themselves—they do in fact work for the commissioners...they do have the right to replace them... I hope you can respect that...the great thing is the county commissioners work for us...there's more than one voice in this situation, I hope you can respect the process..."

Ken Dolezal spoke next. He said that he is a Vietnam combat veteran and practiced law in Iowa for 30+ years. Dolezal said that he watched the BOCC's Monday work session by video. "...I would say that what you, Mr. Mijares made at Monday's meeting were the most racially biased comments that I've heard from anyone. I think your County Attorney should give you some legal advice and tell you to keep it cool. You're going to cost this county several thousands and possibly millions of dollars if you continue with your agenda and proceed along the lines on which you appear to be proceeding...as an attorney I would be more than happy to take the case of anybody that you decide to terminate."

Carol Antolovich was next to speak. "The reason I am here is to talk about my communication with our county manager...it began when I saw the press release from Montrose County regarding the hiring or appointment of Dr Ahmed. It showed that his highest degrees were Masters Degrees...his education was all from Bangladesh...but that's not my concern...so I sent an email to Frank Rodriguez regarding my confusion on this, and he invited me to a community event last Monday night...when I was there, he stated, unequivocally, very forcefully, very authoritatively, he said that to be a Montrose

CITIZENS SHOW UP, SPEAK OUT AT BOCC MEETING *From previous pg*

County employee you had to be a citizen of the United States, and that Dr. Ahmed is a citizen of the United States..."

Antolovich said that this later proved not to be the case, "...He is not a U.S. citizen...I got another email from Mr. Rodriguez correcting the previous...saying that...citizenship is not a requirement..." Next to speak was Michael Badagliacco, who said he was sensitive to medical designations. "...it is important. My family are medical professionals...it's a slap in their face to try and designate someone as a doctor when they are not...I personally think that his WHO (World Health Organization) affiliation is a concern for the citizens of Montrose County because of the agenda of the WHO, even though he has made a statement...to counter, that he worked for them for 24 years but somehow disagreed with their policies..."

Julie Yarnell spoke, stating her support for Rodriguez and for the hiring of Dr. Ahmed. "I watched the work session on Monday and was appalled...Just because you don't know what the specifications are from Bangladesh doesn't mean that you're an expert on it...I think you, both commissioners Pond and Mijares are brand new. You need to settle in a little bit and see how things work. It's fine to want to make change, and you talk about how Montrose is conservative, but bringing in new blood keeps a community from being stagnant. We don't want to be a stagnant community. We want to be a prosperous community, and I support Commissioner Hansen's approach to supporting Dr. Ahmed's hiring...I hope that you will guys will be open to discussion and support of our new county employees."

Bethany Maher spoke next, "...What I witnessed in the BOCC work session earlier this week was really, truly appalling. Our new commissioners' behavior was unprofessional and discriminatory; the firing of either of these men would be inappropriate and unethical. There's no basis for removal...you had the opportunity to meet the candidate beforehand, neither of you did so—you also approved the hiring of the public health director, and you're using it as excuse to also fire the county manager...you should be embar-

assed by your behavior displayed in this meeting, and your lack of humanity in speaking about our public health director...I sure hope we begin to see commissioners who lead with knowledge and inform themselves before speaking and making decisions..."

Others spoke in support of Ahmed and Rodriguez and questioned whether Pond and Mijares had done their "due diligence." Additional speakers included Alice Murphy, Karen Sherman Perez, Jim Haugsness, Ray Langston, and Phobe Benziger.

When all of the speakers had finished, Commissioner Sue Hansen, said she had received around 35 emails from members of the public who had written in to express their discontent.

"All these people are concerned about...your behavior as representing this county," Hansen said. "...in two short months we've gone from a stellar reputation...well respected across the state...across the state I've had calls from commissioners about behaviors of our commissioners...what I can't live with...I'm in my seventh year now as a county commissioner...in two short months--unbelievably short months--we have staff that are scared...I've worked too hard to make this county better, and taking over from the previous board, it was embarrassing...and now again it's embarrassing...these letters all represent opposition to any action that you might take against Frank Rodriguez or Mr. Ahmed in terms of removal...there are 35 people at least who are embarrassed and disgruntled about what's going on in the county at this moment..."

County Manager Frank Rodriguez said he was humbled by the audience. "I'm humbled by your words...I didn't ask anybody to be there...the challenge for me is going forward, this is the very fabric of who we are as a community, this is what defines us...as I look at us and this crowd, I'm an optimist...it's my honor to continue to serve each of you. I promise I am doing everything to the best of my ability to serve this board and the residents of Montrose County. Very humbled, thank you."

COUNTY MANAGER

County Manager Frank Rodriguez asked to move Item F-2, "Consideration and possible approval of the Chair's signature on a Common Interest and Confidentiality Agreement with the Town of Naturita and Town of Nucla in connection with matters related to certain conditional water rights decreed in Case No. 2010CW164, Water Division" Common Interest Agreement - Water Law Case" to D-13.

CONSENT AGENDA

BOCC Chair Scott Mijares introduced Consent Agenda items one by one; Consent Agenda items were then approved as presented.

GENERAL BUSINESS

The first seven items, listed under County Management, involved support for community organizations. Commissioners voted to approve:

- the Chair's signature on a community partnership agreement with the Basin Clinic; as reviewed by Counsel. This agreement stipulates conditions related to County funding being provided to the organization in 2025. This action represents a budgeted expense in the amount of \$250,000;

- the Chair's signature on a community partnership agreement with the Community Options; as reviewed by Counsel. This agreement stipulates conditions related to County funding being provided to the organization in 2025. This action represents a budgeted expense in the amount of \$10,000;

- a community partnership agreement with the Haven House; as reviewed by Counsel. This agreement stipulates conditions related to County funding being provided to the organization in 2025. This action represents a budgeted expense in the amount of \$10,000. (Representatives from Haven House, including Executive Director Rose Verheul, were present to thank the County for their support and to discuss the impact of Haven House.)

- the Chair's signature on a community partnership agreement with the Nucla Naturita Fire Protection District; as reviewed by Counsel. This agreement stipulates conditions related to County funding being provided to the organization in

CITIZENS SHOW UP, SPEAK OUT AT BOCC MEETING *From previous pg*

2025. This action represents a budgeted expense in the amount of \$5,000;

- the Chair's signature on a community partnership agreement with the Rimrocker Historical Society; as reviewed by Counsel. This agreement stipulates conditions related to County funding being provided to the organization in 2025. This action represents a budgeted expense in the amount of \$5,000;

- the Chair's signature on a community partnership agreement with the All Points Transit; as reviewed by Counsel. This agreement stipulates conditions related to County funding being provided to the organization in 2025. This action represents a budgeted expense in the amount of \$20,000;

- the Chair's signature on a community partnership agreement with the Montrose Regional Crime Stoppers; as reviewed by Counsel. This agreement stipulates conditions related to County funding being provided to the organization in 2025. This action represents a budgeted expense in the amount of \$1,000;

- the Chair's signature on a community partnership agreement with Region 10; as reviewed by Counsel. This agreement stipulates conditions related to County funding being provided to the Senior Meals Program in 2025. This action represents a budgeted expense in the amount of \$5,000.

Commissioners also voted to approve:

- the purchase of one 2025 Chevrolet Colorado 4*4 Crew Cab, from Daniels Long Chevrolet of Colorado Springs, Colorado, having been awarded the state bid contract #193755 in the amount of \$36,698. This vehicle will be for IT and it will be their service truck. Upon approval, a purchase order in the amount of \$36,698 will be issued to Daniels Long Chevrolet of Colorado Springs, Colorado;

- the award of the construction contract for Kinikin Road Project to Earthworx Excavation LLC of Montrose having submitted the lowest, responsible, responsive bid in the amount of \$672,795.04 as reviewed by Counsel;

- adoption of Resolution Number 18-2025, regarding the Declaration of Surplus Property Disposal of light fleet vehicles and heavy fleet equipment through advertisement, trade, auction, online auction, or scrap... Sale of Surplus Property Exhibit A 2025 0306.pdf;

- an Intergovernmental Agreement Between Montrose County and The Montrose Emergency Telephone Service Authority, as reviewed by Counsel; and

- Following the board's Executive Session, the BOCC also voted to approve the final General Business item (D-13), the Chair's signature on a Common Interest and Confidentiality Agreement with the Town of Naturita and Town of Nucla in connection with matters related to certain conditional water rights decreed in Case No.

2010CW164, Water Division.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT GENERAL BUSINESS

Commissioners voted to approve three Planning and Development items, including:

-the J Bar J Minor Subdivision [M124-004] proposal to divide 10.88 acres into three lots at Parcel 376510101001;

-Two Stephens Subdivision Preliminary Plan [MA24-006] proposal to divide 13.3 acres into two lots at Parcel 399316307001; and

- the Woodlands Minor Subdivision 2 Extension [EXT25-001] proposal to request an extension due to developers' health at Parcel 399321100054.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board of County Commissioners entered Executive Session with County Attorney Marti Whitmore for legal advice pertaining to the proposed common interest agreement with the Towns of Nucla and Naturita regarding the consolidated water cases 10CW164, 10CW165, 10CW166, 10CW169 and 18CW3048 pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(b) and to discuss personnel policy matters related to contracts and employment policies pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(f).

(Following the Executive Session the proposed common interest agreement was approved as General Business item D-13.)

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

SEE SOMETHING - SAY SOMETHING

970-249-8500

ANONYMOUS CALL

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YOUTH AUDITION WORKSHOP

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WHEN: Saturday, March 29th, 2025 @ 9am-2pm
(please bring brown bag lunch)

WHAT: A FREE fun filled day intensive workshop. You will learn music and choreography for the November show, as well as other audition and theatre basics. Please note that participation in this workshop is not an audition, and will not guarantee a role in Matilda. This is an opportunity to be well prepared for the auditions in April.

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WHERE: Magic Circle Theatre @ 420 S 12th St · Montrose

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

Editor:

The record must be corrected in response to Dennis Anderson's "*I'm offended that you're offended*" attack on this author, Montrose Citizen's D.O.G.E., David White, and Commissioners Mijares and Pond. Anderson's complete distortion of the facts is almost comical if it were not so egregious. Our lackluster "Publisher" of the *Montrose Press*, which continues to bleed both readers and blue blood, penned an op-ed titled "*I'm offended that you're offended*" digitally on March 14, 2025, and in the print edition of the *Montrose Press* on March 15, 2025.

The BOCC Work Session Incident

In his attack piece, Anderson suggested that at the Monday work session of the BOCC, Commissioner Scott Mijares was somehow out of line after being accused of racism by Commissioner Sue Hansen for questioning Mr. Ahmed's (the new Public Health Director for Montrose County) credentials. After being accused of racism, Mijares asked if County Manager Frank Rodriguez was sexist for not hiring a woman (who was the other finalist for the County's Public Health Director position). This seems a fair question, in my humble opinion, given the accusations just thrown at Commissioner Mijares. While Mijares apologized for his statement at the Wednesday March 12, 2025 BOCC meeting, Commissioner Sue Hansen did not apologize for her accusations made of Commissioners Scott Mijares and Sean Pond of being racist, which IMHO, such conduct does warrant her immediate resignation as there is no place for this nonsense coming from a county commissioner. Tellingly, there is no mention of this fact within Anderson's op-ed. Why? Because, like most liberals, it does not fit his narrative, and Mr. Anderson is fully aware that most people will not review the evidence on the Montrose County website to get the facts as most people rely on headlines to feed them information. There was no racist comment concerning Mr. Ahmed or his race at all. The question was about his credentials, as County Manager Frank Rodriguez referred to Mr. Ahmed as "Dr.

Ahmed" five times in the meeting just prior to the 3-0 vote to approve Mr. Ahmed's appointment, when in fact, Mr. Ahmed does not hold a medical degree or the necessary residency requirements to qualify as a doctor in the United States and, Mr. Ahmed does not even refer to himself as "Dr. Ahmed" as he knows he does not warrant the title here in the United States.

Commissioner Hansen's Condescension

Despite Anderson's attempt to portray Commissioner Sue Hansen as above the fray, she came across as condescending toward the other commissioners, likely due to her ouster from the chair position after the appointment of Commissioner Pond, which, to the far-left contingent of Democrats, is sacrilegious. While Hansen claims the only difference between the Chair and the other two commissioners is that the Chair runs the meetings, if this is true (and I have no reason to believe it is not), then why the outcry from those on the left? Why was the outcry from notable Democrat Committee Members so loud after the title was removed from Commissioner Hansen and given to Commissioner Mijares? It seems a little petty to me. I have spent my life around strong women in authority. My career has been filled with female supervisors while I served in the USAF and in my corporate career, where I worked almost exclusively for women without issue and with great respect. I also have four older sisters and a mother who are all very strong women whom I deeply respect.

County Manager Rodriguez's Questionable Integrity

Regarding County Manager Frank Rodriguez and Anderson's glowing accolades, I have gotten to know Frank personally over the past month after meeting him at a BOCC meeting, and I like him. However, my professional experience with him as County Manager is far less glowing. Why, might you ask? For starters, Rodriguez played fast and loose with the facts concerning the employment requirements with the County and the facts related to Mr. Ahmed's qualifications. While I am no

fan of the W.H.O., an opinion shared by many in Montrose County, it was Rodriguez who stated unequivocally at our public meeting on March 3, 2025, and I quote, "In order to work for Montrose County, you have to be a citizen." It was also our County Manager who stated that "Dr. Ahmed had 24 years with the W.H.O." Like the County Commissioners who voted 3-0 in February (after he was already hired, by the way, but let's not let facts get in the way of your narrative), I relied on Rodriguez and confirmation by Commissioner Sue Hansen at that same meeting that these were the facts. Why should I question their statements as they were presented as fact? However, once the "facts" were disputed and shown to be incorrect, their integrity in matters of trust became no longer credible.

Defending Montrose Citizen's D.O.G.E.

Let's address Montrose Citizen's D.O.G.E., of which I am a member. I'm not sure why Anderson has an issue with the group. I did not establish Montrose Citizens D.O.G.E., rather it was established by a group of citizens concerned about the spending of our tax dollars and the fiscal irresponsibility that initially focused on the City's use of our money. This is a noble cause, as we citizens pay the bills in this city and county. All we are doing is collecting information received from the public and allowing people to see what the money is being spent on, since most of what is done within government is usually buried in the details. A question for Mr. Anderson: who else would "appoint" the group? It wouldn't be our current City Council, as they are in lockstep with all the spending. Just look at what is happening on the national level—the same kind of outrage from those who don't want the information out in the open.

Clarifying My Stance on Law Enforcement and Local Politics

Regarding Anderson's comment that I believe myself to be a "law enforcement expert," what he stated was not even close to the comment I made to the City Council concerning illegal aliens.

I was referring to the City Council's

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT From previous pg

consideration of making Montrose a "Sanctuary City." What I actually said is on Page 7 of the January 27, 2025 edition of the [Montrose Mirror](#), and the facts are there for all to see in the transcript posted therein. As for Marc Catlin being a "real conservative," as Anderson suggests, let's not let his voting record get in the way of that opinion.

The RINO Report from March 7, 2025 shows him with a "Failing Score on the week's Liberty Report with a score of 58." So, we can see why Anderson is enamored with Marc Catlin. Lauren Boebert's move to the 4th District was primarily due to the woes she created after her divorce and the ensuing antics. I cannot blame her for wanting a somewhat fresh start after that, as I think anyone would agree if they were honest.

My Montrose Roots

By the way, Mr. Anderson, I am not "new here" as you state in your fabricated mindset. I grew up in Montrose, attended Northside Elementary, then Centennial Junior High, and graduated from Montrose High School in 1983 before serving our country in the USAF. My parents owned a business in the community for 10 years. So, Mr. Anderson, I am not "new here." While I did leave Montrose to serve our country as a member of the USAF and was gone for a time, however, Montrose is my home!

Michael J Badagliacco, "MJB"
Montrose, CO

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

DELTA COUNTY ANNOUNCES UPDATED 2025 LANDFILL FEES

Special to the Mirror

DELTA COUNTY—Delta County officials have announced updated 2025 pricing for the Adobe Buttes Landfill and North Fork Transfer Station, effective immediately. These adjustments reflect the increasing costs of landfill operations and the urgent need to address the rapid expansion of waste in our county.

“The landfill continues to grow at an alarming rate, and managing this comes at a significant cost to Delta County taxpayers,” said Robbie LeValley, Delta County administrator. “The landfill cannot afford to operate at a loss, and these pricing adjustments ensure that we can continue providing this essential service in a sustainable way.”

New 2025 Landfill Fees

The updated fees for Adobe Buttes Landfill and North Fork Transfer Station include:

- General Waste: \$65 per ton
- Mattress & Box Spring Disposal: \$15 per item
- Tires: \$10 per passenger car tire (larger quantities require additional documentation)
- Trailer Houses: \$60 per unit (prior approval required)
- Refrigerators & Freon Appliances: \$40 per item
- Large Appliances: \$10 per item
- Household Waste at North Fork Transfer Station: \$25 per cubic yard (maximum 3 cubic yards)
- ⊘ Electronics (TVs, monitors, computers, etc.) are NOT accepted at landfills due to state regulations.

For a full breakdown of fees, accepted and prohibited items, and hours, visit www.DeltaCountyCO.gov/ABLandfill.

♻️ Where to Recycle

Recycling and waste reduction efforts will help reduce our landfill waste.

Taking advantage of recycling options:

Bruin Waste Delta Recycling Center (Double J)

📍 Address: 21538 Austin Road, Austin, CO

☎ Phone: (970) 835-8886

☑ Accepted Materials: Plastic, paper, paperboard, cardboard, glass, aluminum and tin cans, camper houses, car tires, refrigerators, special waste (petroleum, contaminated soil, etc.)

City of Delta (City of Delta Residents Only)

📍 Address: 640 West 4th St, Delta, CO (West of the Public Works Building)

The cardboard should be dropped off in the fenced-in area behind the Public Works Building.

☎ Phone: (970) 874-7908

☑ Accepted Materials: Brown and clean cardboard only.

Farm Runners

📍 Address: 235 Highway 133, Hotchkiss, CO

☎ Phone: (970) 835-8886

☑ Accepted Materials: Paper and cardboard

Delta Compost

📍 Address: 11289 Doughspoon Road, Delta, CO

☎ Phone: (970) 744-6691

☑ Accepted Materials: Yard waste - logs, branches, leaves, and grass clippings, but they need to be clean. No trash, no concrete blocks, no piles of dirt/rocks.

Volunteer for Adobe Buttes Clean-Up Day

Delta County invites residents to participate in scheduled annual Adobe Buttes Clean-Up Days to combat illegal dumping and protect our public lands. Volunteers will help clean up illegal dump sites in the Adobe Buttes desert, preserving the environment and keeping our community beautiful. When you sign up, you will receive an email alerting you that an event is coming soon, and you will be welcomed to register as a volunteer.

◇ **How to Sign Up:**

Visit [Online Form](#)

Call [970-874-3583](tel:970-874-3583)

Email [Public Information Officer](#)

All volunteers will be provided with gloves, trash bags, and water. This is a great opportunity for community service, student volunteer hours, or simply giving back to the land we love!

The Cost of Waste: A Call for Action

The growing landfill burden comes at a high financial and environmental cost to Delta County. By reducing waste, recycling responsibly, and disposing of materials properly, residents can help minimize costs, extend landfill life, and protect our environment.

For more information on landfill fees, waste disposal guidelines, and recycling options, please visit

www.DeltaCountyCO.gov/ABLandfill or call Adobe Buttes Landfill at (970) 835-7999.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

SUPPORT GROUP FOR THOSE AFFECTED BY ESSENTIAL TREMOR *International Essential Tremor Foundation Support Group to hold meeting*

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE—The International Essential Tremor Foundation (IETF) is proud to announce a support group for those affected by essential tremor. The next meeting will begin at 4:00 p.m. on March 21, 2025, at the Montrose Public Library meeting room, located at 320 S 2nd St in Montrose. Special guest Kyleigh Rubow, Clinical Specialist with Boston Scientific Neuro-modulation will talk about what DBS is, how it works and answer any question you may have. She will treat those attending with a **pizza party**. Essential tremor is a neurological condition that affects an estimated 10 million Americans. Although it is not a life-threatening condition, it is a life-altering condition that causes rhythmic trembling of the hands, head, legs or voice; frequently impacting everyday activities such as eating, drinking and writing. While the severity of the tremor may vary from person to person, it often makes those affected self-conscious

or anxious in social situations.

"Essential tremor can be frustrating and embarrassing and affect the quality of people's lives," explains Cathy Trujillo the Montrose Support Group Leader. "This group will offer an informal place where those affected can be themselves. At our group, individuals won't be asked if their hands are shaking because they're cold or nervous, or because they need another drink. They will find support and fellowship among others just like them—others with essential tremor."

Family members of children or others with essential tremor are also welcome. Anyone interested in attending should contact Cathy Trujillo at 405-205-9397 or catvol2022@currently.com to RSVP so that we know how much pizza to order, or with questions.

About The International Essential Tremor Foundation:

Headquartered in Lenexa, KS, and founded in 1988, the International Essential

Tremor Foundation is the leading organization in the world dedicated to those affected by essential tremor (ET). The mission of the IETF is to fund research that will find the cause of essential tremor and lead to better treatments and a cure, increase awareness about ET, and provide educational materials, tools and support to healthcare providers, the public, and those directly affected by ET.

The IETF has distributed more than \$750,000 in research grants, to fund numerous promising studies, in the search for the cause of ET. The Foundation has hosted numerous community awareness events across the U.S. to provide those affected with the basic knowledge necessary to become their own advocate when seeking treatment. And the IETF also provides assistance to a vast network of support groups around the world. To learn more about essential tremor and the IETF mission, visit the IETF website at www.essentialtremor.org.

FOREST SERVICE ANNOUNCES HIRING OF TEMPORARY FIRE POSITIONS

Special to the Mirror

LAKEWOOD— The Rocky Mountain Region of the USDA Forest Service is hiring up to 50 temporary wildland firefighters and fire support positions for the 2025 fire year across national forests and grasslands in Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Wyoming. Firefighter positions include engine operators, hotshot crew members, handcrew members, helitack crew members, fuels technicians, fire lookouts, dispatchers, and other fire support positions. Job information, including duty locations and application details, is available online on the [Forest Service Careers webpage](#). Job seekers can apply for the firefighter and fire jobs through USAJobs.gov until March 13, 2025. Any U.S. citizen or national 18 years of age can apply. Hiring managers will use a Direct Hire Authority to hire applicants, which means meaning Veterans' Preference and traditional rating and ranking of applicants do not apply. Application and resume preparation tips and guidelines, including step-by-step instructions and on-demand webinars, are available on the [How to Apply webpage](#).

About the Forest Service: The USDA Forest Service has for more than 100 years brought people and communities together to answer the call of conservation. Grounded in world-class science and technology— and rooted in communities—the Forest Service connects people to nature and to each other. The Forest Service cares for shared natural resources in ways that promote lasting economic, ecological, and social vitality. The agency manages 193 million acres of public land, provides assistance to state and private landowners, and maintains the largest wildland fire and forestry research organizations in the world. The Forest Service also has either a direct or indirect role in stewardship of about 900 million forested acres within the U.S., of which over 130 million acres are urban forests, where most Americans live.



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

RE-1J ISSUES CORRECTIONS TO MHS HONOR ROLL 24-25 1ST SEMESTER

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-The below students were omitted from the previously posted Honor Roll for first semester due to an error in our data report. Our sincere apologies to these students.

Correction Honor Roll MHS 3.5-3.75

9th Grade

Elizabeth Lasley

10th Grade

Noah Freese, Nevynn Fritz, Tiago Hernandez, Isabelle Mott, Aspen Pottorff, Ty Robillard, Henry Wilson, and Anden Wynne

11th Grade

Kai Amundson, Colton Daubie, Nickolas Deisig, Josue Gutierrez, Easton Jessop, Noel Mireles-Rodales, Jayden Pryor, Skai Robinson, Jack Schwartz, and Raymond Stamm

12th Grade

Joseph Benetiz, Brianna Garcia, Christopher Gonzalez-Muniz, Austin Hanak, Aloera MacFarlane, Arieon Maestas, Aidan Paider, Cesar Perez, Mikayla Peterson and Viet Tran

Correction MHS Principal's Honor Roll 3.75 and Above

9th Grade

Previous list correct

10th Grade

Previous list correct

11th Grade

Wyatt Ensor, Phineas Howe, Matilda Johnson-Freeman, Christopher Martinez-DelaCruz and Griffin Pollard.

12th Grade

Barnabas Algacs, Benedek Algacs, John Beshoar, Maddison Coca, Brody Cooling, Drake Hawkins, Kayden Huggett, Andrew Luquin, and Artemio Verdin.

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March 21st - Elks Lodge Montrose, CO
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Support Group

Tuesday, 1 April 2025
5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Montrose Library Meeting Room
320 S 2nd St, Montrose

To sign up or for more information
contact Lynette at
AnneliesesDaisies@gmail.com
(970) 417-7117

  @AnneliesesDaisies

A free support group open to anyone
who has experienced a loss or are a family member,
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Share your story or just listen, and find support among other
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While we are all unique, and our situations for our loss differ,
it is important to know you are not alone.

OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

HANSEN NOW OCCUPIES A MINORITY POSITION ON THE BOCC

Editor:

At the last BOCC meeting it became obvious during the call to the public that Sue Hansen R, (really a closet D) had put out a master blaster call to the Democrat party to come support her and the County Manager. Sadly because of a questionable modus operandi Hansen has lost all credible in the Republican Party. After listening to all of the speakers it became clear that none of them had any understanding of how County Government has arrived at this junction.

A few years back Hansen, Rash, and Caddy, to their great credit, adopted a Resolution that stated that they would refrain from publicly supporting any particular candidate for political office. At the Republican Assembly last spring they violated their own Resolution by publicly supporting their handpicked successors for County Commissioner.

Under our County Government the only two offices that fall under the purview of

the BOCC are the County Manager and the County Attorney.

Last year County Manager Jon Waschbusch announced his sudden retirement. It was obvious he was made an offer he couldn't refuse. Terminating his contract was well within the purview of the BOCC, however there was no public outcry over that decision. Emily Sanchez was quickly elevated to Interim County Manager and an internal search for a new County Manager was announced. When legal questions were raised about an internal search the BOCC immediately switched to a more comprehensive broader search. Eighteen applications were received and sadly Commissioner elect Scott Mijares was completely cut out of the evaluation process. Applicant evaluations were anything but transparent. The public was cut out of the process until there were three finalists, when the county dictated what questions the public could ask, a blatant First Amendment violation. In

reviewing the resumes of the final three, the individual from Alabama was the only one who had actual governmental management experience. However it was a forgone conclusion of who they were going to pick.

It became clearly obvious the need to rush to appoint a new manager was for Hansen, Rash and Caddy to indoctrinate the new manager into the status quo... the reality today is that Hansen now occupies a minority position on the BOCC with Majores and Pond in the majority.

If in fact it is determined that the county manager has worked at cross purposes with the majority of the BOCC in favor of the minority then the majority is well within their authority to terminate the County Manager contract. If in fact that occurs such action will be in full transparency of the public and not behind closed doors as evidenced by the previous County Manager.

Dee Laird, Montrose

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

BE LIKE RICK BLAINE FROM CASABLANCA

Editor:

I recently made my way through Maurice Isserman's *Reds: The Tragedy of American Communism*. The book provides a nuanced history of the Communist Party of the United States of America. Isserman chronicles the group's successes, while highlighting its deep capacity for self-deception about the nature of the Soviet Union.

Among other things, the text inspired me to revisit *Casablanca*, the 1942 classic directed by Michael Curtiz. Isserman makes a convincing case Humphrey Bogart's character, Rick Blaine, was intended to be an ex-Communist or some type of fellow traveler, based on his Spanish Civil War service and other biographical details.

Rewatching the movie in the current political climate, I found myself thinking America needs more people like Blaine. Now, what do I mean by that? I certainly don't mean we need more bitter alcoholics. Rather, we need more reluctant, imperfect heroes, who ultimately choose to do the right thing in moments of peril, like we're in currently.

Despite his idealistic, left-wing past, by the time we meet Blaine in the film, he's sunk into cynical quietism. As the saloon keeper famously says, he sticks his neck

out for nobody. Still, when the anti-fascist struggle desperately needs Blaine, he rises to the occasion. The saloon keeper sacrifices personally and risks a great deal.

I think there must be millions of potential Blaines in the United States right now. They likely haven't done anything nearly so dramatic as run guns to Ethiopia, like Bogart's character. Nevertheless, they are formerly committed progressives who, for one reason or another, have grown disillusioned, alienated and exhausted.

I know this, because over the past 20 years, I've seen them at demonstrations against the Iraq War, Occupy Wall Street encampments, Black Lives Matter protests, and the Women's March. I've seen them fighting for marriage equality, immigrant rights, climate justice and so much more. Those people are still out there.

The trouble is, like Blaine, they've fallen away from the left into their own private lives. Perhaps the pace of change was too slow for them. Maybe they ran afoul of some progressive shibboleth and no longer felt welcome. Perhaps they just burned out on politics and needed an extended break to recharge their batteries.

Regardless, the damage President Donald Trump and his fascist cronies are doing to America now wouldn't have been possible

as recently as his first term. This time around, the Republican extremists have faced little resistance. I imagine they are somewhat shocked at the headway their anti-democratic project has made.

Progressives hold a wide variety of policy goals.

For instance, as an animal activist, I want to see a massive infusion of public funding into cultivated-meat research. I see this as the most promising means of reducing nonhuman suffering and premature death. But none of our goals can be achieved under a fascist state.

If you are one of those who have sunk into cynicism, I want to say I completely understand. I've certainly been there. But whatever values that initially brought you to the left are currently under direct assault. I urge you to be like Blaine. In this moment of crisis, come back to the struggle and do your small part to defend democracy.

Jon Hochschartner

*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.*



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

I TOLD YOU SO

Editor:

Back during the 2024 primary I tried to warn the voters as to how dishonest Mijares was. And now we see why that man should never be in a position of power. His and Sean Ponds good ole boy style of collusion on the BOCC has reduced the board to infighting name calling and second-guessing previous decisions. And then after a few citizens become upset and vocal about that decision. They try to lay the blame on someone else. Welcome to the world of being a county commissioner. Some citizens will always second guess the decisions of elected officials. And good leadership should only second guess themselves when they themselves see they have made an error. At no point should they ever blame someone else for the decision they made. And to do so is to make it obvious that they themselves are incompetent in that position. And this is the reason the voters chose Rick Dunlap because they knew with him on the BOCC that the board would continue to function in a manner that the citizens would be proud of. But God had other plans. So, what can we citizens do to get our BOCC back to functioning in a united manner? We should do what we just did. Let them know that we will hold them accountable. Sean Pond will face all the voters in 2026 what he does between now and then will influence the voters decision. And if Scott Mijares continues down the path, he is heading he will be recalled and replaced in six months. He likes to Bragg about how many votes he got in the general election. But he forgets that he was unopposed, so the voters only had one choice. Give the voters another choice and they may make a different decision.

Ray Langston, Montrose



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GAIL MARVEL
Montrose Author & Reporter

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: COMMENTARY

CITY LEADERS & FRIENDS – THE PROGRESSIVE GOOD OLE BOY NETWORK IS WORKING HARD FOR CONTROL ACROSS THE BOARD

The “Players” are not content – Montrose County is in the Crosshairs

By David White

In recent weeks, I've presented to you, the reader, plenty of evidence of nepotism, conflicts of interest, use of public funds for personal use by the City Manager and Staff as well as funding of a variety of private projects with public funds that have had questionable outcomes as well as profit taking by some of the beneficiaries of these projects as the projects were sold for handsome amounts of money. Of course, without ever refuting the solid evidence of such goings on, the gas-lighting and deflection away from the reality of this evidence by the City Council, City Manager and their lackeys at the *Montrose Daily Press* has intensified. But why?

As if things weren't fishy enough to begin with, it turns out that it doesn't stop there. Just last week, the City of Montrose released it's latest edition of The City Beat Newsletter (Winter/Spring 2025 - [City Beat Newsletter](#)) in which it is announced that Mike Steffes has been hired by the City for the newly created position of “Professional Development Manager” with the Montrose Police Department. Mr. Steffes is a very well-regarded law enforcement professional as well as a nationally recognized International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) master-level instructor, one of only eight in the nation. His credentials are impressive ((21) [Michael Steffes | LinkedIn](#)). His most recent position as a Chief of Police in a town of 36,000 people paid him a salary of \$142,563 in 2023 (the most current year that salary information is available through public sources - [Michael Steffes | GovSalaries](#)). No word on his salary with the MPD, but you can be sure it's up there.

Then there's the case of Lisa Kuczmariski who is the Director of Communications and Tourism for the City of Montrose. Ms. Kuczmariski was hired by the City July of 2017 as a Human Resources Generalist & Safety Coordinator and has risen through

the ranks to her current position pulling down a salary \$124,496 in 2023 (the most current year that salary information is available through public sources - [Lisa Kuczmariski | GovSalaries](#)). She too has an impressive work history and resume ((21) ["lisa kuczmariski, mpa" | Search | LinkedIn](#))

So, why the interest in these two folks you ask? It turns out, coincidentally? (probably not), that both have ties to our City Manager, Bill Bell. You see, Mr. Bell came to Montrose in 2011 from the small town of Rhinelander, Wisconsin (population of 8,285 per the 2020 US Census) where he was the City Administrator from 2008 – 2011. And, under him, guess who was the Police Chief of Rhinelander during Mr. Bell's tenure there? Yep, you guessed it – Mike Steffes, whom, it is said, is Mr. Bell's very good friend. And guess who was the Executive Assistant & Human Resources Assistant to the City Administrator of Rhinelander (Mr. Bell)? Yep, you guessed it right – Ms. Kuczmariski. It's just amazing that both found their way 1,401 miles from their old stomping grounds to Montrose. Or is it? I guess we just didn't have any talent closer to fill these high paying jobs.

As if this wasn't enough of a coincidence, I recently learned that our new County Manager, Frank Rodriguez, came to our area through a friendship with Montrose Police Chief Blaine Hall. Chief Hall met Mr. Rodriguez at the 273rd Session of the FBI National Academy which was held from July 9th through September 3rd of 2018 at the U.S. Marine Corps base at Quantico, Virginia ([FBI Academy - Wikipedia](#)). According to the FBI, the National Academy began July 29, 1935, and was created after a recommendation by the Wickersham Commission, which stated special education should be created for "the standardization and professionalization of law enforcement departments across the U.S. through centralized training."

When the opening for a Police Chief in

Olathe became available, Chief Hall recruited Mr. Rodriguez to apply for the position and the rest is history as they say. Both have bonded as evidenced by Chief Hall's recent keynote speech to dozens of County employees who attended the County's Employee Appreciation Luncheon on March 5, 2025 ([Calendar • County Offices Closed for Employee Appreciation E](#)).

Ties to the City of Montrose leadership team by our new County Manager seem to be evolving of late, no doubt due to Mr. Rodriguez and Chief Hall's relationship as well as a growing bond with City Manager Bell. Mr. Bell and Mr. Rodriguez have developed a working relationship that includes coffee meetings as well as a recent appearance by Mr. Bell at a Board of County Commissioner's meeting. Don't get me wrong, these get together and relationships are important to all of us, and I was generally in agreement with the efforts on the part of both parties, UNTIL a Facebook post made by Mr. Bell this past week revealed a different agenda.

You see, there has been a shift in leadership within the Montrose County Board of Commissioners with Commissioner Mijares taking on the Chairmanship of the Board and newly appointed Commissioner Sean Pond becoming the Vice Chair. Commissioner Hansen, former Chairperson of the Board, is now a voting member without title. That hasn't sat well with her or her supporters, largely those who are members of the local Democrat Party who have spoken out quite loudly on her demotion as well as the kerfuffle over the recent hiring by County Manager Rodriguez of a new Director of Public Health, one Mirza Ahmed, a former employee of the World Health Organization.

Mr. Ahmed is a graduate, per his LinkedIn profile ((21) [Mirza Mashrur Ahmed | LinkedIn](#)), of The University of Chittagong (established in 1966). The University is among the oldest & largest public universities in Bangladesh. It offers a wide range

MONTROSE COUNTY IS IN THE CROSSHAIRS From previous pg

of undergraduate & graduate degrees to approximately 30,000 students, across more than 50 programs in a wide range of fields. Mr. Ahmed attended this university from March of 1989 – September of 1996 where he received a Bachelor of Medicine & Bachelor of Surgery degree. However, per his own statements, he is not a U.S. certified doctor. He’s a health professional with an MBA and has a Master of Public Health degree from North-South University also in Bangladesh.

All of this has led to a debate amongst the BOCC and Mr. Rodriguez in last week’s Commissioner Work Session and biweekly Board meeting over the hiring of Mr. Ahmed to include public comments from Commissioner Hansen to Commissioner Mijares that any discussion over the employment of Mr. Ahmed appears to be “racist” in nature. From this one remark,

City Manager Bell went off the rails when replying to a constituent who was commenting on a City Facebook post wherein, he states that Commissioners Mijares, Pond, this writer and the Montrose DOGE group are **“pushing unethical and RACIST (emphasis added) values that absolutely don’t reflect MY MONTROSE COMMUNITY.”**

He closed out his tirade with the statement: **“Our Community must stand up to this group once and for all!”** Really Bill? In typical fashion from this City Administration and Council, they not only choose to slander citizens, but continue to try and shut down the 1st Amendment right to free speech which includes the right to call out our government for actions that are questionable, inappropriate or just because we disagree with their policies or direction. Is there an attorney in the house willing to step up and put these dictators on notice? I’m looking for one!

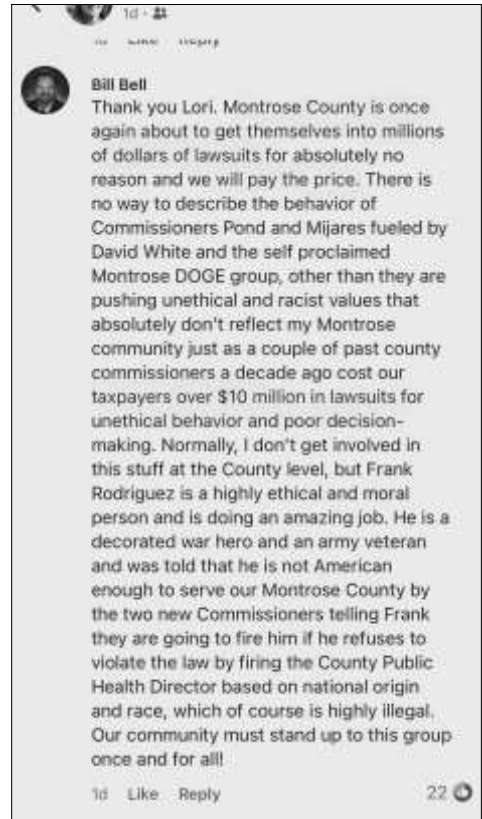
So, without checking himself or the facts of the matter and hurling the word “racist” at his detractors, most of whom, including me, have never uttered a word or acted in any manner that could be considered “racist”, he has incited many on

the left of the political center to conjure up a campaign of terror against Mijares and Pond and any who believe this inciteful rhetoric to include fueling rumors that the Commissioners were going to “fire” the County Manager, Frank Rodriguez (which they have not) and Mr. Ahmed. Of course, they have the right to do so, as do Mr. Bell’s superiors on the City Council. Interference in another governmental entity’s business is just over the top.

All of his comments along with those of others, have, of course, led by Democrat Party Chairman, Kevin Kuns and his wife Bobbie (their Treasurer); notable Democrat Party community members or operatives such as Karen Sherman-Perez (head of the Hispanic Affairs Project); Bethany Maher (head of the Mexican American Development Association – MADA); Phoebe Benzinger (City of Montrose Planning Commission & community activist), Dennis Anderson (publisher of the *Montrose Press*) and many other party activists and/or sympathizers, scream from the rooftops about everything from locking up public and private lands (which they support and most of the BOCC does not), to the termination rumors and other accusations that are completely without merit (talk is talk until action is taken and there’s been a lot of talk for sure but nothing has come of it folks). Gaslighting at its best I’d say.

To say that the City’s manager is engaging the public with his own form of deflection to cover his cronyism, nepotism, conflicts of interest, mispending of money from the public treasury and so many other clearly obvious actions of self-aggrandizement, is putting it mildly. All I can say is watch out folks. The City’s liberal and progressive elements are finally stepping out of the shadows and showing you what they want your City and ultimately your County to look like in the not-too-distant future.

While the mainstream media and other progressives have been advancing their agendas through other avenues such as their control of the City Council, School



Screenshot of Mr. Bell’s Facebook post. Courtesy image.

Board, Library Board and others to change our storied history, those who believe in more traditional values and roles for government are and have been outmaneuvered. If you want to slow it down or stop the soon to be runaway train, you’d better get involved. Do something, say something, be something. Time is short. At least our new Commissioners recognize this. Hopefully you do too.

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 and have 10 grandchildren & one great grandchild.



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MAYOR J. DAVID REED PROCLAIMS MARCH IS RED CROSS MONTH

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE— Mayor J. David Reed issued a proclamation last week recognizing March as Red Cross Month to honor the compassion and dedication of people who serve communities through the American Red Cross of Western Colorado.

“This work to uplift our community is truly made possible by those who selflessly answer the call to help, whenever and wherever it’s needed.” Mayor Reed said in the proclamation. “We hereby recognize this month of March in honor of their remarkable service, and we ask everyone to join in their commitment to care for one another.

During its annual Red Cross Month celebration, the Red Cross honors the people who deliver support when help can’t wait — including volunteers who comprise **90%** of its national workforce, generous financial donors, and other supporters who power its lifesaving mission.

“Red Cross Month is a special time to recognize our neighbors who step up to care for each other,” said Christie Caster, Executive Director, Red Cross of Western Colorado. “Here in Montrose these community heroes provide a beacon of hope in people’s darkest hours, whether it’s comforting a family after a disaster, saving a life with skills like first aid and CPR, or supporting military and veteran families. If you’re looking for a meaningful way to give back, join us to help ensure no one faces an emergency alone.”

Visit redcross.org to make a financial donation, volunteer or take a class. Financial gifts made on March 26 will be part of our annual Giving Day to help people affected by disasters big and small across the country.

About the American Red Cross:

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides comfort to victims of disasters; supplies about 40% of the nation’s blood; teaches skills that save lives; distributes international humanitarian aid; and supports veterans, military members and their families. The Red Cross is a nonprofit organization that depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to deliver its mission. For more information, please visit redcross.org or CruzRojaAmericana.org, or follow us on social media.



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

DOCTOR PARK TRAIL CLOSED FOR SEASONAL WILDLIFE PROTECTION

Special to the Mirror

GUNNISON — The Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison (GMUG) National Forests' Gunnison Ranger District reminds visitors that National Forest System Trail (NFST) #424—Doctor Park trail closed to all uses on March 1 and will remain closed through the Friday before Memorial Day.

This annual seasonal closure provides protection for bighorn sheep during a critical time when they are most vulnerable to disturbance. The trail will reopen for hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking and two-wheeled motorized travel once the seasonal restriction ends.

“This temporary closure is essential for the health of wintering bighorn sheep,” said Dayle Funka, Gunnison District Ranger. “Even one human disturbance per day can negatively impact the survival rate of the herd.”

Accessing NFST #424—Doctor Park trail for any activity during the wildlife-sensitive closure period is prohibited. Forest officials appreciate the public’s cooperation in protecting local wildlife. Details on the Doctor Park trail closure, including a map, can be found on our website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/gmug/alerts-notice/?cid=stelprdb5395575>.



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

QUALITIES OF A GOOD LEADER

Editor:

Leadership takes many forms, whether in business, corporate, military, civic, teaching, etc. The most important of these, however, is leadership of a nation. In this time of chaos, I've been thinking about the qualities of leadership that could save us from the situation in which we find ourselves. To paraphrase one such leader - Abraham Lincoln: "a house divided cannot stand". Those words reveal the most important quality of leadership: a good leader builds cohesiveness out of the wide variety of people that comprise a nation.

In today's USA, we are "led" by those who intentionally anger and divide us to obtain their own goals. Some aspire to one set of goals, others violently oppose them; and the "leader" eggs them on. On such issues as environmental protection, immigration, the responsibilities of government, etc., we are deeply at odds. Sadly, with the advent of new forms of unregulated, free-for-all media over the past several decades, division on these issues has reached to boiling point. Worse yet, these morally rotten media sources are actually getting rich while they spread conspiracy theories, hate, disillusionment with government, and destroy faith in long standing, professional news sources.

The wrong people are taking it to the bank, while the working classes suffer; and paradoxically, support the messages of hatred of the "leaders" who spread it. This is just one symptom of a society that is being torn apart due to a lack of, you guessed it: Leadership. We need wise leadership now more than any point in our lives.

How did all of this come about? It is said that "Success has many fathers, and so does failure" In 1987, President Reagan gutted the Fairness Doctrine, enacted in 1947. This doctrine required news sources to give all sides of a story fair reporting, and to separate news from "entertainment". With the unfortunate demise of the Fairness Doctrine, "news" and "entertainment" became mixed, fairness fell to salaciousness, and the quality of news plummeted. Into this new opportunity stepped Rupert Murdoch, who had been drummed out of Great Britain for

spreading garbage on the airwaves, and relegated reporting to the sewer ... but he saw potential dollar signs in the USA. He started Fox News; the quality of information the average citizen received took a nosedive, and Murdoch got rich at our expense. Despite their motto at the time (since conveniently forgotten): "Fair and Balanced"; they skewed reporting towards conspiracy mongering, and found a ready audience among disaffected conservatives, whose moribund ideas had gained little traction from the public. About this time, a politician named Newt Gingrich changed the whole dynamic of Congress from one of principled debate into political warfare. With the help of Fox News and broadcasters like Limbaugh and Hannity, he was wildly successful in turning, year by year, a principled governing body into the disaster it is today, filled with members who would never even have gotten through the front door of the chambers just 35 years previous. Fox News reached a settlement of \$787,000,000 for intentionally lying to their listeners about who won the 2020 election...but those listeners still believe what they broadcast; a situation that boggles the mind.

So, what has all of this got to do with leadership? Qualities of a good leader include a sense of fairness, a willingness to listen to all sides of a debate before coming to a wise decision for the benefit of most, if not all. Decisiveness mixed with reason, courage mixed with humility, a reverence for historical precedent, knowledge of, and respect for, the law, kindness and compassion mixed with discipline, wisdom mixed with the ability to adapt to changing situations, respect for our governmental institutions created and honed over 250 years, and finally, respect for those who disagree with their opinions. **Every one** of these qualities is missing in our current president, vice president, and his pet oligarch and campaign financier, Elon Musk. As is often the case ... "as goes the leader, so go his lieutenants". The current president has broken all precedents in choosing his cabinet, and the people who work under him. Gone are the leadership requirements mentioned above. These have been re-

placed with two supreme requirements: utter subservience to the president (only "yes men" are allowed); and large bribes. And, since there are so few quality personnel who would stoop to that level, we now are subject to those scraped from the bottom of the barrel of humanity: Hegseth, Gabbard, Kennedy, Bondi, and Patel, along with his absolutely ludicrous number two at the FBI, fringe podcaster Dan Bongino. None of these people are qualified for the high posts they now inhabit. Each one of them is a middle finger prominently poked in the face of their employees, and to our citizenry ... and that, my friends, was intentional on the part of the Chaos President. As a result, tens of thousands of hard working young Americans are being fired from their jobs in public service; their careers left in tatters.

As I've said over the years in my Letters to the Editor: Trump was always Putin's choice for President of the USA ... and it should be clear for anyone with critical thinking skills to see the reasons why. Putin knew that the best way to defeat the USA was from within; and who better to do that than Trump. While publicly saying he was for Harris, Putin's covert support for Trump paid off like a lucky ticket to the Power Ball Lottery. We see how Trump consistently praises Putin, while insulting Ukraine, Canada, Mexico, and NATO; all the while taking a meat cleaver our own government, and destroying our economy with ill-conceived tariffs, meant to restore domestic manufacturing, but with NO known plans to make that happen!

If our country survives the chaos, including possible economic collapse, and destruction of our long standing institutions, it may take decades to rebuild trust in our own government, and repair the damage done to our long treasured alliances ... but that's what happens when voters believe lies put out by substandard media outlets, and support a malignant demagogue whose only true concerns are his own power and greed. I still believe in the American Dream; but it will only survive if we choose leaders with the qualities outlined above in upcoming elections.

David Congour, Montrose

OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

INDIVISIBLES STATEMENT ON MINORITY LEADER SCHUMER'S FUNDING BILL VOTE

Editor:

Minority Leader Schumer, as chair of the Democratic Caucus in the Senate, broke with the vast majority of his caucus to allow a GOP funding bill to advance, without any restrictions on the ongoing efforts from Donald Trump and Elon Musk to dismantle the federal government. Montrose and Ouray Counties Indivisible issues the following statement:

“Under Senator Chuck Schumer’s Leadership, Senate Democrats just surrendered a rare moment of leverage to rein in the chaos and harm of Donald Trump, Elon Musk, and Congressional Republicans. By voting to advance the GOP government funding bill, rather than demanding anything in return, Schumer handed more power to the extremists destroying the government. This was not just a strategic mistake - it was a demonstration that Schumer is not prepared to lead the Democratic opposition to fascism and protect our democracy. We thank him for his years of service, and call on him to step aside as minority leader.

As the new leader of Montrose and Ouray Counties Indivisible, I am so proud of this group’s members, enthusiasm, efforts, calling and emailing, to contact OUR State Senators, Bennet and Hickenlooper. Our members’ efforts helped move them to a “HELL NO” vote on the continuing resolution, recognizing that that bill hurt Coloradoans and Americans.

We continue to try to work with Representative Jeff Hurd to find common ground.”

Indivisible works to build a real democracy -- of, by, and for the people. We believe that we have to build a democracy that reflects a broad, multiracial “we the people,” one that works for all of us and is sustained by all of us. Only then will we be able to achieve a progressive vision for our future.

“We do not come to this decision lightly - for the country, or for our democracy. But the stakes are too high, and we need leaders who are willing to fight as hard as we are. Schumer should step aside as Minority Leader so another Democrat who’s willing to lead the opposition can step up to take his place.”

Holly Speaks, Leader, Montrose & Ouray Counties Indivisible About the Indivisible Project

The Indivisible Project (501c4) is a social movement non-profit driven by a vision of a real democracy - of, by, and for the people. Indivisible began in 2016 as a viral guide to resisting Trump’s agenda. Today, the Indivisible movement is a network of thousands of local groups and millions of activists across every state. The Indivisible Project drives campaigns for bold progressive policies, lobbies Congress, and equips activists with tools to build lasting progressive power, everywhere. Together, we fight to defeat the rightwing takeover of American government and build an inclusive democracy.



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aim
is
true

the montrose mirror

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(OF BIRDS OF PLAY)



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COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

LARRY LEE BOVARD

March 17, 1945 — February 3, 2025

LARRY BOVARD, a long-term and proud Colorado resident, passed away on February 3, 2025. He passed away quietly in his home after a long term, yet futile battle with a disease that took his strength but never his spirit.

He is survived by his children. Dawni Colon (Michael) of Dallas, Texas, and Jacksonville, Florida. Brett Bovard (Linda) of Lewiston, Idaho. Scott Bovard (Lynn) of Raleigh, North Carolina and Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Also, his grandchildren, Amanda and Christopher Colon, Ryan and Branden Bovard, and Hunter and Phoenix Bovard.

Larry was born in Hastings, Nebraska, where he was first introduced to the two things that were the passion of his life, cars and horses. He moved to Denver Colorado in 1972 where he built and raced dragsters in the NHRA. After a few years, he decided to slow down and found the perfect place, Ridgway, CO. He wanted to live a more simple and bucolic life so, he started raising horses. He was a well-known and respected member of the

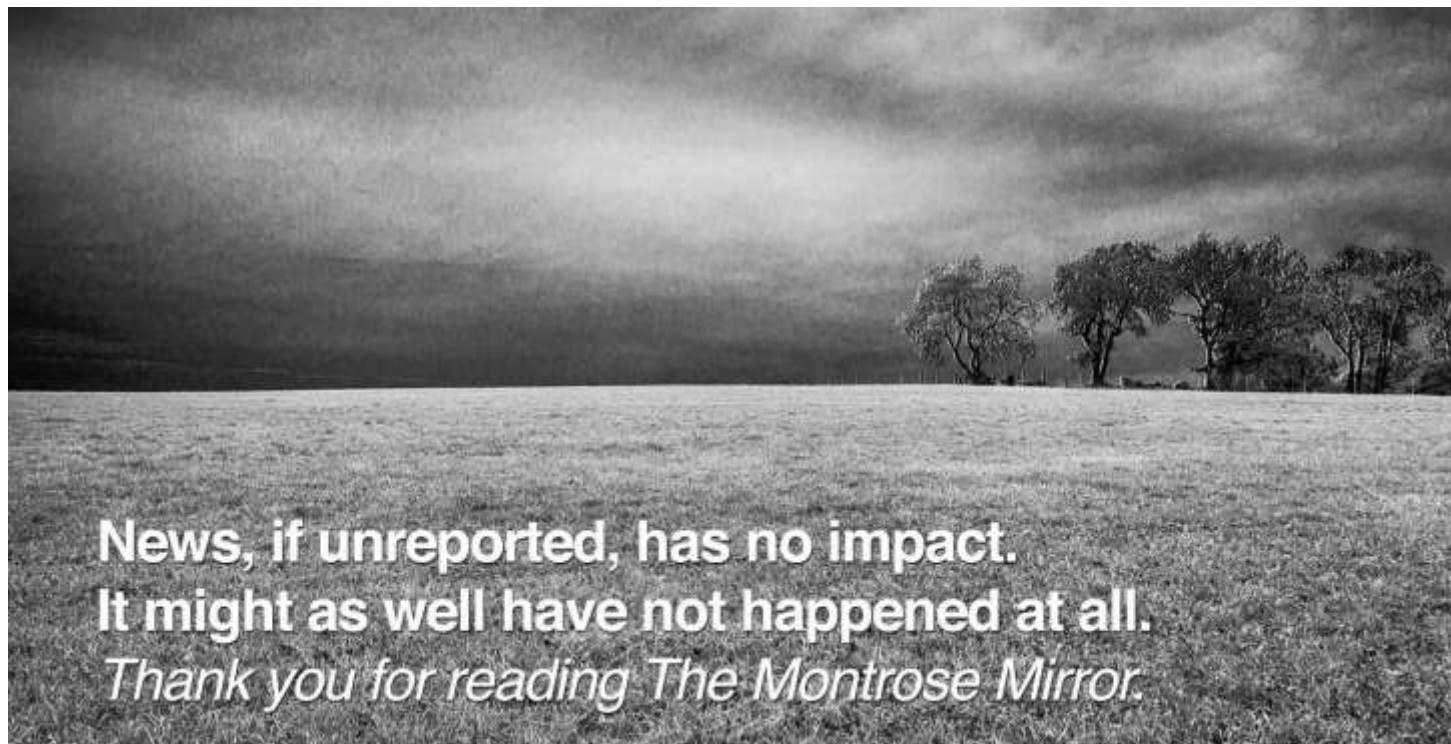
community in Ridgway where he developed friendships and relationships with people whose lives were better for it.

His interest in draft horses became an obsession and a passion. He created Bovard Paradise Percherons, his show-horse team, that competed at the highest national levels. He strived for perfection and wanted to be the best of the best. His unique talent and knowledge of these animals opened many other doors in his life. From friends and neighbors, who wanted his advice or assistance to the great ranches of western Colorado that sought out his expertise to procure and develop their own draft teams.

During this time, he developed a most uncommon connection with an Amish community in Bloomfield, Iowa. Henry Yoder and his family became a surrogate family to Larry. They welcomed him with their kindness, and that gave him great comfort for the rest of his life. He learned from them the joys of a simpler life and in the end, that is what he had. A simple and extraordinary life.



Celebration of Life service will be held at Matt and Marcia Miles place 1250 West Oak Grove Road, Montrose on March 30th at 100pm. Internment with full military honors will take place at Veterans Memorial Western Colorado Cemetery on Tuesday, April 1st at 100pm



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

COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

SUSAN V. GUNTER

February 17, 1952 — March 8, 2025



SUSAN V. GUNTER, beloved mother, grandmother, and friend, passed away

peacefully on March 8, 2025, in Aurora, Colorado, at the age of 73. Born on February 17, 1952, in San Jose, California, Susan was the cherished daughter of Herman F. DeSomber Sr. and Mildred Veronica Scott. A long-time resident of Montrose, Colorado, Susan was an active member of the United Methodist Church, where she found community and connection. She was known for her vibrant spirit and infectious laughter, lighting up every room she entered. A true joy to be around, she was the life of the party, always ready to celebrate with family and friends.

Susan had a passion for the outdoors and cherished her time fishing and camping. She delighted in gathering with loved ones, often sharing her love for singing and watching Hallmark movies. Her warmth and kindness extended far beyond her immediate family, as she loving-

ly embraced many as her own grandchildren.

She is predeceased by her parents and her beloved daughter Kimberly. Susan is survived by her former husband, Ken Gunter; her brothers, Herman DeSomber of Idaho and Earl DeSomber of California; her sister, Mary Kirk of Longmont, Colorado; her three grandchildren, Richard, Darcy, and Leighandra; and her seven adored great-grandchildren, who brought her immense joy.

Susan's legacy of love, laughter, and cherished memories will forever remain in the hearts of all who knew her. She will be deeply missed but lovingly remembered. A celebration of her life will be announced at a later date, where family and friends are invited to gather in her honor. Arrangements are in the care of Crippin Funeral Home, Montrose, Colorado.

HELENA PAIZ ARCHULETA

February 12, 1924 — March 10, 2025

HELENA PAIZ ARCHULETA, a remarkable woman of faith, love, and strength passed away peacefully Monday, March 10, 2025 at her home in Olathe, Colorado. She was born February 12, 1924, in Montrose, Colorado to Maria Dolores Sandoval and José Alfredo Paiz, both natives of Mora, New Mexico. Helena married the love of her life, Claude Archuleta on February 6, 1946. Together they had two beautiful daughters, Ellen Joan and Dorothy Jane. They were married for over 50 years. Sadly her husband passed away in 1992 and her eldest daughter, Ellen Joan in 1993. Helena truly lived life to the fullest through hard work and simple pleasures; hunting, fishing, gardening, cooking, being with family and talking to everyone she met about her Heavenly Father, Jehovah God. When her granddaughter recently told her that she was an amazing woman she replied, "well, I have to be!" Everyone who had the honor to meet this beautiful, petite, feisty and strong woman was blessed with hospitality, love, laughs and lots of fun stories of her memorable childhood with her 11 siblings! A Legacy of Love and Strength, Helena is survived by her loving daughter, Dorothy Jane, who selflessly cared for her over the past 25 years. She is also survived by five grandchildren: Michael, Melissa, Claudette, Erica, and Renata; eleven great-grandchildren: Ashley, Angelica, Isaac, Erick, Acacia, Alejandro, Eva Luna, Andrés, Ualani, Wailea, and Lehua; and two great-great-grandchildren, Azrael and Mason. Not to mention countless nieces, nephews & extended family.



"In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to help cover the funeral expenses. Any amount is appreciated. They can be mailed to: Dorothy Ramirez P.O. Box 235 Olathe, Co. 81425"

COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

KARIN LEIGH JONES

January 18, 1954 — March 4, 2025



Karin was born on January 18, 1954, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Her Parents

were: Raymond Rose & Edith Broadbent. She was raised in Media, Pennsylvania. Attended Penncrest High School, graduating in 1971. After High School she moved to Tucson, Arizona. She worked at University of Arizona for two years, then moved to Boulder, Colorado. She was active in Martial Arts & became a member of Mensa, and then Intertel, one step above Mensa. In 1985 she met her Husband Wilson R. Jones at a dance class that he was teaching. In 1988, they moved to Ridgway, Colorado. Wilson worked for US West & Karin started working for Earthworks Teepee Co in Ridgway. In 1990 Karin applied to the U.S. Postal Service. She passed their qualifying test and worked as a Rural Mail Carrier for 25 years in Montrose, Colorado. In the meantime, she was Secretary for the Dallas Park Board for

over 18 years. She was a member of the Ouray Elks Lodge for many years as well. After retiring from USPS she became involved in Karaoke which she loved a great deal.

Karin is survived by her Husband, Wilson R. Jones; her Brother, Stewart Rose; Stepchildren, Karen Shaw, Kimberly McNicol & Kenneth Jones; Niece, Mellisa Hammelbaucher; Nephew, Joshua Rose; Son In Laws, Richard Shaw & Brent McNicol; Grand Children, Danielle Shaw, Jamie Ryanne Shaw, Taylor Cheyenne McNicol & Cody McNicol, and 2 Great Grand Children. Karin requests donations go to Second Chance Humane Society or Local Food Bank.

Services will be a Celebration of Life/ Karaoke Party to be announced in the near future.

SADIE MARIE VIALPANDO

October 27, 1930 — March 8, 2025

SADIE MARIE VIALPANDO, 94, passed away peacefully at her home in Montrose, Colorado, on Saturday, March 8th, 2025, surrounded by her loving family.

Born on October 27, 1930, in La Junta, Colorado, Sadie was the daughter of Margarito and Matilda Salazar. She married Joe Toby Vialpando in Fowler, Colorado, on July 24, 1944. Their union was one of deep love and devotion, lasting for 56 years until Joe's passing.

Sadie and Joe made their home in Pueblo, Colorado, where they raised their children. The family briefly lived in Denver before settling in Frederick, where they spent five years. In 1969, they moved to Santa Rosa, California, before returning to Colorado and finally settling in Montrose.

Throughout her life, Sadie was a dedicated wife, mother, grandmother, and friend. She found joy in simple pleasures like fishing, camping, and spending time at the casino. She was known for her warm heart, her infectious laughter, and her love for singing and dancing. Sadie was also a wonderful cook, always ensuring that no one left her home without something to eat and a smile on their face.

She is survived by her six children: Dorothy (Darrin) Thaut, Rose (Frank) Tripp, Alice (Carl) Gonzales, Geraldine (Bryan) Poland, Margarito (Dina) Vialpando, and Rosella (Ricardo) Cadena; as well as her 131 grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren and great-great-great grandchildren, along with numerous extended family and friends who were blessed to be part of her life.

Sadie was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Joe Toby Vialpando; her sons, Toby, Joe Ernie, and Daniel; her daughters, Lorraine, Martha, Guadalupe, and Alice; and several grandchildren.



ISSUE 512 March 17, 2025

ART & SOL

YOUR BRAIN ON NATURE – COPING WITH FRUSTRATION



By Dr. Lauren Hall Ruddell, Ph.D.

Greetings Mirrorites!

OLATHE-In general, I really love cheap stuff from China. Sometimes it's crap, but sometimes it's the perfect item at the perfect time. One thing I don't like is the instructions, if you can call them that, which invariably leave out important details or describe them in such a way as to be indecipherable. One such item arrived this week. I had ordered an automatic window opener for my new greenhouse. Requiring no electricity, this little unit was supposed to lift the lid when temperatures inside the greenhouse approach or exceed 70 degrees F. After examining it, I knew some minor construction would be involved in the installation and wanted to be sure it worked before going to all of that trouble. I reviewed online sources and videos and got the impression that it worked just swell. But when I myself assembled it and tested it in a jar of hot wa-



Sunrise gazing sure helps with tolerance for bad directions. Courtesy photos.

ter, no lifting occurred. Huh, I thought, maybe it just takes time. I waited. No luck. Maybe it needed for the water to be hotter the first time? No luck. Puzzled and fearful I had gotten a faulty product, I consulted the almighty Internet once again. Huh, should be working. I reassembled it again and tried it again. No luck. By this time I felt like throwing a minor tantrum and throwing the item at the wall. Too pissed off to keep at it, I got a cup of hot tea and went outside into the morning sun.

While outside I found myself calming down without really expecting to, and some new courses of action popped into

my head unbidden. Keywords I had not tried in my previous searches suggested themselves. After 10 minutes, I felt capable of calmly searching for a YouTuber with the answer to my problem and found one! There is a trick to getting these hydraulic lifts to work that the instructions completely ignore. You have to assemble them cold, and you have to screw the shaft into a circular piece, not just insert it the way the Chinese directions indicate. Eureka!!! My frustration abated utterly and instead I became very proud of myself for my perseverance.

Frustration is a complex and universal experience for humans in pursuit of needs

Continued next pg

YOUR BRAIN ON NATURE – COPING WITH FRUSTRATION From Previous pg

fulfillment, ranging from physiological needs to psychological needs, and from safety to self-actualization. Frustration is generally recognized as a goal-oriented emotional state that emerges when encountering obstacles to success and can be experienced as a sense of underperformance. We can blame the thing, person, or situation, or we can blame ourselves for being inadequate to the task. Frustration that embodies feelings of anger and is attributed to external causes can lead to aggressive behavior, whereas internal attribution can cause anxiety. Thus, affective components tend to frame and shape the frustration response, such as sadness and disappointment with the self in some situations, or more overt, like anger and irritation in other contexts. When frustrating events make the individual feel out of control, they're likely to express their frustration directly (e.g., by shouting or throwing innocent objects). There can and probably will be negative consequences, which can lead to social censure or financial loss, among other outcomes. I was glad I was able to self-regulate and then decompress before hurling a \$30 item at the wall. My time on the front deck in the morning light reduced my feelings of overload caused by the fact that I had limited time that morning and this task was taking up way too much of it.

A popular theory about frustration concerns *overload* and provides an explanation of why recuperation following a

stressor may be more rapid when external stimulation is comparatively low, like in a quiet and restorative natural scene. High complexity or other increasing-stimulation properties typical of urban settings place taxing processing demands and elicit more sustained attention than nature settings. Accordingly, restoration from cognitive overload is hampered in urban settings. It's quite likely that my creative keyword thinking would not have happened through 10 minutes of gazing upon an 8-lane freeway.

A [European study](#) supports this assumption. The researchers found that the relationships of stressful life events with number of health complaints and perceived general health were significantly moderated by the amount of green space in a 3-km (2 mile) radius. Respondents with a high amount of green space in a 3-km radius were less affected by experiencing a stressful life event that qualified as a typical 'daily hassle' than respondents with a low amount of green space in that radius. The same pattern was observed for perceived mental health. Interestingly, the moderating effects of green space were found only for green space within 3 km, and not for green space within 1 km of residents' homes, presumably because the 3-km indicator is more affected by the presence of larger areas of green space. In keeping with Attention Restoration Theory, landscape extent and a sense of being away may be at work and more effective

than staring at one's container garden a few feet away. Without really intending to, I had placed myself in a position to see rolling adobe hills in the mid-ground with the San Juans in the background. Plenty of extent, for sure.

Certain folks experience high frustration with temporary set-backs in goal achievement more keenly than others. I might be one of them, not sure. But psychologists recognize that daily hassles have real consequences for mental health and optimal functioning. [Daily hassles, frustrations, and irritations encountered in everyday life were found to have the strongest correlations with depression, feelings of hopelessness, and among individuals with heightened emotion perception](#), states one group of American researchers. Little things can add up, and when they do, for extra-sensitive types or just regular types, time in restorative environments with low stimulation, low noise, some sort of spaciousness (extent) and even a brief sense of being away can restore emotional balance and reduce frustration. So whenever possible, I plan to put away those idiotic Chinese instructions and take more outdoor breaks to preclude any unwise tantrums that might mean an unnecessary visit to Amazon to replace that item at some very near point in the future.

Be calm, be patient, and get outdoors this week to decompress.

Best wishes,

The Mindful Naturalist.

249 8500

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COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

MATILDA THE MUSICAL OFFERS KIDS AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHINE ON STAGE **"Nobody but me is going to change my story" –"Naughty," Matilda the Musical**

By Lisa Rediger

MONTROSE-For Bethany Ward it all started with a voice student asking to sing "Quiet" from a musical she had never heard of. "It was kind of a quirky song," Ward said, but she found herself asking several of her students over the years to give it a try. Then Netflix came out with a movie based on the musical.

"I cried when I saw it," Ward said. "A little girl bullied by neglectful parents and an evil headmistress. A sweet teacher. A wonderful back story about the love for a child. Kids with hopes and dreams coming together to make things right. I was so inspired! All the kids! I could see Magic Circle and all the young talent we have around here make *Roald Dahl's Matilda the Musical* come alive in Montrose. I knew I had to pitch it."

When Bethany met Wendy Bodwell on the set of *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*, sharing the stage as Phoebe and Sibella, "I met a kindred spirit when it came to teaching kids." Wendy has spent years teaching students of all ages instrumental and choral music in our area. Currently she is the choir and drama teacher

at Centennial Middle School. Bethany has been teaching piano and vocal music for 27 years, 19 of those here in Montrose.

As educators and theater volunteers with experience directing, singing, and acting, they both saw an opportunity to provide elementary and middle school aged students the rare chance to be in a main stage production.

One of the primary goals at Magic Circle is "to engage youth in a variety of live theatre experiences that educate, excite and increase community awareness of the value of performing arts."

"What a perfect fit! Ward said. "Now along with drama camps (coming this summer) and junior shows (*High School Musical, Jr.* opening in June) we could add yet another opportunity!" As Wendy Bodwell said in their pitch to the season selection committee "It is a joy and a life passion to pass the skills, joy of performing, and community that comes with the theater along to young students."

Free Youth Audition Workshop

To help local youth gain experience and confidence going into auditions or drama camp, Wendy and Bethany will be holding

a free audition workshop for youth age 7-13 on March 29th from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. at Magic Circle Theatre. Attendees will be able to work on a song from *Matilda*, learning vocal techniques and part singing, then use dialogue from a script to learn how to project and act, as well as learn some fun choreography. Along with that will be games and drama exercises to help build confidence and team work—all important aspects of being in the cast of a show. Bring a sack lunch and join in the fun!

Auditions for *Matilda the Musical*

Auditions for *Roald Dahl's Matilda the Musical* will be April 26th at 5 p.m. and/or April 27th at 1 p.m. for youth aged 7-13. Auditions for youth 14+ and adults will be April 27th at 5 p.m. Check magiccircleplayers.com for more information coming soon.

Parents of all interested students are encouraged to come join in the fun and audition as well. Make it a family thing! There are youth and adult lead roles as well as many ensemble roles, including non-singing ones.

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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
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 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
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 day 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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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-](http://ststephensmontrose.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 Feb. 23 we will have a family Bible study, "Lord, Teach Me to Pray," 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 following services for a potluck brunch.
 Please visit <https://www.summitchurchmontrose.org/events>

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 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</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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COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS: NON-PROFITS

MONTROSE CENTER FOR ARTS ANNOUNCES ANNUAL SPAGHETTI DINNER FUNDRAISER

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE-The Montrose Center for Arts (MCA) invites the public to support the arts in Western Colorado and fill up on a fantastic spaghetti dinner. The event will take place Friday, April 4, from 5 – 7:30 p.m. at the Elks Lodge (801 S. Hillcrest in Montrose). Tickets are \$18 (\$20 at the door), while children under age 6 eat for free. There will be a cash bar provided by the Elks Lodge. Tickets may be purchased at the MCA Tuesday – Saturdays, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

“This is one of the MCA’s largest and tastiest fundraising events of the year, so we hope the community will come out to support us,” say Bob and Pat Brown, MCA co-chairs for the event. “We are excited to provide great food, a bake sale, and a terrific silent auction that will feature works donated by local artists as well as merchandise donated by members and business partners in the community.”

About Montrose Center for Arts

MCA is a non-profit organization totally served by volunteers. It 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. Membership advantages include invitations to member-only special events, regular events and classes; unique show opportunities; notifications through the newsletter on all upcoming activities; and the ability to provide feedback on the direction of arts on the Western Slope. Stop by the MCA (205 East Main St.) and sign up in person.



Pahgre's
970-249-6442

Rib City
970-249-7427

Stone House
970-240-8899



Fiesta Guadalajara
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Alpen Confections
970-648-0609

Jimmer's Steak & BBQ
970-252-1227



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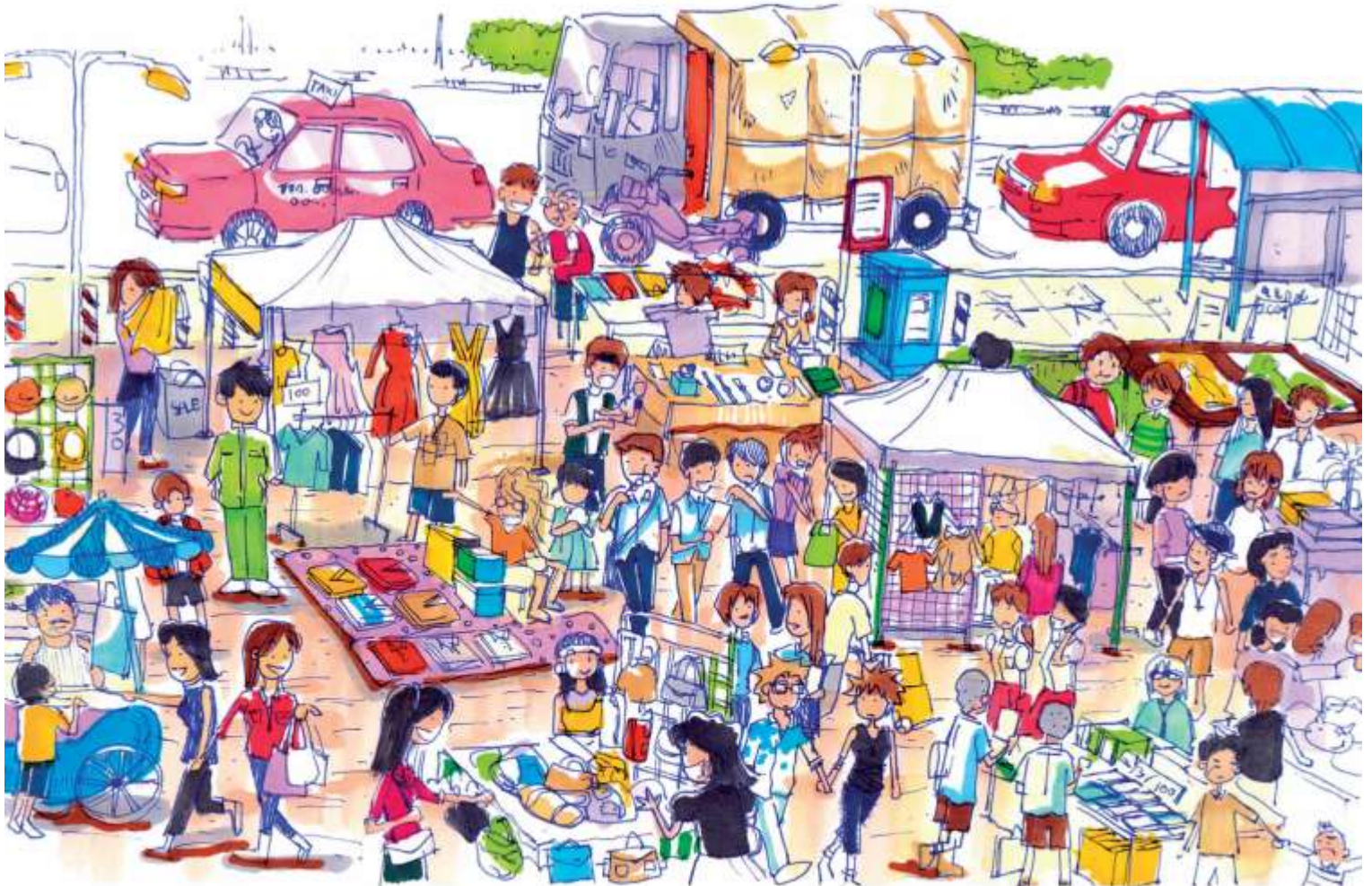
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2025 March Madness CRAFT SHOW

Friday March 28th | 9:30am-6pm

Saturday March 29th | 9am-4pm

Friendship Hall, Montrose County Fair Grounds



Free admission | Hourly door prizes

Over 70 vendors for your shopping pleasure

For Vendor information call Debbie 970.531.2438 or email: montrosefootwear@aol.com

Art About Town

EVERYBODY HAS AN INNER ARTIST

By Kathryn R. Burke

REGIONAL-Art is a panacea. It's a living-life reward. A stress reliever, anxiety reducer. It's an outlet, and for some, making it fulfills a driven need to create. For all of us, whatever form it takes, however you enjoy it, art is important.

No matter what your interests—as a participant or an observer, or both—art opens the door to joy. At the same time, it can serve as a reprieve from life's uncertainties and confusion. When life gets complicated, when anxiety ties you up in knots or gives you a bellyache, take an art break. Go visit a gallery. Watch a dance or theater performance. Attend a concert. Take a walk in nature and imagine how you might express it with pencil or paintbrush, then, take an art class.

I am a Creative Inspirationist. I make art and I teach it. In my weekly art classes—without exception—every person who attends leaves feeling they had a good time and took a much-needed break from day-to-day stuff. Some come right from work. Some get a babysitter for the kids or someone they are caring for to take some much-needed “Me” time. Some are looking for a way to let go of stress or fear of uncertain economic situations. Regardless of past experience—or any experience at all—they join us, expressing their creativity.

We have interesting groups, about half coming for the first time, a good many coming back multiple times. People get to know one another, chatting and sharing ideas and thoughts about their work, activities, travel, and families while they participate in class. Sessions are two hours, but we most always run over, enjoying the camaraderie as much as the creative activity. Often we get people who say, “I don't have a creative bone in my body,” “or I'm not artistic.” Yet, what

they turn out by the end of the class is amazing. Everybody has an inner artist. My goal is to help them find it and express it, a lesson in letting go and embracing their innate creativity

Expressing that is often seasonal. Do something to brighten cold, dark winter days. Share the joy of luminous fall colors. Celebrate summer or welcome spring.

That's where we are right now, looking forward to backyard patio time with pets, family, and friends. To working in the garden. Recognizing that, I decided to create projects that get ready for spring. Couple weeks ago, we painted wine glasses (with waterproof paint) at LaNoue DuBois Winery. Everybody painted something that reminded us of spring. Last week we decorated birdhouses at Mosaic—getting ready to welcome backyard birds. This Thursday, again at Mosaic, we are painting flowers using watercolor pencils, a fun new way to visualize your garden while you “paint” with a pencil. Saturday, we're back to the birds, decorating tall, open-sided gazebo bird-feeders at LaNoue DuBois. In April, we will paint rocks at Endless Pastabilities, decorative rocks to scatter around your garden. Then we paint wine glasses again, or soda and beer mugs, at LaNoue DuBois. All my classes include a snack and an adult beverage or non-alcoholic drink. At the LaNoue, you also get a Winery Tour, which is so much fun.

My art classes are also a gallery experience. We not only talk about what's going on around town in the art world, we view it in the classroom venues. While at LaNoue, admire the amazing artwork of Susan Humphrey hanging on the southwest wall. Mosaic, downtown, is also a gallery, filled with fun and funky, contemporary artists' work out front (the classroom studio is in the back). Endless Pasta-



Water color class at Mosaic. Courtesy photo.

bilities has hand-painted murals on the walls. And at creative classes in my studio (over the summer) students are surrounded by artwork, some of it still in progress.

The experiences I facilitate, the classes I lead, all are geared toward enjoying art for its own sake as well as experiencing the joy of making it and discovering (or reaffirming) your own creativity.

To learn more about why art is so important to us all, in the coming weeks, I plan to interview different artists representing a variety of art forms and also ask students taking my classes to share their thoughts and experiences. They have great stories to tell. Maybe you do too. Send me a note and let me know what you'd like to share about what art means to you.

Kathryn is a Renaissance woman of many talents and interests. Learn more about her at kathrynRBurke.com.

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COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

SNOW CAPPED CIDER INTRODUCES EXCLUSIVE CIDER CLUB

Western Slope Cidery Offers Award-Winning Ciders and New Releases Through Club Membership

Special to Art & Sol

CEDAREIDGE – Snow Capped Cider, the Western slope cidery known for its award-winning ciders and helmed by Kari Williams, invites cider enthusiasts to join their newly launched Cider Club. With two membership tiers – **Rootstock Club** and **Graft Club** – members can enjoy award-winning cider selections, a first taste of new releases, exclusive discounts, and more throughout the year.

"We're so excited to share some of our incredible ciders with members across the country while celebrating the amazing orchards of the Western Slope. Our members get an exclusive sneak peek at our new releases, have access to limited special small-batch ciders, and can experience our award-winning selections in the comfort of their own homes," said Kari Williams, Owner and Head Cider Maker at Snow Capped Cider.

Each Cider Club tier includes four annual shipments of Snow Capped Cider, offering members a chance to enjoy a first taste of new releases, merch, discounts, and event invitations. Each shipment will feature Snow Capped Cider's highest awarded ciders, including those honored by the **Good Food Awards**, **GLINTCAP**, and **Cider-Craft**. Personally curated by Williams, these handpicked craft ciders showcase the finest flavors from across Colorado, featuring the unique character of the state's Rocky Mountain terroir in every sip.

Rootstock Club

Rootstock Club is the ultimate cider experience, offering access to Snow Capped



Image courtesy Snow Capped Cider.

Cider's rare Small Batch series, Reserve, and Specialty lines. Members receive quarterly shipments of four bottles, a custom T-shirt, 20% off purchases, and invitations to private events. Prices range from \$120 to \$170 per shipment, plus tax and shipping.

Graft Club

Graft Club is ideal for those exploring estate-grown cider, providing quarterly shipments of two bottles or a mix of bottles and cans. Members receive a custom T-shirt, a 10% discount on purchases, and priority access to special events. Prices range from \$80 to \$150 per shipment, plus tax and shipping.

At the 2024 GLINTCAP Awards, Snow Capped Cider was named **Midsize Cidermaker of the Year** and secured the most Gold medals. Snow Capped Cider has earned 19 Best in Class awards from GLINTCAP, six prestigious Good Food Awards, and the title of highest-awarded cider at the CiderCraft Awards for two consecutive years. With every batch, Snow Capped Cider celebrates Colorado's Rocky Mountain terroir, showcasing the exceptional flavors of Western slope apples.

For more information about Cider Club memberships, visit <https://snowcappedcider.com/join-club/>.

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COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

LESLIE AMENT SHARES TALES OF THE WEST END AT THE LONE CONE LIBRARY IN NORWOOD MARCH 19

Special to Art & Sol

NORWOOD- Naturita Community librarian Leslie Ament will share her tales of growing up in Uravan and Naturita as our March Bardic Trails guest storyteller on Wednesday March 19th at 6 pm MDT.

Born in Uravan and raised in Naturita along the scenic San Miguel River, Leslie raised two sons, Jordan and Jared Blood, who graduated from Nucla High School. She has two granddaughters, Sofia and Catalina, and lives with her companions, a pit bull named T-Bone Horatio and a cat, MeowKerPow.

“We hold Sunday Socials at the Naturita Community Library,” said Ament, “together with our 11 am Talking Gourds Stories & Poems sessions, where we’ve hosted presenters and have group discussions on topics like bears, mountain lions, and wolves, as well as mushrooms, UFOs, poetry, music, healthcare and issues specific to the West End.”

“West End communities are spirited and competitive,” added Ament. “In the past, Nucla, Naturita, Uravan, and Norwood have had their rivalries, with Redvale remaining mostly neutral. Paradox kids were known for excelling in basketball and music, Uravan dominated the baseball fields, and Norwood folks were often labeled as rednecks. Meanwhile, Nucla tended to view itself as superior to the other towns (and, in my opinion, still does). As for Naturita? Well, we mostly didn’t like being told what to do — and

we’re still willing to stand our ground over just about anything.”

“I look forward to spirited conversations about the history of our amazing area and to hearing everyone’s personal stories,” concluded Ament.

The theme this month for storytellers and poets this month, if you would like a prompt, it’s “Water.”

The Stories & Poems free series happens on the third Wednesday of each month. Our featured guests will give a 15-20 min. presentation each, followed by a short question and answer period after the presentation. Then there’s a passing of

the gourd, where community members are encouraged to share stories or poems.

A collaboration of the Lone Cone Library and the Telluride Institute’s Talking Gourds poetry program, *Stories & Poems Norwood* is free and open to all ages, thanks to the generosity of the library, a Town of Telluride CCAASE grant, private donors and Talking Gourds’ Fischer & Cantor poetry contests.

For more information, text 970-729-0220 or email Goodtimes at <art@tellurideinstitute.org>. To visit the website: <www.tellurideinstitute.org/talking-gourds>

TALKING GOURDS
year 2

IN CONJUNCTION WITH: SUNDAY SOCIAL
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Tales of Old Uravan with Art Goodtimes & Leslie Ament

March 16th
@11 AM
2025

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NATURITA, CO 81422
90.787.2270

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Watercolor Pencil MOSAIC

March 20, 5:30-7:30 pm

With Kate Burke

Step-by-step
Instructions to
paint this design
or create your own



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COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

DATES AND TIMES-MAGIC CIRCLE PLAYERS 'YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU'

Magic Circle Players

Mar 14, 2025 - Mar 29, 2025

The winner of a Pulitzer Prize and an Academy Award, *You Can't Take it With You* by George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart, is a quirky, fun, old fashioned comedy served with a clash of the classes. Tony Kirby, the son of a snobbish Wall Street banker, falls madly in love with Alice Sycamore, a beautiful young woman from a good natured, loving family who teeter on the edge of eccentric. Can these two families, who couldn't be more different, survive a dinner party?

Tons of laughs, surprises, and a few "BOOMS" will leave you wanting more! Directed by Michelle Terry.

Tickets at magiccircleplayers.com.

Magic Circle Players, 420 S 12th St, Montrose. Box office: 970-249-7838.

Friday, March 21, 2025 - 07:30 PM MST

Saturday, March 22, 2025 - 07:30 PM MST

Sunday, March 23, 2025 - 02:00 PM MST

Friday, March 28, 2025 - 07:30 PM MST

Saturday, March 29, 2025 - 07:30 PM MST

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SAVE THE DATE! LOCAL EVENTS CALENDAR

ONGOING-

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 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

Feb. 4-April 11--The Montrose AARP Tax-aide site will be in operation from Feb. 4 through April 11 at the Senior Center in the Montrose Pavilion, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 9am - 2pm. Reservations are required and can be made now by calling 970-252-4889.

March 18- 7pm, Delta Library Community Room. "The Great Dinosaur Discovery." is a 1976 documentary about the dinosaurs of Dry Mesa Quarry in Delta, Colorado. The film was produced by Brigham Young University (BYU) and aired on public television stations across the United States.

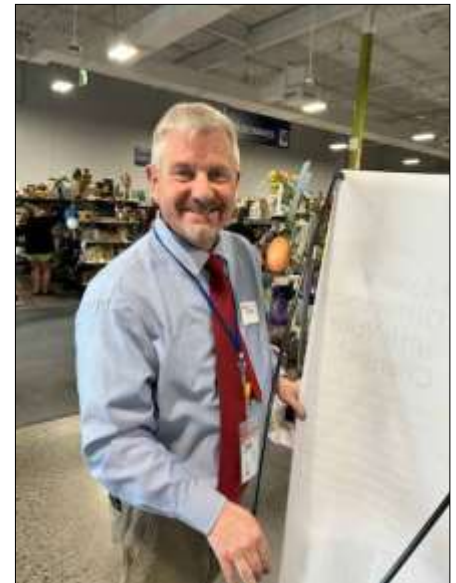
March 24-The City of Montrose Youth City Council will be hosting an open house showcasing the Montrose area's non-profit organizations and the vital public service they provide to the community during the Nonprofit Showcase and Involvement Fair set for Monday, March 24, from 4 to 7:30 p.m. at the Montrose Pavilion.

March 26-Help Foster, Kinship, and adoptive families-Attend a wine dinner March 26 at 6 pm in support of Foster Connections. Click here for [reservations link](#).

March 20-The community is invited to a gathering at the Peace Pole in Ute Indian Park on Thursday, March 20, at noon to celebrate the Spring Equinox with prayers for peace and the healing of Mother Earth. Bring your drums and your prayers. More information, Spiritual Awareness Center, 970-252-0908. Everyone is welcome.

April 4--The Montrose Center for Arts (MCA) invites the public to support the arts in Western Colorado and fill up on a fantastic spaghetti dinner. The event will take place Friday, April 4, from 5 - 7:30 p.m. at the Elks Lodge (801 S. Hillcrest in Montrose). Tickets are \$18 (\$20 at the door), while children under age 6 eat for free. There will be a cash bar provided by the Elks Lodge. Tickets may be purchased at the MCA at 205 E Main St Tuesday - Saturdays, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

GOODWILL OPENS LOCATION IN MONTROSE



Director of the new Montrose location welcomes visitors.

The Montrose Goodwill location at Oxbow Crossing officially opened on March 15. Photo by B. Switzer.

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