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BOCC MEETING DESCENDS INTO NAME-CALLING, TAUNTS



Ken Dolezal of Montrose repeatedly taunted Montrose County BOCC Chair Scott Mijares during the March 19 meeting, and was escorted out by a Sheriff's Deputy after refusing to leave. Meeting screenshot.

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE-BOCC Chair Scott Mijares called the meeting to order and asked attendee Tonya Maddox to lead in saying the Pledge of Allegiance, as the Montrose Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) convened for the regular meeting of Wednesday, March 19. All commissioners were present.

Pastor Curt Mudgett of Cedar Creek Church delivered the Invocation, first reminding those present of a verse from St. Paul in the *Book of Ephesians*, "...Be diligent to preserve the unity of the spirit and the bond of Peace."

Mudgett said, "...Dear Heavenly Father...You created us, and so we are accountable to you, so we ask you for your guidance that we might honor you today, in our personal lives and in matters involving the leadership of the County of Montrose...We continue to pray for the Dunlap family and their friends, who are missing Rick so much. May his enduring example be influential in our lives."

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Continued pg 40

MONTROSE SPORTS ROUND-UP

By Cliff Dodge

BOYS LACROSSE:

Montrose Red Hawks 7, Crested Butte Titans 6

After two games with the Grand Junction Tigers that resulted in lopsided losses, the Red Hawks bounced back against the Crested Butte Titans by the score of 7-6 on the Red Hawks home pitch.

The game was tight from the opening faceoff until the final seconds ticked off the scoreboard clock, proclaiming the Red Hawks 7-6 winners. Neither team led by more than a single goal and the defenses of both teams held the opponent's offenses in check.

The Red Hawks fell behind midway through the first quarter but tied it up and then took a 2-1 lead in the second quarter. The game remained glove tight the entire rest of the way with the Red Hawks hanging on for the victory.

According to Coach Preston Weaver this win was led by Junior Goal Keeper Patrick



Red Hawks play stout defense vs Crested Butte. Photo by Cliff Dodge.

Continued pg 50

[MEDC Sees High Turnout for Annual Meeting!](#)

[Carole Ann McKelvey Book Review: 'It Started With A Turtle!'](#)

[Red Hawks Sports: By Cliff Dodge!](#)

[Colorado Newline Report on Door-to-Door Solar Sales!](#)

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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COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

ARREST MADE IN STOLEN BLANCA POLICE RIFLE

Special to the Mirror

CBI – BLANCA, CO – After a thorough investigation by the Blanca Police Department with assistance from the Colorado

Bureau of Investigation, an arrest warrant was obtained for the arrest of Rodney Vigil, 45.

The warrant was for Vigil's involvement of



Rodney Vigil: Courtesy Blanca Police Dept.

allegedly breaking into a town police car and stealing a patrol rifle on Nov. 21, 2024.

On March 20, 2025, Vigil was arrested without incident in the 1000 block of Smith Ave. in Blanca, Colorado by the Blanca Police Department, Costilla County Sheriff's Office, and the Colorado Bureau of Investigation. Vigil was later booked into the Costilla County Jail on the charges of Possession of a Dangerous Weapon, Large Capacity Magazine Prohibited During a Crime, Theft, First Degree Criminal Trespass, Possession of Burglary Tools, Criminal Mischief and First Degree Criminal Tampering. Bond was set at \$7,500. The Blanca Police Department is offering a \$500 reward to anyone who could provide valuable information that leads to the recovery of the stolen rifle. If you have any information please contact Blanca Police dispatch at 719-589-5807.

We would like to thank all of the agencies for their assistance in this investigation.

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

YOUTH CITY COUNCIL TO HOST NON-PROFIT SHOWCASE MARCH 24

Special to the Mirror

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 In-

volvement 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 organiza-

tions, the City of Montrose Youth City Council came up with the idea to host an expo.

The Montrose Youth City Council was established by the Montrose City Council to encourage greater youth participation in the city's government.



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

DR. GAYLE FRAZZETTA NAMED 2025 PHYSICIAN OF THE YEAR BY COLORADO ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

Special to the Mirror

DENVER-The Colorado Academy of Family Physicians (CAFP) is proud to name Dr. Gayle Frazzetta, MD, FAAFP, CCD, ABHRT-C, the 2025 CAFP Physician of the Year, in recognition of her outstanding contributions to patient care, education, advocacy, and community health.

As the founder of Montrose Wellness Center, Dr. Frazzetta has provided comprehensive, compassionate care to countless patients. Her work in women’s health, hormone optimization, and osteoporosis management has placed her at the forefront of innovative and evidence-based family medicine.

"Practicing in a rural community has given me the opportunity to truly connect with my patients and address their needs holistically," said Dr. Frazzetta.

A respected educator, Dr. Frazzetta has served as an Assistant Clinical Professor at the University of Colorado School of Medicine’s Department of Family Medicine for nearly two decades. She has trained and mentored aspiring physicians, instilling in them the values of empathy, excellence, and service.

Her leadership extends well beyond the clinic. Dr. Frazzetta has been a powerful advocate for public health—supporting local Women’s Marches, improving school nutrition policies, raising awareness about youth concussion risks, and serving for 16 years as a physician advisor for the Montrose County Department of Health and Human Services.

In 2019, she received the COPIC Insurance Humanitarian of the Year Award for her advocacy work, and in 2022, she was honored with the Humanitarian Peace Award from the Western Slope Friends of the Himalayas for her commitment to women’s health and global service.



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

WHEN DEMOCRATS DON'T GET THEIR WAY THEY ACT LIKE PETULANT CHILDREN

Editor:

Montrose Democrats, it's time to stop and take a deep breath. Yes, we have two new commissioners, conservative commissioners in fact. If I remember correctly, the Democrat party did not even put up a candidate to run for commissioner. In all my time in Montrose (almost 40 years) I have never seen the Democrat party so concerned about the Republican party. I have to smile when I hear Democrats telling our commissioners, "You are supposed to represent everyone in Montrose County". Tell me exactly how would they do that. Pretty much every decision they make will have those who agree and those who disagree, apparently hard for Dems to understand. It is difficult to please everyone. Actually, it is about time that the conservative majority in this county has representation. For too long Republican commissioners here have seemed to represent more liberal views than that of the majority of their constituents. Maybe that is why when Democrats don't get their way they act like petulant children. Time to grow up and let our new commissioners do their job.

Ben Alexander, Montrose



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COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

I-70 WEEKLY CHAIN LAW ENFORCEMENT OPERATIONS

Colorado State Patrol

COLORADO- The Colorado State Patrol held its weekly multi-agency enforcement operation on the I-70 mountain corridor on Thursday, March 20.

Reporting agencies:

- Colorado State Patrol
- Garfield County Sheriff's Office
- Parachute Police Department
- Silt Police Department

The results are as follows:

-Total passenger vehicle contacts made -

45

-Total passenger vehicle speeding citations - 7

-Total passenger vehicle citations - 20

-Total CMV contacts - 133

-Total CMV chain must carry citations - 10

-Total other CMV citations - 10

The next Colorado State Patrol multi-agency Enforcement Operation will be held on Wednesday, March 26, 2025.

As a reminder, compliance with traction laws for passenger vehicles requires a

3/16-inch tread depth and being rated either "all-weather" or "Mud and snow." Commercial Drivers are required to carry chains from Sept. 1 to May 31 each year.

State Troopers and partnering local agencies from Glenwood Springs to Golden will participate in these weekly operations to enforce dangerous moving violations, especially speed and chain law violations.

These operations will be held when weather is not inclement to ensure commercial and private drivers are prepared.

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

THANK ALL VETERANS FOR YOUR FREEDOM

Dear Editor,

This Saturday, March 29 is officially VietNam War Veterans Day.

I want to tell you about two of the most heroic boys to ever serve our country in

war.

These are two men whose story has been told and is on file in the Ouray County Museum. Ouray High school friends, both drafted by the United States Army and

went to war in July, 1967.

Little did they know that 11,000 miles away the fate of both boys would be determined.

Separated at Cam Rahn Bay Vietnam on January 1, 1968 with a hug and a handshake and a promise to go back to Ouray together.

February 5, 1968 changed all that when Robert Lee Dickson was killed.

His family requested that his buddy, Fred Stollsteimer, please bring the body home. And so it was. Fred brought his friend home, buried him and returned to war. Serving with extreme bravery.

There is much more to this story than what can be told here, but I ask you, if you meet Fred or look him up here in Montrose, thank him for his service and thank him for your freedom and say a prayer for the soul of Robert Lee Dickson.

Thank all veterans for your freedom. Fred is my brother and I have read his complete story hundreds of times but I still break into tears when I see pictures of him in the jungle.

So my hero brother, thank you for your service and your help. I could never have survived the 1960s without you.

Bob Stollsteimer, Montrose

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: COMMENTARY

MONTROSE COUNTY COMMISSIONER SEAN M. POND CALLS FOR URGENT CORA REFORM: "THIS LAW IS CRIPPLING GOVERNMENT"

By Sean M. Pond

Montrose County Commissioner, District 3

MONTROSE— Montrose County Commissioner Sean M. Pond is calling for urgent, bipartisan reform of the Colorado Open Records Act (CORA) and the Colorado Sunshine Law, citing growing misuse of the system that is paralyzing the ability of governments—large and small—to function.

"Transparency is a cornerstone of a constitutional republic, but what's happening now isn't transparency—it's being weaponized to obstruct and undermine governance," said Pond. "At this very moment, I do not have access to my county-issued phone. It's been seized for yet another records request, and I'm unable to communicate with my staff or my constituents. This is becoming routine, and it's unacceptable."

"The moment you take the oath of office, you become less free than the people you serve," Pond continued. "You lose your right to privacy, your right to speak freely,

and your ability to function without constant surveillance. That sacrifice should be honored—not exploited."

Pond emphasized that while the original purpose of CORA was to ensure public access and government accountability, the law has been repeatedly abused by individuals and groups submitting excessive, politically motivated, or duplicative requests. The result, he says, is a collapse in operational capacity.

"This isn't just about Montrose County," said Pond. "Town mayors, city councils, county commissioners, and public employees across Colorado are being buried in open records requests that serve no public interest. The law is being used not to inform the public—but to obstruct and intimidate."

Pond is calling on state lawmakers and local leaders alike to come together and fix what has become a system of dysfunction. He's advocating for the following reforms:

Reasonable limits on the number and fre-

quency of requests per person or organization,

Protections that uphold the First and Fourth Amendment rights of public servants by ensuring personal devices not used for government business remain off-limits,

Support for proactive transparency systems that reduce dependency on CORA, Financial and legal resources for counties and municipalities overwhelmed by compliance demands.

"I encourage lawmakers to reach out to the people in their own districts—commissioners, council members, clerks, and mayors," said Pond. "Ask them what's happening. This isn't a partisan problem—it's a structural failure. And if we don't fix it, good governance will continue to erode."

Commissioner Pond is available for comment, interviews, and follow-up inquiries.

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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

KREX-TV NAMES JUSTIN BROWN ANCHOR OF 'WAKE UP WESTERN SLOPE' & KREX NEWS AT NOON

Special to the Mirror
GRAND JUNCTION— KREX-TV (Newschannel 5 (CBS) Grand Junction/ Montrose is pleased to announce Justin

Brown as Main Anchor/Reporter on "Wake up Western Slope," which airs on KREX from 5 – 7am, and on KREX News at Noon. Brown will begin his on-air duties in

early April. Brown replaces anchor Noah Anderson, who was promoted to Nexstar Media Group sister station KTXL - FOX 40 in Sacramento, CA. Brown brings dynamic on-air anchoring and network-level producing skills to KREX. As an executive producer he launched national cable news shows, where he conceived strategy, guided editorial decisions, managed staff and oversaw production of multiple hours of morning news. Justin has also served in a variety of on-air roles including news and entertainment host and moderator of political debates. KREX/ KFXQ/KGJT Vice President and General Manager Bill Dallman said, "Justin's deep knowledge of news and entertainment, along with his engaging on-air personality will allow KREX-TV to continue leading the Grand Junction/Montrose market in the mornings and midday." Commenting on his new role, Brown said, "I am excited to join the talented team at KREX-TV and looking forward to highlighting the incredible individuals and communities in the Grand Valley. I look forward to connecting with everyone and invite you to wake up with me every morning as we start the day informed and inspired!"



*Justin Brown. KREX-TV
Courtesy photo.*



Celebrating National Doctors' Day

On this National Doctors' Day, March 30, we extend our deepest gratitude to the dedicated physicians who bring skill, compassion, and hope to every life they touch. Your unwavering commitment to healing and care makes a world of difference every day.

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MHS COACH'S CORNER: PRESTON WEAVER MONTROSE VARSITY LACROSSE COACH

By Cliff Dodge

MONTROSE-Lacrosse season is here. Can Spring be far behind? Head Coach Preston Weaver sat down and talked about his team, his players, the team's goals, and rigors of league play along with other tidbits.

"The expectations I have for this team are basically the same year after year. We want to be over 50 percent wins, we want to compete in our conference, and that will hopefully lead us to the state playoffs.

"We have already played three games and are now 1 win and 2 losses overall. We are the same 1 and 2 in conference play and still have to play Fruita-Monument, Telluride, Durango, Crested Butte again. It's tough competition but we still have all the goals we set out in front of us.

"There are 27 players on our roster and we are very senior and junior heavy this year. Three seniors came out and are playing lacrosse for the first time and we have seven seniors who are returning and contributing to the team. Our junior class has six players along with five sophomores and two freshmen, so this year is different. Last year we had about 40 players. We lost about 17 players to graduation, parents moving, guys playing different sports, which gave us the 27 players on our current roster.

"The rest of the schedule is probably like Fruita-Monument and Telluride who have been the cream of the crop here in the Mountain League for the past few years. We have already played Grand Junction twice, and in the opinion of our coaching

staff, they are the top dogs in the league as things stand right now. Durango has a lot of players returning and they have a new coaching staff. Telluride lost a lot of players, but they have always been one of those teams you don't know how good they are until you play them, and we play them this Saturday the 22nd. We played Crested Butte last Saturday and were able to pull out the 7-6 win, while still missing about four of our players due to injury and sickness. I think when we play them again it will be a competitive game, and we already know their game plan, so we'll have to repeat our effort to get another win."

One of the problems the Red Hawks faced against Crested Butte was winning faceoffs.

"Faceoffs against Crested Butte are going to be tough no matter who they play. Their faceoff specialist led the state last year in win percentage, and he just happens to be in our conference which presents problems for their opposition. I believe he will win the win percentage stat again this year for the state.

"The win over Crested Butte was led by Goal Keeper Patrick Alvarez. He had 25 saves in the game. We had 3 goals from Senior Captain Zack Motley, 1 goal from Senior Eli Sauer, 1 goal from Junior Elijah Womack and 1 goal from Junior Maverick Powers.

"I think we figured out what kind of a team we had last Saturday. We took a difficult loss last week and it was one of those losses that we are not going to reflect on based on the score. The way the players bounced back on Saturday and the



Red Hawks Lacrosse Coach Preston Weaver. Photo by Cliff Dodge.

practices we have had this week tells me this team is a team. The energy level we had on Saturday was above and beyond. The coaches and I were talking before the game and there was something different about that day. The excitement level, the looseness of the players and their coming together as a team. I think we have hit that point. Now the main thing is being able to maintain Saturday's efforts for the 11 remaining games that we have on our schedule."

The Red Hawks play Glenwood Springs this Thursday at home.

Then Telluride comes to Montrose on Saturday with first faceoff at 11 AM.

Then we play them again on the Road next Wednesday.

This will test the Red Hawks with three tough games in a row.



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

COLORADO DRIVERS TOO FAST THROUGH LOW-SPEED ZONES

Troopers wrote over 1,200 tickets in 2024 in school or construction zones

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Special to the Mirror

COLORADO – School zones and construction zones have lower speed limits, traffic calming devices and several high-visibility warning devices for drivers for good reason. Kids' and roadside workers' lives are at risk. Yet, when looking at data from the Colorado State Patrol in 2024, troopers alone cited almost 1,220 people for speeding in construction or school zones.

"Kids, neighbors and road workers count on all of us to care about other humans when they enter these spaces. Currently, too many motorists are failing these vulnerable populations," stated Col. Matthew C. Packard, chief of the Colorado State Patrol. "A driver should never assume people will not be present in these low-speed zones, no matter the day of the week or time of day. Follow the law because people's lives depend on you."

Speeding is a common type of aggressive driving, and it can happen on neighborhood streets as well as busy four-lane highways.

"Speeding can be habit forming, but it doesn't make it excusable," explains Col. Packard. "When you don't drive cautiously and lawfully in school and work zones, you display extreme indifference to your neighbors and community."

According to Colorado State Patrol data, 49 of Colorado's 64 counties had at least one instance of a driver receiving a citation in either a work zone or school zone. The top five counties with the most speeding citations issued by Colorado State Troopers in these low-speed zones in 2024 were:

- 1.El Paso County (327) an increase over 2023 (222 citations)
- 2.Adams County (104)
- 3.Eagle County (77)
- 4.Boulder County (56)
- 5.Park County (56)

Troopers ask you to follow Colorado's Hands-Free law and put away distractions. Drivers should look for mobile and permanent signs that prompt them to slow down or follow shifting lane patterns. Keep your cool by practicing your patience, and always leave extra space between your vehicle and other motorists, equipment, or people.

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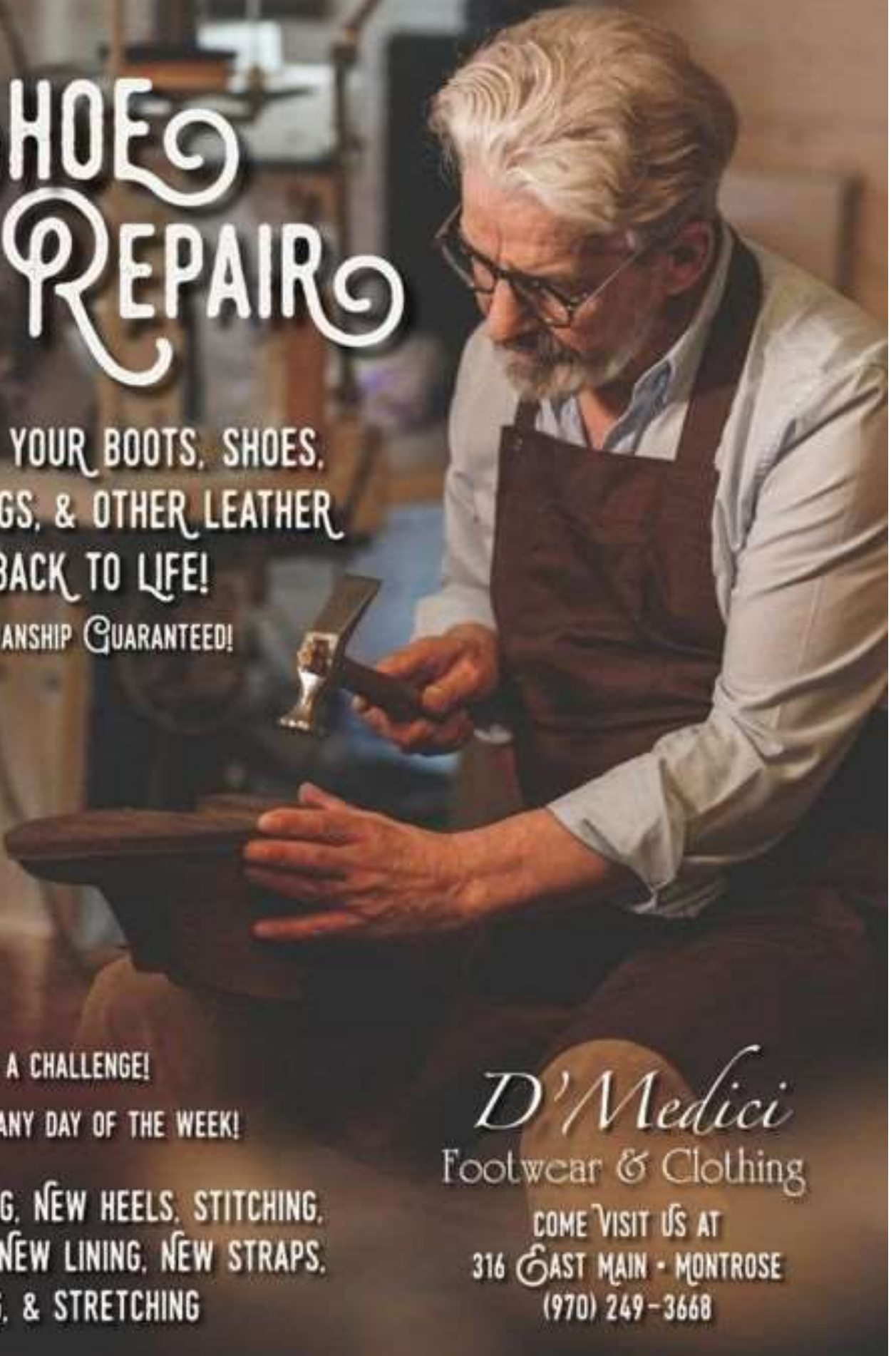
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COLORADO NEWS BRIEFS

72-YEAR OLD ARRESTED IN 2007 FREDERICK HOMICIDE OF YOUNG MOTHER



(Jessica Bejarano: Courtesy of CeCe Merrow)

Special to the Mirror

CBI-FREDERICK, CO – After nearly 18 years, the Colorado Bureau of Investigation has made an arrest in the 2007 homicide of 25-year-old mother, Jessica Bejarano. Darrell Burklund, 72, a former maintenance worker, was arrested on March 14, 2025, in York, Nebraska, in connection with Jessica’s murder. He has been booked on a single count of Second Degree Murder.

On April 6, 2007, Frederick police officers responded to a call at a residence in the 7900 block of Larkspur Circle in Frederick, Colorado, where they discovered the body of Jessica Bajarano in the bathroom. She had suffered a single stab wound to her chest. At the time of the incident, her four-year-old daughter and two-year-old son were present in the home. Initially, investigators looked at various suspects, including the victim’s husband, who was later cleared as he was determined to be at work during the time of the crime.

Investigators ultimately obtained DNA evidence that subsequently yielded a potential match to Darrell Burklund. On March 14, 2025, investigators conducted a follow-up interview with Burklund. Following the interview, Burklund was arrested and taken into custody at the York County Sheriff’s Detention Center, in York, Nebraska.

At the time of the homicide, Burklund was 54 years old. He is currently 72. He will face an extradition hearing this Wednesday before he can be transported back to Colorado to face charges.

“This arrest is the culmination of years of tireless work by our investigators for the unwavering pursuit of justice for Jessica Bejarano and her family,” said CBI Director Chris Schaefer, who was one of the original CBI agents assigned to this case in 2007. “I want to remind the victims’ families to never give up hope. No matter how old or complicated these cases are, our cold case team is dedicated to resolving the most difficult cases no matter how long it takes.”

“We are grateful for the diligent and hard work of the CBI and its cold case team (especially Agent Kevin Koback). We never gave up hope. Chris Schaefer, who was on Jessica’s case from day one, made a promise that he would not retire until Jessica’s case was solved. He has kept his promise,” said Cece Merrow, mother of Jessica Bejarano. “There were so many twists and turns in her case, but we always had faith in the CBI.”

“The Frederick Police Department would like to thank all agencies involved for their dedication in this case to seeking justice and closure for the family of Jessica Bejarano,” said Frederick Police Chief Todd Norris.

CBI extends its gratitude to Frederick Police, the 19th Judicial District Attorney’s Office, and both Nebraska State Patrol, and the York County Sheriff’s Office in Nebraska whose assistance was instrumental throughout this investigation. The charge against Mr. Burklund is merely an accusation and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law



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CITY COUNCIL INTERVIEWS APPLICANT FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION, ANNOUNCES DATES FOR ANNUAL SPRING CLEANUP, HEARS AIRPORT UPDATE



City Council Work Session of March 17. Meeting Screenshot.

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE-The Montrose City Council interviewed an applicant for the Historic Preservation Commission, announced dates for the annual spring cleanup, and considered several upcoming agenda items at the regular work session of March 17. All councilors were present.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION APPLICANT INTERVIEW

Applicant [Bethany Maher](#) brings a strong background in historic preservation and in the community, as she serves as Executive Director of the Mexican American Development Association (MADA) and has also led historic preservation efforts in Leadville. Maher's appointment to the Historic Preservation Commission will be placed on the March 31 Consent Agenda, Mayor Reed said.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Council considered the [Rock the Block Event Main Street Closure](#), for an annual event held by Habitat for Humanity of the San Juans.

Council discussed a [Parks Fertilizer and Herbicide Contract Award Recommendation](#); they will be asked to approve the award of the Parks and Vacant Lot Fertilizer and Herbicide Application Contract to Aspen SavATree, Ridgway, Co, for \$140,000.

Background-A memo from Parks Superintendent Daniel Payne states, "The City's Parks Division has contracted the application of herbicides and fertilizers for 28 parks, covering approximately 149 acres of turf, as well as for 18 vacant lots throughout the City. The services included fertilization and weed control for all turf areas twice. Additionally, weed control was performed twice for all vacant lots, with some of these lots requiring mowing. This year, the contractor will implement three application rounds to more effectively manage weeds throughout the City. The increase in cost is attributed to the purchase of materials. Last year, the City supplied all fertilizers and herbicides with an estimated expenditure of \$45,000. To streamline operations for the crews, Aspen SaveATree will provide all products along with an additional herbicide application. City staff recommend extending the contract with Aspen SaveATree....the contract recommended for award to SaveATree will be a Not-to-Exceed contract, which will be billed as work is performed, according to the rates provided in the bid sheet. The Not-to-Exceed amount is set at \$140,000. The budgets for 2025 include \$120,000 for Parks, \$25,000 for the Cemetery, and \$15,000 for Sunset Mesa."

Council considered a [Parks Turf Maintenance](#)

[Contract Award Recommendation](#) for the extension of the Parks Turf Maintenance Contract to Green and Bearit in the amount of \$132,412.

Background-A memo from Parks Superintendent Daniel Payne to Council states, "The City's Parks Division contracts turf maintenance for 13 out of 28 parks with turf, which accounts for 75% of the total turf area in City Parks, excluding Sunset Mesa and Cedar Creek Cemetery. The contractor is responsible for weekly mowing, trimming, edging of all walkways, cleaning up trash and debris, conducting irrigation checks, and ensuring all sidewalks, roadways, picnic areas, and walkways within those parks are clean. The contractor also helps with leaf removal efforts in highly used parks...Since 2017, the City has worked with Green and Bearit, who provide on-call services such as mowing vacant lots, and performing irrigation maintenance and repairs. They have been the primary contractor for park turf maintenance since 2019. Green and Bearit have consistently demonstrated exceptional service, adapting to events, weather conditions, and the diverse needs of park users... The proposed contract extension with Green and Bearit will be a not-to-exceed contract, which will be billed based on the work performed according to the rates provided in the bid sheet. The maximum amount for this contract is \$140,000, which is budgeted for the 2025 fiscal year."

The final discussion item was authorization of the 2025 Streetlight Replacement Project, with council considering approval for Year 3 of the Street Light Upgrade Project, in partnership with DMEA, in the amount of \$180,000 for direct LED replacements and pole replacements.

Background-A memo from Streets Division Superintendent Nick Priddy states, "The City of Montrose currently has approximately 1900 streetlights on a variety of street types and most of these fixtures are High-Pressure Sodium (HPS) or Mercury Vapor (MV) fixture type. These fixtures were originally installed in the 1950s and 1960s and have been the primary fixture type for street lighting until 2010 when

CITY INTERVIEWS MAHER FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION From previous pg

when LED fixtures were introduced to the market. Over the last 10 years, as the HPS or MV fixtures have failed or needed replacement they have been replaced with a Light-emitting Diode (LED) fixture.

The City of Montrose successfully initiated the first year of the Street Light Upgrade Project in 2023, partnering with DMEA. This successful second year has resulted in the replacement of over 200 streetlights, completing the entire northern half of Montrose. DMEA has reported a 66% reduction in energy consumption in this area due to the new energy-efficient LED lights. Based on this success, we propose to continue the project into its third year..."

GENERAL COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Councilor Judy Ann Files, who serves on Montrose County's [Airport Advisory Com-](#)

[mittee](#), presented the Economic Impact Study for Montrose Regional Airport, "It definitely impacts us," Files said. The airport has an impact of \$713,000,000 and generates 4,323 jobs with a \$231,000 payroll, she said. "I just felt really good about that."

Council spent time in discussion of the benefits the airport brings to Montrose.

Files also expressed appreciation for the City's neatly printed and helpful work session agendas, "I wanted publicly thank you Lisa (DePiccolo), you do a fantastic job with that...and when we go into execution session, You do a great job Chris (Dowsey) of having all that documentation...it's so nice to have those steps to follow...thank you."

Mayor Pro Tem David Frank said he serves on the Region 10 board. The legis-

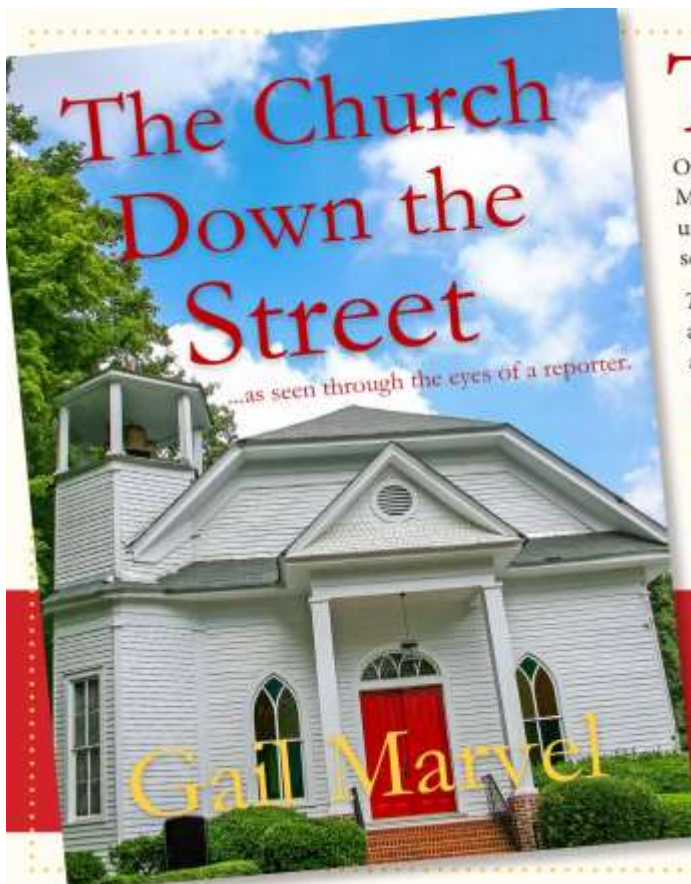
lature is taking an axe to a lot of funding, which impacts the Area Agency on Aging, Frank said, "If you have an opportunity to contact your legislator and advocate for keeping that funding whole...this is critical funding..."

STAFF REPORTS

City Engineer Scott Murphy gave a traffic update, Ogden Road will open by the end of the week, the following Monday, Woodgate and Oak Grove will close, he said. Also, there are tours available of the new public works facility. "It's a great opportunity to get a feel for what's going on there, and what's coming up..." Murphy said.

April 25 and 26 (7am to 7pm) are the annual spring cleanup dates.

With no further discussion, Mayor Reed adjourned the work session.



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

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

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

Readers will:

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

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

GAIL MARVEL
Montrose Author & Reporter





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SOME DOOR-TO-DOOR SOLAR SALES INCLUDE FALSE AND MISLEADING INFORMATION: COLORADO SOLAR AND STORAGE ASSOCIATION HOPES TO SEE STATE LEGISLATION PROTECT CONSUMERS

Editor's Note: This article appeared first in Colorado Newsline-We are sharing it here upon request.

By: **Sharon Sullivan, Colorado Newsline**

COLORADO- A young and persuasive salesperson came to Grand Junction resident Brandon Keen's home last summer selling residential rooftop solar systems. Keen was interested in solar, so he listened to the salesperson's spiel.

Keen said the Go Brite Solar salesperson told him that a Colorado grant would pay for the solar panels and installation and that Our World Energy, a solar company headquartered in Arizona, with locations in Colorado, New Mexico and Texas, was one of only a few companies approved to install the system. Keen signed up to lease the panels.

Go Brite Solar, with locations in multiple states, is a "sales only" company that solicits solar systems door-to-door then sells the contracts to a solar installation company like Our World Energy.

Go Brite Solar's website states "Hint: We don't work for solar companies, we work for you."

After signing a contract, Keen learned from a neighbor who had his solar panels installed by a longtime local company that the solar incentives are not grants but, instead, a collection of state and federal tax credits for people who owe taxes. And that's only with a purchase — not lease — of the solar. When a person leases the solar panels, the tax credit goes to the lending institution financing the project. Some utility providers offer rebates for solar as well.

Keen also learned that any certified solar company could do the installation. He canceled his contract with Our World Energy.

"It was a brokerage group that came to our door," Keen, 38, said. "We were tricked on how he presented it. I'm not sure if he understood the incentive program."

Colorado Newsline attempted to reach Go Brite Solar for comment by calling both of the phone numbers listed on its website. One number reached an answering machine for Utah Online School, according to the greeting. Messages left by a reporter were not returned. A man an-

swered a call to the second number, identifying as Cove Home Security, a company in Draper, Utah.

In recent years there's been an uptick in Colorado, and across the nation, in door-to-door solar "sales only" solicitors accused of predatory and misleading practices. They're solar brokers who then sell the contracts to solar installation companies — some of whom have gone out of business or moved, leaving customers stranded when a problem arises or with incomplete systems.

The office of Attorney General Phil Weiser would not confirm or otherwise comment on any potential investigations into deceptive solar sales practices, said AG spokesperson Elliot Goldbaum.

Consumer protection legislation

The Colorado Solar and Storage Association expects to support consumer protection legislation at the Colorado Legislature in the coming weeks. The consumer protection bill, if it's introduced, would provide guidelines not only for sales-only companies but also for solar installation businesses.

"We're tired of seeing unethical people selling solar in Colorado," said Mike Kruger, the COSSA CEO and president. "The bill will put up guardrails, and spell out expectations for behavior of salespersons."

Grand Junction resident Ted Juntilla, 68, is a disabled military veteran who had been considering solar when a person selling for Our World Energy came to his door in June 2024. Juntilla said the salesperson told him that the solar installation would be free and that his utility bills would remain the same for the next 25 years.

However, Juntilla's solar system would not have been free — instead, it would have been financed over a period of years with no upfront costs. Customers pay a monthly fee, basically trading a utility bill for a finance payment.

Juntilla said he felt pressured to decide quickly, because he was told that his utility provider Grand Valley Power would allow only a certain percentage of homes

in his subdivision to install solar systems. However, when Juntilla contacted the electric cooperative he was told that was not the case.

Grand Valley Power is a member of Colorado Rural Electric Association, a non-profit that represents and serves 21 Colorado electric co-ops. Grand Valley Power spokesperson Rita Sanders said Grand Valley Power does not currently restrict, or in the past restricted, anyone from installing solar due to system capacity. However, that could change in the future if local solar generation meets or exceeds demand in the same area, which poses challenges to maintaining a safe and reliable grid, Sanders said in an email to Newsline.

Juntilla also learned that Our World Energy had pulled a building permit for his property from the Mesa County Building Department, without his permission. "There was no mention of doing that during the sales pitch," Juntilla said. "I didn't sign anything. It really irritated me. It seems unscrupulous not to notify me."

Attempts to reach Our World Energy by phone and email were unsuccessful. A third-party agent answered the phone, and told a reporter that someone from the company would call back.

San Isabel Electric is a CREA member based in Pueblo West, serving customers in southern Colorado. San Isabel spokesperson Paris Daugherty said San Isabel receives a lot of calls from its members asking if the co-op is associated with a particular door-to-door salesperson.

"Sometimes (the sales associates) say they are San Isabel Electric and want to inspect the meter," Daugherty said. "It's frustrating to us. We do not do door-to-door meter inspections."

San Isabel Electric told Ion Solar, headquartered in Provo, Utah, that it was misrepresenting itself by saying it was with the electric co-op, and that it was impersonating the co-op, which is a crime. She said that after San Isabel contacted local media Ion Solar stopped the practice.

However, other companies in the San Isabel area continue to mislead residents,

SOME DOOR-TO-DOOR SOLAR SALES INCLUDE FALSE, MISLEADING INFORMATION From previous pg

Daugherty said. She said it's difficult to confront the sales associates, because they do not wear clothing identifying who they work for, they drive vehicles without a business logo, and they do not give out business cards.

"It's difficult to figure out what company they're working for," she said.

It's not just sales-only companies that are engaging in misleading sales practices. There are also fly-by-night installers who do not finish installations they were hired to do, Daugherty said.

"There is tremendous opportunity for solar in southern Colorado. In our area there are a wide range of installers and sales companies that do great work. (The unethical companies) are ruining it for reputable businesses."

Scams increasing

Both the declining cost of solar, and the availability of incentives offered by the federal government — whose goal during the Biden administration was to transition to a 100% carbon-free electric grid by 2035 — has led to an increase in solar sales in recent years. Solar accounted for 40% of all new electric generating capacity in 2019 in the country.

"Solar scams usually happen door-to-door, and ramp up when there are incentives like there are currently," said Mark Fetterhoff, program manager for AARP ElderWatch, a consumer watchdog group that has partnered with the Colorado attorney general's office for 20 years. "It's an opportunity for misinformation. People take advantage of it."

Fetterhoff said both solar and home alarm companies are commonly tied to door-to-door sales scams occurring nationwide.

In November 2023, a Time magazine report described how door-to-door sales associates across the country often tell consumers they can get free panels from the government, which is not true. Consumers are told there are tax credits, though the credits are only for those who owe taxes. And they're told they can eliminate their energy bill, which is not likely unless they invest in a battery — at a significant extra cost. In most cases people with solar will still have a small utility bill that allows their system to be hooked up to the grid.

AARP published an article in September on how to avoid solar scams, and lists a

website — brokercheck.finra.org — where consumers can check to learn if a solar broker is licensed. Go Brite Solar is not listed as a licensed broker.

A 'bro' sales model

Atlasta Solar Center in Grand Junction, and Empowered Energy Systems in Hotchkiss, are employee-owned solar companies on the Western Slope. Representatives at both companies say they have noted a huge increase in door-to-door sales associates using aggressive and misleading practices.

The associates are often young — 18 to early 30s — and friendly, clean-cut, religious and from Utah, said Lou Villaire, one of the owners of Atlasta Solar Center, a company in business for 45 years.

It's a "bro model," a get-rich-quick scheme that has taken hold throughout the United States, Villaire said. The associates have a "red line," a minimum amount they must sell the job for and any money above that amount they get to pocket. Thus, they're incentivized to sell the product for as high as they can, he said.

"Once they sell the contract, they're done," Villaire said, adding that contracts are often sold to installers headquartered out-of-state, some of which have gone bankrupt and later reemerge as a new solar business.

Atlasta receives calls every week from people seeking help with getting their solar installation completed, but they're unable to reach the original installer because the company is no longer in business or has left town, Villaire said.

"I've been in the business 20 years and I've never seen anything like this year, these tactics," Villaire said. "We've always seen plenty of companies come and go, but this level of deception I've never seen."

Additionally, Villaire noted dozens of cases where consumers were sold solar installations for \$5,000 to \$10,000 more than what locally-owned solar companies would charge for the same system.

Crawford rancher and farmer Terry Baker said he canceled a deal he made last fall with an out-of-town door-to-door solar sales associate after he learned that he was being charged \$10,000 more than what Empowered Energy Systems would have charged. Baker, 63, had signed up, in part, because he was told that without solar, his utility bills could triple in the

next few years.

Baker was charged a \$1,500 cancellation fee.

"We thought we had plenty of time to back out," Baker said. "I paid it. I wanted out of the whole thing. I wanted away from it. I'm partly to blame. He was just a young guy, in his 20s. He raced over a lot."

Danielle Carre, a co-owner at Empowered Energy, said homeowners have been lured into signing contracts only to learn later that they need an electrical upgrade to install the solar, and that the costs will be significantly higher. Empowered Energy has also heard from community members that they were told they'd receive tax credits for solar and for replacing their roof. However, federal tax credits only apply to the solar, not roof replacements.

"We've been approached by these sales companies but refuse to work with them," Carre said. "Their price is inflated. It saddens us that this is happening, because solar is a good thing and these practices give the industry a bad reputation."

Teddy Aegerter, of Atlasta Solar, said homeowners are sometimes misled about what they are signing. Signatures are often collected on iPads, without any hard copies given to customers, he said.

The sales-only business model is not necessarily a problem itself, said Kruger, the Colorado Solar and Storage Association CEO. Not all business owners are comfortable selling, so they might want to hire someone to do it for them.

Villaire said he considered hiring an outside sales company to sell for Atlasta and was negotiating with someone until he learned what the sales associate would charge customers. "What stopped me was one of the owners told me the only way they'd do it is if they could put one-third of the price in their pocket," Villaire said. "For perspective, most sales types of jobs garner a commission of 3 to 6%, not 33%. They are motivated to go above the red line for the highest price they can."

Kruger said, "People get into trouble when sales companies make tons of promises, then sell the contract to an installer — promises like 'you'll never get a utility bill again,' or, 'It will pay for itself in two years.' They're not being honest or truthful. They'll say whatever it takes to get a customer's money.

"One thing is uniform — it's all designed for a quick sale, and a quick buck."

OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

MONTROSE COUNTY MUST REJECT THE MIRAGE OF "FRESH IDEAS"

Editor:

I delayed publishing this piece last Monday, overwhelmed by a torrent of pressing concerns, but the urgency to rouse the Citizens of Montrose into action can no longer wait. The time for mere discussion has passed—action must take its place. Montrose has proudly upheld Conservative values for generations, yet we've grown complacent, letting those principles slip through our fingers. Now, we face a choice: stand firm or watch our treasured conservative haven fade forever.

The Illusion of "Fresh Ideas"

At the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) meeting on Wednesday, March 12, 2025, one speaker praised the arrival of "fresh ideas" in Montrose County. It's a seductive phrase—who doesn't crave innovation? But these aren't fresh at all. They're recycled failures from California, Oregon, Washington, and Denver—policies that have left a trail of fiscal ruin

and moral decay. Far from revitalizing us, they threaten to drag Montrose down the same cliff I watched my former home tumble over decades ago.

The Leftist Playbook Invades Montrose

These "fresh ideas" are a Trojan horse for leftist policies that clash with Montrose County's cherished values. Look at the evidence: skyrocketing deficits, crumbling infrastructure, and a rejection of family values have bankrupted places like California not just financially, but spiritually. The socialist/globalist agenda peddled here mirrors that descent—dressed up as progress, yet devoid of the accountability and traditional roots that define us. Montrose isn't broke; why fix it with tools that have shattered every community they've touched?

The True Cost of Abandoning Our Soul

This isn't just about policy—it's about Montrose County's soul. The leftist agenda cloaked as "fresh ideas" doesn't merely

strain our budget; it frays the moral fabric that binds us.

Fiscal recklessness—think Denver's budget woes or California's endless debt—is bad enough, but the erosion of family values and personal responsibility cuts deeper.

We can't afford to let our home fall to this ideological experiment.

A Call to Hold the Line

Montrose County stands at a crossroads. We can rally behind voices like Jim Anderson, demanding our commissioners defend the values that make this place worth calling home. Or we can let the cheerleaders of failure steer us toward the abyss that swallowed California, Oregon, and Washington.

Let's choose again today to protect the county we know and love. The stakes are too high for anything less.

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

"SHALL NOT BE INFRINGED"

Editor:

The language of the Second Amendment is clear:

"A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

According to the Federalist Papers and other historical documents, the Militia is "We the People" - every able-bodied American. The amendment does not limit the types of arms, as restricting citizens to non-military weapons would not make sense given the need for readiness to fight when called upon.

Only those who do not respect weapons seek to eliminate them, and only those who do not respect the Constitution aim to restrict the people's right to keep and bear arms. As Thomas Jefferson once said; *"When the Government fears the people there is Liberty, when the people fear the government there is tyranny."*

The Colorado State Legislature is attempting to fight the "Supreme Law of the land," just as they have done by making Denver a Sanctuary City. The Supremacy Clause (Article VI, Clause 2) of the U.S. Constitution establishes that the Constitution, federal laws, and treaties take precedence

over conflicting state laws. If a state law conflicts with the Constitution, it is null and void. So why is Colorado pushing forward with SB25-003, only to have it end up in endless litigation and be overturned?

This is virtue signaling at its worst by leftists in Denver - "fresh ideas" that are merely attempts to force the same failed policies of California, Oregon, and Washington on Colorado residents, as I stated in another Op-Ed in this publication. Denver has lost its collective mind.

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





See Something? Say Something!

Text or VM: (970) 892-8638

info@montroseDOGE.org

Check us out on [Twitter] [Instagram] [Facebook]

Holding Public officials of Montrose, CO Accountable to "We the People"

DID YOU KNOW?

Sales and Use Tax 2024
Sales and Use Tax 2019

WHERE DID IT GO?

\$27,953,775 +53% in 5 years
\$18,265,827

FYI - 2019 to 2024 total sales tax revenues exceeded City Budget by \$18,232,505

Our City Council just approved a \$55,000,000 bond FLOAT for the BLOAT.
Our City Council endorses over \$100,000,000 in long term debt (30 years)
AND.....over \$200,000,000 in interest and principal payments (30 years)

Table with 3 columns: Category, 2024 Value, 2019 Value, and Change. Rows include Population City of Montrose and Population Montrose County.

Numbers from City and County of Montrose websites

Pay no attention to what's behind the curtain!

Your children and grandchildren matter • How's that city food tax working for your family and friends?

Your vote matters • Stay tuned for more facts from Montrose Citizens DOGE!

"Great leaders surround themselves with individuals comfortable providing constructive criticism and alternate perspectives. Weak leaders remove those who disagree with them and feel threatened, offended, and attacked when their ideas and opinions are challenged."

"The purpose of the Montrose Citizen DOGE is to hold public officials of the City and County of Montrose, CO accountable to the people they serve, ensuring transparency, integrity, and responsiveness in all actions for the betterment of the community."

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



COUNCIL APPROVES LIQUOR LICENSE TRANSFER FOR BRIDGES

By Caitlin Switzer

MONTROSE—A handful of citizens were present as Montrose Mayor J. David Reed opened the regular meeting of Tuesday, March 18 and led in saying the Pledge of Allegiance. All councilors were present, with the exception of Ed Ulibarri who was absent. Also present were Youth City Councilors Darinka Skybova and Nia Di Patel.

Mayor Pro Tem David Frank had no changes to the [meeting agenda](#).

CALL FOR PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

As a citizen stepped up to speak, Reed read the rules for public comment, and reminded the citizen that he would be interrupting him at two minutes and at the point where he had 30 seconds left to speak, a habit that previous mayors have not engaged in.

Citizen Michael Badagliacco began to speak, "The City Manager has weaponized his position to attack citizens..."

Mayor Reed angrily broke in. "I asked you not to refer to personnel and employment matters."

Badagliacco said, "That's not an employment matter it is a public concern."

"Go ahead and offer your comments then," Reed said.

Badagliacco continued speaking. As he was unable to finish speaking before being told that his time was up, his comments are included in full in this issue of the *Mirror*.

CONSENT AGENDA

Consent Agenda items were approved as presented.

LIQUOR LICENSE TRANSFER APPLICATION

With Applicant Ty Jennings present to answer questions and discuss the application, Council voted to approve the [transfer of a Hotel and Restaurant liquor license](#) with option premises at 2500 Bridges Drive from Remington of Montrose Restaurant LLC, doing business as Remington of Montrose Restaurant, to Remington's at Bridges LLC, doing business as Remington's, for consumption on the licensed premises.

"We're eagerly awaiting the grand open-



A handful of citizens were present at the regular City Council meeting on March 18. Meeting Screenshot.

ing," Mayor Pro Tem David Frank said.

ORDINANCE 2679 - SECOND READING

Council voted to adopt [Ordinance 2679](#) on Second Reading, authorizing and approving a site lease and lease purchase agreement between the City and UMB Bank, N.A. (solely in its capacity as trustee); approving not to exceed \$55,000,000 principal amount of [certificates of participation, series 2025](#), in connection therewith; authorizing officials of the City to take all action necessary to carry out the transactions contemplated hereby; and related matters.

MOVING MONTROSE FORWARD SURFACE TREATMENT CONTRACT CHANGE ORDER NO. 3

Council approved [Change Order No. 3](#) in the amount of \$1,260,726.21 to A-1 Chipseal's Moving Montrose Forward Surface Treatment Contract for completion of 2025's surface treatment scope of work.

MOVING MONTROSE FORWARD 2025 STREET MAINTENANCE CONTRACT AWARD

Council voted to approve \$3,768,000 in expenditures for completion of the [Moving Montrose Forward 2025 Contracted Street Maintenance Project](#). This includes the award of a construction contract to Oldcastle SW Group (DBA United Companies) in the amount of \$3,700,000, and authorization of \$68,000 in direct expend-

itures payable to Delta- Montrose Electric Association (DMEA) for relocation/ replacement of conflicting streetlights within the project area.

SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT EXPENSE AUTHORIZATION

Prior to Council approval of the Sidewalk Improvement Project Expense Authorization, City Resident Chris DePew spoke. He said he has done a lot of walking and running in the city. "There's a lot of broken sidewalk pieces, especially in this area...appreciate your wise use of what funds you do have to repair these sidewalks...appreciate all your efforts to make these sidewalks better to walk on..."

Council voted to authorize [expenses for sidewalk improvements](#) as part of the 2025 MoveMo Project in the amount of \$250,000.

STREET SWEEPER PURCHASE

As previously discussed in work session, Council voted to approve [the purchase of one Tymco Street Sweeper](#) from Intermountain Sweeper for the total purchase price of \$394,800.

THE PRESERVE SUBDIVISION FILINGS 6 AND 7 AMENDED PRELIMINARY PLAN

Council voted to approve [The Preserve Subdivision Filings 6 and 7 Amended Preliminary Plat](#) expressly conditioned upon City staff ensuring that all policies, regulations, ordinance and Municipal Code provisions are met and that the Applicant

COUNCIL APPROVES LIQUOR LICENSE TRANSFER FOR BRIDGES

From previous pg

adequately addresses all of staff's concerns prior to execution of the Final Plat.

STAFF REPORTS

Sales Tax Manager Leeanne Whittaker delivered the Sales, Use & Excise Tax and Area Report.

YOUTH COUNCIL

Youth City Councilors Darinka Skybova and Nia Di Patel discussed the upcoming Non-Profit Expo, to be held on March 24 from 4 to 7:30pm. There will be more than 50 non-profits participating, Skybova said. Di Patel said that Youth Council is very excited to see the community come out for the event. The Non-Profit Showcase will take place at the Montrose Pavilion.

City Engineer Scott Murphy said that Ogden Road would open Friday March 21 at 2:30pm.

The roundabout at Woodgate and Oak Grove will be closed starting Monday March 24.

With no further business, Mayor J. David Reed adjourned the meeting.

Lighthouse Eatery
970-964-7570

Ray's Corner Cafe
970-417-4340

Trattoria de Sofia
970-249-0433

Rib City
970-249-7427



Stone House
970-240-8899

Sidelines Sports Bar
970-765-0129

Amelias Hacienda Restaurante
970-249-1881

Delta: Pour Ernie's
970-546-0074



Alpen Confections
970-648-0609

Crash Burger
970-249-0825

Coffee Trader
970-249-6295
970-787-9021

Tacos & Beer
970-964-4448

Tacos & Beer on Main
970-964-4999

Pahgre's
970-249-6442

Premier Sponsor:
Montrose Farmers Market
970-249-0705

Horsefly Brewing
970-249-6889

Jimmer's BBQ,
Burgers & Beer
970-252-1227

Fiesta Guadalajara
970-249-2460

El Jimador
970-249-8990

Busy Corner White Kitchen
970-323-6215

Delta: CB's Tavern
970-399-3570



OPINION/EDITORIAL: COMMENTARY

COMMENTS MADE TO THE MONTROSE CITY COUNCIL ON 3-18-25

To the Montrose City Council:

City Manager William Bell has weaponized his position to attack citizens and elected officials who dare to question the actions of their local government. This Council must address and rein in Mr. Bell, who has taken it upon himself to publicly defame and falsely accuse those exercising their constitutional right to hold government accountable. His actions are reprehensible and demand swift corrective action. Mr. Bell recently posted on Facebook the following inflammatory and baseless accusation:

"There is no way to describe the behavior of Commissioners Pond and Mijares, fueled by David White and the self-proclaimed Montrose DOGE group, other than they are pushing unethical and racist values."

This statement is not only false but also an unacceptable attack on elected officials and private citizens. The Montrose Citizens DOGE is a non-partisan, grassroots organization dedicated to ensuring transparency and fiscal responsibility in local government. Contrary to Mr. Bell's dishonest portrayal, Montrose DOGE provides a platform for the community to voice concerns regarding government overreach and reckless spending. Information is vetted before it is shared publicly, and at no point have any of its members, nor Commissioners Pond or Mijares,

engaged in racist or unethical behavior. Mr. Bell's assertion is a disgraceful smear intended to silence dissent and discredit those who challenge the status quo.

Furthermore, Mr. Bell has not only falsely accused Commissioners Pond and Mijares but has also willfully spread a lie regarding their stance on County Manager Frank Rodriguez. Despite Mr. Bell's claims, neither Commissioner Pond nor Commissioner Mijares has ever made threats regarding Mr. Rodriguez's employment status. This fabricated narrative, pushed into the public sphere by Mr. Bell, is yet another example of his deliberate attempts to mislead the community and manipulate public opinion.

Mr. Bell may not be an elected official, but he serves at the pleasure of the Montrose City Council. The Council members who appointed him are directly responsible for his behavior and the damage he has caused. If they fail to hold him accountable, then they, too, are complicit in his defamatory attacks and falsehoods. While the First Amendment protects freedom of speech, it is well established that one cannot make false statements and avoid consequences. Mr. Bell did not exercise good-faith due diligence to escape the repercussions of these patently false statements.

Let this be a clear message to the Montrose City Council: The people of Montrose

demand accountability. You, as City Council were elected to represent the interests of your constituents, not to shield an unelected bureaucrat who has repeatedly undermined the integrity of local government. If Mr. Bell remains in his position, the voters will remember that you refused to act.

Such reckless, inflammatory, and dishonest behavior from a City Manager is not only inappropriate but also completely disqualifying for someone in his position. Mr. Bell has demonstrated a clear lack of judgement, integrity, credibility, and professionalism, and it is evident that he can no longer effectively lead this city. His public statements, riddled with misinformation and defamatory rhetoric, have eroded public trust in Montrose's leadership.

For these reasons, we are demanding the immediate resignation of City Manager William Bell. If he refuses to step down, then this Council must act swiftly to remove him. A city official who uses their position to unduly attack those he disagrees with is unfit to serve the people of Montrose.

The citizens of Montrose deserve better, and we will accept nothing less.

Michael J Badagliacco, "MJB"
Member, Montrose Citizens D.O.G.E.
Citizen-Montrose, CO

SEE SOMETHING - SAY SOMETHING

970-249-8500
 ANONYMOUS CALL

**MONTROSE REGIONAL
 CRIME STOPPERS**



MAGIC CIRCLE PLAYERS

Celebrating 65 Years of Live Theatre Magic

YOUTH AUDITION WORKSHOP

Magic Circle is bringing ^{BYALD DAVE} **Matilda** _{THE MUSICAL} to the stage November 2025. We are so excited to feature **YOUNG ACTORS** in this production! To help you prepare for auditions, we are pleased to offer an **AUDITION WORKSHOP**

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.

WHO: Students ages 7-13

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

COME *Learn* WITH US



Alpine Bank



MagicCirclePlayers.com · 420 S. 12th · Montrose, CO · 970-249-7838 · mcp@montrose.net

BOCC MEETING DESCENDS INTO NAME-CALLING, TAUNTS *From pg 1*

First to speak was Ray Langston, "...I would like to welcome Mirza Ahmed as our Public Health Director, and I would like to apologize to him for some of the things that have been said in recent days in some of these meetings. I think I would like to caution the county commissioners we need to put away the divisiveness and get back to working together for the benefit of this county and all its citizens."

Next to speak was Matt Hillier, who said he serves on the Town of Olathe Board of Trustees but was speaking as an individual. "...I was very disappointed to read the editorial by Dennis Anderson of the *Montrose Daily Press*...I'm aware of Mr. Rodriguez's work ethic...I know the man, his ethics, and his integrity...Frank took on the role of Chief of Police for meager pay and performed his duties with a level of dedication I have seldom seen. He worked many more hours than he was expected to in order to do his job to the utmost of his abilities. He is a man of true integrity and dedication to whatever cause he may be serving at the time...it is his character traits such as this that likely contributed to his receiving not just one, but five bronze stars...he deserves respect and support, not intimidation...he has no hidden agenda. Montrose County is very fortunate to have someone with the personal and professional qualities Mr. Rodriguez exhibits..."

Next to speak was Cindy Dozier, "...I appreciate everyone's efforts in these meetings to be more clearly heard by those who are streaming these meetings..." Dozier said she has attended the County's Legislative Updates and would like to continue to be notified of those. "...Even though I faithfully attended these briefings for over a year I don't receive notifications anymore. I have asked to be included, I'm not sure who can fix this, not sure what the obstacles are, but I would sure like to be in on these important meetings to hear from our state legislators. They take their time to talk with constituents, and I'd really appreciate a solution to this situation. The current situation does not serve the people of this county well..."

Scott Stryker spoke. Stryker said that he had been asked by BOCC Chair Scott Mi-

jares to provide a termination value to the county commissioners. "Today I am here as a contractor to shed some light on what we're experiencing...it's no secret that construction is truly expensive right now and we're not getting any relief in sight..."

Stryker noted that there is a limited local subcontractor base, and high-end construction is occurring in the neighboring community of Telluride.

"...Here's the deal. If Health and Human Services needs space, I can tell you that that building south of town, it needs a new roof, it needs a new exterior shell system and windows...that needs the foundation stabilized, it has a floor plan that doesn't work for ADA access or for their needs...in short that building doesn't have good bones...the North Campus will never be built cheaper than what we are contracted for today to construct it...do right by the taxpayer and keep the momentum to construct this building as contracted...you're getting an incredible value in this building, I truly hope that you see past this issue and you can move this project forward...I'm not desperate for a project, I'm desperate to make sure common sense is a part of the decision."

Tonya Maddox spoke next, "...For those of you who don't know me, for those of you who are in the front row and the second row, I ask that you turn your seats to look at me so you can hear me. I really want you to hear the reflection in my voice and to see my face. A great man once wrote, 'When this is all over it's not the rantings of our enemies we will remember, it's the silence of our friends...we can no longer be silent. I love this community...I am quite emotional over what has been on display over the last 30 to 60 days. The folks that we... voted in...have an obligation to you, to us, and they must represent us all...we need to say, 'enough'...I respect the people sitting up here...however what I have seen, I am embarrassed by, I am saddened by, and gosh darn it, I'm just mad now."

"I say to Commissioner Mijares and I say to Commissioner Pond, how dare you...take someone who has not only proven themselves in our community and

have them step aside, how dare you do that without even knowing what she brings to the table. And I am talking about Commissioner Hansen, who did exactly what you should have done when she was a freshman...please apologize to her, apologize to this community...Frank Rodriguez, a man of integrity, I am honored to know you, I am honored you are in our community...I hope that my 11-year-old son will one day be the man that you are. Thank you for serving us...and our new county health manager, gosh I don't know him, but I can't wait to know him...these are people who are doing the right things for our community, and I ask you all to say 'enough.'

"Quit being silent and let's make a change right here and right now."

Next to speak was Tim Force, who was asked to hold his comments until the board of adjustments hearing.

Next, BOCC Chair Scott Mijares said, "I just have to respond..." He denied that he and Vice Chair Sean Pond had ever asked to fire Frank Rodriguez or Mirza Ahmed. "I don't know where these rumors are coming from but we're going to get into it...no one wants anybody fired...we both think Mirza is the right person for the job but the process of his hire was against state statute and we're going to be addressing that right now in this meeting...No one wants anybody fired. This has all been drummed up by who knows who, I don't know...this division has got to stop. It was not created by Sean Pond and I, it was created by somebody out there...no one on this board has asked for him to be fired...whoever's perpetuating these rumors you're damaging our community..."

Next, Ken Dolezal spoke. "Mr. Mijares your actions have been disappointing, OK. First of all...at the work session...the prior week, you made a point you didn't have the opportunity, and Mr. Rodriguez didn't provide you with the opportunity to review the medical advisor's resume, and you voted on him but you said you only had two days...you spoke at the forum before the election and you were boasting at that forum that there wasn't any Democratic opponent...you were in essence announcing that you were going to be the next person on the board, the board of

BOCC MEETING DESCENDS INTO NAME-CALLING, TAUNTS *From previous pg*

commissioners, and yet at that meeting you represented that you didn't have the opportunity to be in a position of knowledge regarding the appointment of Dr. Ahmed."

Dolezal then openly taunted Mijares, "You're full of you know what, ok?"

Mijares interjected, "You're getting into that personal attack area."

Dolezal said, "And I am personally attacking you because of your position..."

When Mijares asked him to leave, Dolezal said he would not leave unless he was escorted out, which he then was.

"Jeez, come on," Commissioner Hansen said. A member of the audience began to jeer loudly at Mijares, "A real leader we have here!"

Next, Tim Steinmetz spoke, and said he was new to the community, "...I'd just ask us to pump the brakes here. I appreciate your comments...it doesn't matter where we're going from here, but let's just pump the brakes and stop talking about it. Let's focus on the future...circling back around and talking about procedures, it doesn't help us all....his opinion's valid...let's just pump the brakes, turn our eyes to the future, and get business done."

"Thank you," Mijares said.

COUNTY MANAGER

County Manager Frank Rodriguez had no changes to the meeting agenda.

GENERAL BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Commissioners voted to approve the first item, authorizing the Chair's signature on a community partnership agreement with Hoof & Paw; 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 \$12,000.

The BOCC voted to approve the award of the Montrose County Historic Furniture bid to ProSpace Interiors, Inc, having submitted the lowest, responsible, responsive bid. "Following award of the bid, staff will negotiate final quantities and a contract

for approval by the Board of County Commissioners."

The BOCC voted to allow staff to submit Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) requests for Colorado projects in Fiscal Year 2026 through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Community Facilities grant for renovation of the Naturita School.

Also approved was the annual Agreement to Purchase Out-of-Home Placement Services with A Bridge to Home, LLC, effective July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025, as reviewed by Counsel; this represents a budgeted reimbursed expense not to exceed available State funding.

Commissioners approved the Chair's signature on a community partnership agreement with the West End Family Link; 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 \$25,000.

Commissioners approved the Chair's signature on a grant award letter with the Colorado Department of State Electronic Recording Technology Board. Montrose County Clerk Tressa Guynes was present to speak about the grant award and the reason for the grant. "The County's current recording system is old and antiquated technology," Guynes said. "...We have experienced significant lack of reliability with the product, with the company programmers and their representatives. Not just is the software not stable, but the company appears to be not stable...if we didn't have our IT people, Matt and his guys, we would have had a total crash in the system by now...our IT people are able to fix problems the company's programmers are not able to fix...our system errors result in tacked on fees by the company...we also experience system failures and freezes that result in double charges to our customers...we experience regular breakdowns with our transfers to the Assessor's office..."

The BOCC left regular session to convene as the Montrose County Board of Health. **MONTROSE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH** Public Health Director Mirza Ahmed gave an engaging and detailed report on Public Health in Montrose County. [Click here to read](#) the full report.

In a separate Board of Health agenda item, the Board of Health voted to allow staff to submit a grant application to Carving for Colorado Foundation for a reproductive health grant with funding up to \$125,000 for 18 months, starting in July 2025 and ending in December 2026.

Commissioners took a brief recess prior to returning as the Montrose County Board of Adjustment.

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

The Board opened a public hearing to hear an Appeal of the staff decision to not issue a Certificate of Occupancy for BP2024143 *"for a New Single-Family Home on Jasmine Road, and to consider and possibly approve the 58902 Jasmine Road zoning appeal to require a Certificate of Occupancy to be issued by the Building Official for the structure in question based on findings of fact."*

After hearing from the Applicant, the public, and from Planning & Development staff, Commissioner Hansen moved to deny the appeal, and to work with staff to resolve the issue. BOCC Vice Chair Sean Pond also voted to deny. BOCC Chair Scott Mijares abstained from the vote after stating that he believed the board could have reached a resolution.

The Board returned to regular session as the Board of County Commissioners.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board met in Executive Session pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(a), (b) and (e) *"for legal advice pertaining to contracts with North Campus and pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(b) and (f) to discuss C.R.S. 25-1-508 as it applies to hiring the Public Health Director."*

Following the executive session, during which no decisions were made, the meeting was adjourned.

MEDC SEES HIGH TURNOUT OUT FOR ANNUAL MEETING

By Gail Marvel

MONTROSE-The Montrose Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) held their 2025 Annual meeting at the Montrose Pavilion Event Center on March 20, 2025. Executive Director Sandy Head said, "This is a good turnout. It's the largest annual meeting we've ever had." Executive Assistant Patricia Cummings verified they received 240 reservations, but by meeting time attendance had risen to 250.

MEDC Chair Corri Schmidt welcomed guests and the invocation was given by Kelly Thompson.

Head gave a brief recap of 2024, which included the everchanging narrative of the vacant Russell Stover plant. She said, "As of January it has changed hands again and is now owned by Chuck Horning, owner of the Telluride Ski."

Head updated the audience on CO Fire Operations, wild land fire suppression operations. She said, "Unfortunately, a nearly four-year effort to locate them to Montrose came to a tragic halt on September 5, 2024. Kyle Scott, founder and co-owner died in an aerial accident during an agriculture flight. I remain in contact with Kyle's partner Chris Doyle and their staff. At this time future plans are on hold."

Head's report included community outreach, ongoing activities, appreciation for State and local partners, as well as special recognition for Administrative Assistant Patricia Cummings.

Montrose Regional Health (MRH) received the 2025 MEDC Economic Development Award, which was accepted by Chief Operating Officer Jeff Mengershausen.

MRH Highlights from the annual report include:

"Today, MRH employs over 900 caregivers, with adding 200+ new jobs in the last three years — with salaries, benefits and wages totaling over \$83 million annually — making substantial impact on the region's health and economy."

"Over the last three years, MRH has successfully recruited 93 providers — a testament to the hospital's commitment to meeting the growing healthcare needs of the region. This number includes advanced practice providers and physicians that MRH has helped recruit to other practices within the community. In 2024



The Montrose Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) Annual Meeting was held on March 20. Representing Montrose Regional Health, Chief Operating Officer Jeff Mengershausen (at the podium) accepted the 2025 Montrose Economic Development Award. (L to R) Montrose Regional Board of Directors Jack Johnston, Selvin Sandoval, Barb Judd, Dr. Mary Vader, MEDC Chair Corri Schmidt, CEO Jeff Mengershausen, and MEDC Executive Director Sandy Head. Photo by Gail Marvel.

alone, 23 new providers joined MRH, and already in 2025, seven new providers have been added to our growing team — ensuring that our community continues to have access to top-tier medical care."

"Imaging at River Landing, opening in 2025, will offer state-of-the-art technology, including the Cartesian Prime Digital PET/CT Machine and the Siemens 1.5 Tesla Magnetom Altea MRI, providing exceptionally detailed imagery."

Schmidt formally recognized elected officials, the MEDC board, the contribution of long-serving board member Martin Lutz, and introduced keynote speaker Jayson Street.

Keynote Speaker: Jayson Street, Secure Yeti.

Generally speaking, Street is a "hacker" who can come into your business, or your personal life, and show you how easily you can be hacked. He thinks like a hacker and uses technology, phishing calls, soundtracks, and elaborate stories to get the unsuspecting to compromise security systems. A self-described "Simulated Adversary for hire," businesses and organiza-

tions use his skillset to identify security weaknesses.

He said, "It's all about perception. You blend into situations. When I go into a business, no one vets me, they think others have vetted me. I don't like being bad...I'm just good at it! Why should I go into a bank and [rob it] of \$200,000 when in a couple of minutes I can tap into machines that allow me to do wire transfers?" Street noted that he has successfully robbed banks, hotels, government facilities, and Biochemical companies...etc. on five continents.

Street used actual video and audio clips of him convincing people to turn over passwords and other "keys to the kingdom". He said, "Executives are the worst security on the planet. They have domain administration.

"Every manager and every executive needs to live by the same policies they enforce on their company."

Street recommended stopping Security Awareness Training deeming it a waste of time. He said, "There are tutorials about how to commit crimes on YouTube!"



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

MONTROSE REGIONAL HEALTH RECEIVES PATIENT SAFETY EXCELLENCE AWARD FROM HEALTHGRADES

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE— Montrose Regional Health has been recognized as a recipient of the 2025 Patient Safety Excellence Award™ by Healthgrades, the #1 site Americans use when searching for a provider or hospital. This achievement reflects Montrose Regional Health’s commitment to safe, patient-centered care and puts the organization in the top 10% of hospitals nationwide for patient safety.

“We are honored to be recognized by Healthgrades for Patient Safety Excellence,” said Jeff Mengenhausen, CEO of Montrose Regional Health. “MRH holds itself to the highest standard for patient safety and overall experience, ensuring we care for each of our patients like family. We are proud to provide award winning care for our communities.”

To determine the top-performing hospitals for patient safety, Healthgrades evaluated risk-adjusted complication and mortality rates for approximately 4,500 hospitals nationwide.

Healthgrades’ analysis revealed significant performance gaps between the na-

tion’s highest and lowest-achieving facilities, making it increasingly important for consumers to seek care at a hospital with top safety ratings. From 2021-2023, 173,280 preventable safety events occurred among Medicare patients in U.S. hospitals. The annual study found that patients treated in hospitals that received the 2025 Patient Safety Excellence Award have a significantly lower chance of experiencing preventable safety events.

“As a 2025 Patient Safety Excellence Award recipient, Montrose Regional Health consistently puts the well-being of their patients and staff at the forefront, setting a high standard for patient safety nationwide,” said Debra Gradick, MD FACEP, senior physician consultant at Healthgrades. “We commend Montrose Regional Health for providing consistently exceptional care while preventing serious injuries, giving patients their best chance of a seamless recovery.”

In addition to the 2025 Healthgrades Patient Safety Excellence Award, Montrose Regional Health recently received other awards including being named a Best-in-



Montrose Regional Health Recognized by Healthgrades for Patient Safety Excellence. Courtesy image.

Class Employer by Gallagher, a CMS 5-Star Cleanest Hospital by Becker’s Hospital Review, a High Performing Hospital in the areas of Heart Attack and Patient Experience by U.S. News & World Report, and most recently was named by Chartis as a Top 100 Rural & Community Hospital for 2025.

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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

SUPPORT OUR COUNTRY, IN GOD WE TRUST

Dear Editor,

It is very sad when a whole segment of our civilization is driven by hate.

No common sense, no heart, no respect, no law....just outright hate, and unable to make a rational decision because of hate.

The human instinct of discernment between right and wrong and good and evil no longer exists.

It was displaced by Trump derangement syndrome.

I am talking directly to all of you who are blinded and numbed by your hatred for President Trump.

In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King "Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that." The Dr. Also said " I have decided to stick with love. Hate is too big a burden to bear "

Hate causes us to think quickly, it causes us to make poor decisions.

Hatred can significantly negatively impact a person's mental and physical well-being, leading to increased stress, anxiety, depression, and even physical health problems.

Being hateful is being stupid. Bill Engvall says hateful people should wear a sign that says "I'm stupid". Here's your sign.

Jesus taught that followers should reject the idea of hating one's enemy.

I tell you that hatred is not a good thing.

Support our country, in God we trust.

Support our President.

Bob Stollsteimer, Montrose

INDIVISIBLE'S STATEMENT ON MINORITY LEADER SCHUMER'S FUNDING BILL VOTE

By Holly Speaks, Leader, Montrose & Ouray Counties Indivisible

MONTROSE- 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."

###

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.

OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

PRIMARY ANY DEMOCRAT WHO SUPPORTS SCHUMER

Editor:

After Democratic Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer announced his intention to help break a potential filibuster of the Republican spending bill, America's fascist president, Donald Trump, took to Truth Social to praise his old friend: "Congratulations to Chuck Schumer for doing the right thing," he wrote. "This could lead to something big for the USA, a whole new direction and beginning."

Schumer's stance justifiably angered the Democratic base, as it gave away all leverage the anti-fascist coalition has for the foreseeable future to stop Trump's illegal power grab. The minority leader defended himself from progressive criticism, saying he had the overwhelming support of his caucus, which I actually don't doubt, despite the fact only nine other Democratic senators voted with him.

I'm no expert in Senate procedure, but it's my understanding any member of the body could have denied the bill unanimous consent, forcing a debate which would give the opposition time to mobilize against the legislation. No Democratic-aligned senator did that, including various liberal darlings. It's hard to avoid the conclusion this was all carefully-coordinated political theater.

In other words, Democrats who were retiring or not immediately up for reelection supported the Republican bill, knowing it would anger their progressive base. These senators provided cover for other Democrats to vote against the legislation. Perhaps this is overly cynical, but I don't think so. Any senators who genuinely object to Schumer's stance should publicly call for new minority leadership.

The progressive base must assume any Democrat who doesn't do this actually supports Schumer's handling of the show-down. They should be primaryed by Democrats willing to take the fight to fascist Republicans seeking to establish an authoritarian state. We urgently need a Tea Party-like movement from the left, which will sweep all the accommodationist Democrats from office.

The Democratic coalition has a wide variety of policy goals. For instance, I'd like to see a massive infusion of federal funding into cultivated-meat research. The new protein is grown from livestock cells, without slaughter. The emerging technology is the most promising means of reducing nonhuman suffering and premature death. However, none of our goals can be achieved under a fascist government.

In order to save American democracy, we

need a fighting opposition party. Building such an organization will mean replacing the Democratic organization root and branch. There are only a handful of incumbents worth saving, in my view, and even they could benefit from left-wing primary challengers pushing them to fight harder. Frankly, the current era requires vicious partisans.

A good place to start, however, is launching credible primary challenges against any national Democratic politician who supports keeping Schumer as Senate minority leader. While I've had many criticisms of House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, to his credit, he held his caucus together, in opposition to the Republican spending bill. Schumer betrayed the anti-fascist coalition he purportedly represents.

At the risk of surrendering independent thought to negative polarization, if Trump is praising the actions of a nominal opposition leader, that leader has almost certainly failed at doing his or her job. We have to primary Schumer and other Democrats who voted for the Republican legislation. But we also have to primary Democrats who won't publicly call for a change in Senate minority leadership.

Jon Hochschartner, Granby, CT

BOCC NEEDS TO READ THIS AND MAKE SOME DECISIONS

Editor:

The BOCC needs to read this and make some decisions. One decision should be to fire Mr Ahmed. [Colorado Health Equity](https://hcpf.colorado.gov/health-equity). <https://hcpf.colorado.gov/health-equity>

Charles Zimmerman, Montrose



OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

HAS THE CIRCUS COME TO TOWN?

Editor:

So newly appointed commissioner Pond in his email is the one who questioned Ahmed's hiring by the previous BOCC. That means he was also questioning Mijares who then started having separation anxiety from his collusion buddy and started blaming Frank Rodriguez. After all, Mijares could never be at fault for any decision he made? Nor could he ever be accused of siding with commissioner Hansen in opposition to Pond. When Mijares tried to justify his accusatory statements as not being racist he elaborated on how his family was from South American ancestry and how they ran a circus. Well, it looks like the circus has come to Montrose and erected their tent right in the middle of the Montrose BOCC. I hope they start serving popcorn at the BOCC meetings because this would be very entertaining if we taxpayers were not fixing to be on the hook for lawsuits. Rather than question as to whether "DR" Ahmed was the most qualified candidate, Pond's only concern was he a naturalized citizen even though it is not a requirement. Pond's other concern was that he was not a doctor in the U S A, and that is not a requirement either (and according to C.R.S. 25-1-508) he meets all the requirements of the Colorado revised statutes. I would suggest they drop this issue before they prove to the citizens that the citizens have good reason to be concerned. This reminds me of my good friend Don Coram's favorite quote about watching elected officials doing their job, "it's a bunch of amateurs trying to do a professional job." And this is why Sue Hansen should have stayed the chair until Pond and Mijares learned how to do the job without embarrassing themselves and the county.

But on the other hand, having someone else lead the meeting will not stop Mijares from embarrassing himself and the county. He loves the sound of his own voice and loves to make contradictory statements such as "I never threatened to fire Frank Rodriguez" really? Before Mijares

took the oath Mijares complained "loudly" about the previous BOCC hiring Frank. Why the fuss Mijares? Did you promise that job to someone else? Did Ponds email questioning the hiring Mirza Ahmed give you Mijares a reason to attack Frank because he recommended the hiring. Mijares In your statements Wednesday March 19, 2025, you stated you just cannot figure out where all these rumors came from. They are coming from you and Ponds public statements and emails and the meeting agendas. Mijares, if you want these rumors to stop, I suggest you do less talk and more listening. "It is better to remain silent and have the world think you're a fool than to open your mouth and remove all doubt." I would also tell you and Pond not to go to neighboring counties and discuss these issues with other people because the grape vine is as fast as a cell phone.

We know how Pond got appointed, in a vacancy vote of twenty-five people after the passing of commissioner Dunlap. So how did Mijares get elected? He lied his way into that job. Intentionally deceiving the voters of Montrose County is a good reason to recall an elected official. He started his campaign with the statement that he was a lifelong Republican at the February 8th, 2024, Montrose GOP monthly meeting. But he was not a registered republican until February 12th, 2024. And that created some serious trust issues for the Montrose GOP and chair Scott Riba who was running for county commissioner (in a contested primary) in district three in violation of the GOP by-laws. And all my investigations have found no evidence that Mijares has ever been a registered Republican before February 12th, 2024. And Mijares himself has never provided any proof that he was previously a registered Republican. All my investigations into Mijares background have been extremely concerning. He voted the democrat ballot in the 2020 presidential primary while living in Ouray County (that means he voted against president trump).

And when confronted about it he lied and said someone else must have voted his ballot. However, the signature on the ballot envelope matched the signature on file with the Ouray County clerk's office. And I have copies of these documents for anyone who would like to see them. And anyone who wants to put forth the effort can access these records for themselves.

Only one County elected official supported Mijares and Riba in the 2024 primary and that was Sheriff Gene Lillard (WHY)? They promised that if elected they could give the sheriff's office more money from the PSST (public safety sales tax). The problem is that money was being allocated just the way it was intended back when it was voted on by the voters. And altering that could cause some legal challenges. The BOCC funded the sheriff's office up to 85% of the average wage for counties of this size in Colorado. As the population of Montrose County grows this percentage will increase accordingly. That was up from 65% so that was a 20% raise across the board for all deputies. But that is not the way the money was distributed. The high-ranking officers were raised up to 110% and the patrol deputies stayed at 65%. But there was something concerning about the ethnicity ratio of the remaining deputies; the ethnicity of most of the remaining deputies were minorities. Was that an accident or was that intentional? Seems to me the sheriff needs to answer some questions on this issue. And he needs to do it before any vote for additional funding. This could be a problem should any of those deputies decide to take legal action.

Some people will say that the only reason I raise these issues is because I am disgruntled because of my disagreements with Montrose GOP. That is not it. I am a concerned citizen and a proud republican that believes in holding the republicans to a higher standard. I expect the democrats to lie to me. I will not tolerate it from the republicans.

Ray Langston, Montrose

MONTROSE SPORTS ROUND-UP From pg 1

Alvarez, who had 25 saves in the contest to keep the Red Hawks in it to the end. Goal scorers for the Red Hawks included Senior Captain Zack Motley who scored 3 goals, a lacrosse hat trick. Other scorers included Senior Eli Sauers (1 goal), Junior Elijah Womack (1 goal) and Junior Maverick Powers (1 goal). The Red Hawks record overall and in league play stands at 1 win and 2 losses, with 11 games remaining on the spring schedule.

GIRLS SOCCER:

Fruita-Monument 1, Montrose Red Hawks 0

The Montrose Red Hawks journeyed up north and invaded the lair of the Fruita-Monument Wildcats last week and both teams clamped down fierce defenses. A total of one goal was scored in the contest and, as luck would have it, the Wildcats tallied the goal early in the first half of play and then thwarted the Red Hawks throughout the rest of the contest to preserve the 1-0 win.

Montrose Red Hawks 7, Coal Ridge Titans 1

The Montrose Red Hawks shook off the hard fought 1-0 loss to the Wildcats of Fruita-Monument and manhandled the Coal Creek Titans 7-1 on their home pitch to even their overall record at 2 wins and 2 losses.

Five Red Hawks hit the scoring column against the Titans. Junior Sadie Wareham had 1 goal while freshman Jordyn Dew scored for the home team. Senior Eli Duncan had 2 goals as did Junior Mayce Oberg, while Senior Yuliana Almanza had the Red Hawks final tally. Duncan, Oberg and Almanza all added assists to the Red Hawks' total.

Delta Panthers 4, Montrose Red Hawks 0

The Montrose Red Hawks Girls soccer team ran into a buzz saw last Tuesday and felt a choking defense completely shut down their offense as the Panthers walked away with a 4-0 win on the Red Hawks home turf. The Panthers scored three times in the first half of action and added their 4th goal in the second half to seize the 4-0 victory.

MONTROSE CO-ED TRACK & FIELD:

Montrose High School Results:

Girls:

100-meter dash

4th - Audrey Righter

5th - Talia Alvord

200 meter dash

4th - Emarie Simpson

400 meter dash

4th - Zuri Balleck

800 meter run

3rd - Georgia Ficco

4th - Millie Crane

600 hundred meter run

5th - Naomi McGarry

3200 hundred meter run

7th - Lucy Waschbusch

4x100 meter run

1st - Montrose

4x200 meter run

1st - Montrose

4x400 meter run

1st - Montrose

Long Jump

2nd - Audrey Righter

High Jump

3rd - Bella Johnson

Boys :

100 meter dash

3rd - Deklan Wooden

200 meter dash

2nd - Deklan Wooden

3rd - Cutter Travers

400 meter dash

7th - Josiah Graff

800 meter run

8th - Jose Chavez

3,200 meter run

6th - Zach Quaid

4x100 meter relay

4th - Montrose

4x200 meter dash

5th - Montrose

4x400 meter run

7th - Montrose

4x800 meter run

2nd - Montrose

Long Jump

5th - Cutter Travers

Discus

3rd - Easton Jessop

Shot Put

1st - Easton Jessop

GIRLS LACROSSE:

Montrose Red Hawks 5, Eagle Valley Devils 4

The Montrose Red Hawks Girls lacrosse team traveled to Gypsum, Colorado, and took on the Eagle Valley Devils in a non-league battle. And battle it was, as both teams were unable to unleash any offensive consistency and the Red Hawks came away with a tightly fought 5-4 victory. Both defenses were stout and neither offense could get into their usual rhythms. The Red Hawks 5 goals was just enough to cop the victory.

Junior Kacy Stewart was the offensive leader for the Red Hawks as she scored 3 of the 5 Red Hawk goals. Other scorers include two seniors, Alexandra Sauer and Madison Coca. The Red Hawks goal keeper, Junior Abby Siegel, kept the Red Hawks in the game as she stopped 5 of the 9 shots she faced.

Roaring Fork Rams 17, Montrose Red Hawks 1

The Montrose Red Hawks ran into a very solid lacrosse team in the Roaring Fork Rams last Tuesday as their one-game win streak came to a quick end as the Rams put 17 goals on the scoreboard while holding the Red Hawks to a single goal in a good, old fashioned, whipping. Junior Kacy Stewart scored the only goal for the Red Hawks.

Junior Abby Siegel saved 10 of the 27 shots the high flying Rams fired at her. The loss evened the Red Hawks record to 1-1.

Durango Demons 12, Montrose Red Hawks 1

The Montrose Red Hawks returned home for their first match on familiar ground. The visiting Durango Demons seemed to find the pitch to their liking as they scored a dozen times to take a fairly easy 12 - 1 victory over the Red Hawks.

The Red Hawks were once again unable to get their offense untracked as the pressing Durango defense kept them off balance.

Senior Maggie Cline scored the only Red Hawks tally and Junior Goal Keeper Abby Siegel stopped 18 of the 30 shots on goal.

MONTROSE SPORTS ROUND-UP From previous pg



The Red Hawks carry the attack vs Coal Ridge. Photo by Cliff Dodge.

BASEBALL:

Summit Tigers 14, Montrose Red Hawks 7

The Summit Tigers traveled from Frisco to take on the Montrose Red Hawks in a non-league affair last Friday and doubled the Red Hawks run production in a 14 to 7 Tigers victory. The visitors pushed across a single run in the first frame and then erupted for 6 runs in the third inning. The Tigers duplicated the scoring of 6 runs, this time in the 6th inning that put the game out of reach for the Red Hawks, who scored 5 runs in their half of the 6th inning in a losing cause.

The Tigers scored their 14 runs on 9 hits

while the Red Hawks plated their 7 runs on 6 hits. Five Red Hawks each had a base hit, while Cade Saunders checked in with the only extra-base hit, a ringing double. The Red Hawks season mark stands at 2-3 overall, and 0-0 in league play.

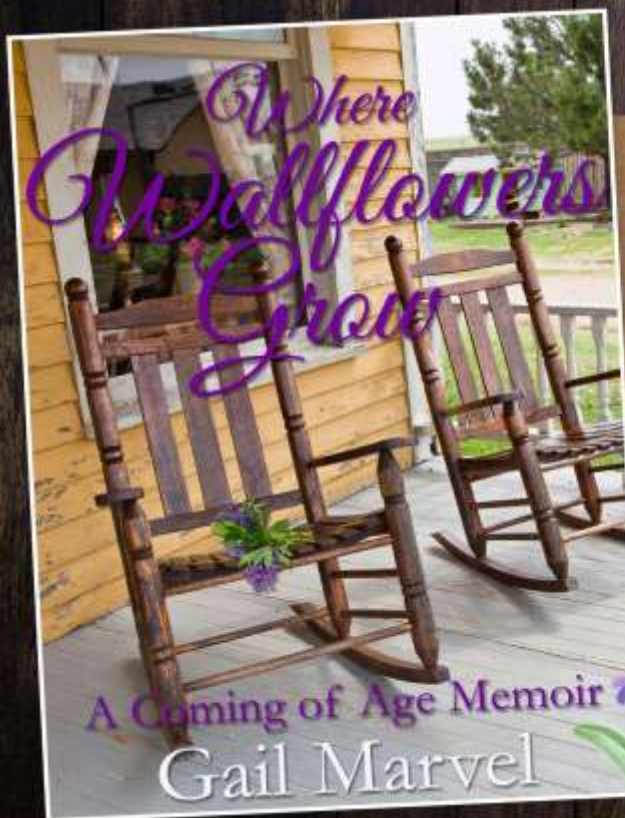
Rifle Bears 7, Montrose Red Hawks 1

The Montrose Red Hawks baseball team fell to the visiting Rifle Bears by the score of 7-1 on Friday. The visitors scored a run in the first and second innings and then plated 4 runs in the third inning to build a lead the Red Hawks were unable to overcome. The Red Hawks scored their lone run in the bottom of the sixth inning to

avert a shutout. The Bears scored their 7 runs on 9 base hits while the Red Hawks managed a single run on five base knocks. Joey Benitez and Ryan Balleck each contributed a double to the Red Hawks hit total. Kaeden Clair, Jack Pankey, and Brekin Hutto pitched for the Red Hawks.

Montrose Red Hawks 12, Bayfield Wolves 2

The Montrose Red Hawks baseball team welcomed the Bayfield Wolves to Montrose on Friday and defeated the Wolves by the score of 12-2, increasing their overall record to 3 wins and 4 losses. The Red Hawks have yet to play a league opponent.



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

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

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

GAIL MARVEL

Montrose Author & Reporter

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COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS GET A BITE OF REALITY!

Financial Reality Fair held to Promote Financial Literacy

Special to the Mirror

MONTROSE—NuVista Federal Credit Union & Black Canyon Rotary Club hosted the 8th Annual Financial Reality Fair for the seniors of Montrose High School, Olathe High School, Black Canyon High School, and VISTA Charter School on Thursday, March 13, 2025, while underclassmen were PSAT/SAT testing.

During the event, powered by the Bite of Reality platform, students gathered in McMillan Gymnasium, to learn about what goes into a monthly budget as an adult. “It was super helpful to see how to budget and save money. It was a good reflection as to what real life will be like. My favorite part was just seeing how much money you really need to spend monthly. I didn’t realize how much groceries, entertainment, house needs, etc. were financially,” said MHS senior Avery Kingsbury.

Each student was given a hypothetical life circumstance—a job, monthly salary, spouse and child, credit score, and student loans. They then had to navigate through different stations to make purchases for their monthly budget. OHS senior Kathrynne Combs said, “I thought that the app was extremely effective and that it listed the things we needed to know later in life. I also liked how there were surprises where we could gain or lose money beyond our control. When the mentors would try to convince us to buy the expensive options was my favorite part because it mimicked how we really did all want the best of everything”.

The different stations included housing & utilities, transportation, childcare, entertainment, household needs, clothing & personal care, groceries & dining and shopping. In each station, students were guided by real, local, adult volunteers who helped the students make difficult, but appropriate choices among a variety of options to determine what would fit in with their hypothetical monthly budget. The students watched as each choice; nice clothes, a brand-new car payment, a



NuVista Federal Credit Union & Black Canyon Rotary Club hosted the 8th Annual Financial Reality Fair for the seniors of Montrose High School, Olathe High School, Black Canyon High School, and VISTA Charter School. Courtesy photo.

home, childcare, etc. slowly dwindled their monthly income. “I enjoyed the simulation of keeping track of my expenses and financial responsibilities, having to find the balance between living comfortably and saving money was fun. It really shows how fast money disappears,” said MHS senior Paxton Hughes.

After being tasked to consider real-world decisions, students shared their experiences in a group Q & A session where the students were able to win some fun prizes! The students also had the opportunity to ask NuVista’s CEO BJ Coram and Loan Officer Tisha Braaten questions about the Credit Union, budgeting, and credit scores. “Our NuVista Team always enjoys the interactions with the students and community volunteers. We are proud to be a title sponsor for the Financial Reality Fair and to see this event continue to be a success each year. Financial Literacy is so important to NuVista, that is why we are

excited to be able to provide this event and add the post-event learning opportunity for the students through Financial Wellness Center,” said NuVista CEO, BJ Coram.

Students learned about money and then had the chance to win some money. Twenty lucky students won \$100 in the form of a Montrose Bucks gift card. After the event, students can complete Financial Classes through the NuVista Financial Wellness Center for a chance to win 1 of 4 \$250 prizes. In addition, students can apply for one of six, \$1,000 scholarships. To apply for the \$1,000 award, senior fair participants complete a Scholarship Application and submit an essay explaining what they learned from the Financial Reality Fair. The submission deadline is April 5.

The generous support of our event sponsors continues to make the scholarships possible.



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

BEING PART OF A BOARD REQUIRES WORKING WITH THE OTHER TWO MEMBERS

Editor:

I watched both the work session dated March 10th and the BoCC meeting dated March 12th. I am confused by a statement Commissioner Sue Hanson made during the March 12th meeting.

First, I did not hear anything in the work session about firing the County Manager or the new hire for Health and Human Services. I heard concerns about the hire, including the fact that the County Manager stated Mr. Ahmed was a doctor when he is not.

Commissioner Hanson, I would like to know where you and the 35 people you referenced came up with the claim that Commissioners Mijares or Pond stated they wanted Mr. Ahmed and County Manager Frank Rodriguez fired.

You also stated in that meeting that county employees were "scared." Scared of what? Are you projecting your own fears onto the employees through your talking points? If I am not mistaken, the BoCC can only fire the County Manager and the County Attorney—no one else. Your other statement is that people around the state are not liking this board

of commissioners. Again, is that coming from your talking points?

Yes, you have done many good things in the seven years you have served as a commissioner, and I thank you for that. However, based on what I have observed in the past few months, it is you—and you alone—who is dividing the BoCC, not Commissioner Mijares and certainly not Commissioner Pond. Your behavior toward Commissioner Mijares has been openly rude and, at times, downright hateful. After the election in November, you made it very clear that you were unhappy with the outcome of both the primary and the general election.

You also violated your own resolution, which you signed, stating that you would not campaign for any candidate—yet you publicly supported Rick Dunlap. Regardless, you were part of the process that selected Sean Pond to fill the vacant commissioner seat. He was selected the same way you were when Glen Davis resigned. Despite this, your actions have made it very clear that you were unhappy with the Montrose GOP's selection of Sean Pond as the new commissioner.

I have heard you repeatedly state how past BoCC boards made decisions you "hated." Well, they were at the helm at that time, and as far as I can recall—and I have a very good memory—they did a great job. Did they do things differently? Yes. Will this board operate differently than you, Rash, and Caddy did? Yes, they will.

You have said that you are just one member of the BoCC, and that is true. Being part of a board requires working with the other two members. Stop acting as if you are personally wounded whenever things do not go your way.

Please stop bringing in your Left Wing Radicals to board meetings. Everyone knows that you have asked them to come forward and speak against the other two commissioners. That is something a good board member does not do. You are embarrassing yourself and that is not a good thing.

If you do not like the heat, then you need to resign from your position as commissioner and allow this county to move forward.

Doris Van Ness, Montrose County



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OPINION/EDITORIAL: LETTERS

DEMOCRATS OFFER NO VIABLE ALTERNATIVES TO BIDEN/OBAMA ERA FAILURES

Editor:

When we went to school we were taught the benefits of free trade. It is ingrained in our brains that tariffs are bad and free trade is good. By helping less affluent countries improve their economies, we lessen the likelihood of conflicts around the world, and everybody benefits, right? So, why is Trump imposing tariffs on imports from various nations, some of whom are our allies? The short answer: "Free trade" with China, Mexico, Canada, and Europe does not exist. These countries have long placed tariffs and other restrictions on American goods and/or subsidized their own industries placing them at an unfair advantage over their American counterparts. Trump's goal is to change that. As Trump stated, "America will no longer play the role of sucker on the world stage."

Democrats and the mainstream media (I repeat myself) report on Trump's tariffs with headlines such as "China and Canada Retaliate Against Trump's Tariffs," as if Trump just decided to economically assault those nations for no reason. Trudeau's comments about "unjustified" tariffs are a distraction from the fact that Canada has enjoyed unfair trade advantages over the U.S. for decades. The same is true for the other countries on the receiving end of Trump's tariffs. Trump recognizes how weak U.S. leadership has allowed unfair trade practices and how that has weakened America. This nation's trade deficit, the amount Trump is trying to reduce by using tariffs, is \$1.1 thousand billion for one quarter alone. Unlike his predecessors, Trump is boldly putting American workers, industries, and sovereignty first. It is also important to recognize that Trump's aggressive bargaining tactics have other positive goals. Mexico has been forced to cooperate in stopping illegals from crossing its border and to clamp down on cartels and fentanyl distribution. Canada has also made major strides in closing its border to illegals and fentanyl. Trump is the solution for the problems Democrats created.

Of course, with Trump imposing tariffs, suddenly the media/Democrats are concerned about inflation. They actually campaigned for Democrats even though their monetary policies -- printing cash like there is no tomorrow -- caused a permanent

price increase of more than 20% on everything. The average price of houses went up over 47%, and first time buyers can no longer afford to buy a home. The difference between Biden's actual inflation and the possibility of increased inflation with Trump's tariffs is significant. Biden's inflation had no positive offsets, either short-term or long-term. Trump's tariffs will increase employment and wages in the U.S., raising standards of living and growing the economy. U.S. manufacturers will benefit from an even playing field, allowing them to expand. Just as importantly, our dependence on China for strategic materials and pharmaceuticals will be reduced.

With tariffs, we need to consider both the short-term and long-term economic impacts. Consumers might feel immediate pain in the form of increased prices and perhaps some turmoil and uncertainty. When you are faced with reversing decades of bad trade policies and bringing back jobs that were outsourced by previous career bureaucrats, there will be challenges. The reality is, Trump's policies are all about positioning America for long term success, and he recognizes there will be short-term pain.

Schumer and his fellow Democrats will do everything possible to frighten the public and gaslight them about Trump's tariffs and any new inflation. (I have to chuckle at their theatrics about the current inflation rate plunging to its lowest point since Trump was last in office, egg prices falling under Trump after someone figured out we should stop killing chickens, and gas prices also falling dramatically.) Should we expect anything different from Democrats? This is the same party whose California governor blew \$9 billion on "free" health care for illegals, but is now asking for a bailout. The same party whose Senate minority leader Schumer just affirmed he is the face of America's dumbest party with this line about Americans and their hard-earned money (he thinks it belongs to him): "Their attitude is, 'I made my money myself. How dare the government take my money from me.'" This is the same party that stands in the way of cutting a single dollar from the blotted federal budget, despite overwhelming evidence of outright theft of billions of dollars of taxpayer money. The same party

that bucks a huge majority of Americans who think biological men should not be allowed to dominate women's sports and invade their locker rooms. The same party that believes the lunatic argument that climate change is an existential threat, but is celebrating Nazi-like tactics to destroy Tesla -- the American company that has done more than any other to cut greenhouse gases. The same party whose recent VP candidate is rooting for Tesla's stock to crash and its 70,000 American employees to lose their jobs -- but also wants 100% clean energy in Minnesota. The same party that is going crazy because Schumer refused to shut down the government and send home every one of those government workers they claim to cherish. The same party that claims to stand for Israel and anti-Semitism, but showed their support by trying to turn a terrorist-supporting non-citizen thug into a hero and oppose his deportation. The same party that refuses to follow Trump's lead in achieving a negotiated peace in Ukraine through pragmatic diplomacy rather than indefinitely prolonging the death and destruction.

Unlike Democrats, Trump is part of the solution to problems created by extremists on the left.

Our country faces mounting trade deficits, immigration crises, an endless proxy war with Russian, and a corrupt and out-of-control federal bureaucracy, but Democrats offer no viable alternatives to these Biden/Obama era failures.

Democrats have decided that in place of advocating for policies that actually help America and its people, they're simply going to scream "No" to everything duly elected President Trump does. Is it any wonder that Democrats' favorability crashed 20 points since Biden first took office to the lowest favorability ever in CNN polling? With people like AOC, Kamala, Jasmine Crockett, Hakeem Jeffries, and Bernie Sanders leading their internal polling, is it any wonder the Democrat party is sinking into irrelevancy? Maybe they can try foul language to seem more relatable to voters? Oh. Wait. They tried that this past month, but just confirmed their inauthenticity while also revealing their crudeness and total lack of class.

Ed Henrie, Montrose

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COMMUNITY OBITUARIES

SANDRA ANN GWIN

May 10, 1940 — March 15, 2025

SANDRA ANN (ADAMS) GWIN, 84, of Montrose, CO, passed away on March 15, 2025.

She was born in Montrose May 10, 1940, to Daily Press Publisher, Charles E. Adams, Jr. and Alma L. (Thornton) Adams.

Sandra's early years were spent moving around the country. After her first year in Montrose, her dad sold the Daily Press to join the Army and moved the family to Virginia. After the war they moved to Salt Lake City, Denver, Grand Junction and finally back to Montrose, where her dad opened Adams Office Supply. Moving around gave her a joy of travel, history and seeing new places.

It was in Montrose at the age of 14 where she met Chuck Gwin, the love of her life and future husband of 62 years. Sandra was a graduate of Montrose High School and attended one year of college at Augustana College in Illinois. She returned to Montrose to marry Chuck and together

they raised four children. Her husband's career took Sandra and her family to Durango, Montrose and then to Utah, finally returning to Montrose after they retired. Sandra helped support the family by working in various positions including working as a bank teller and bookkeeper. She was always a kind and supportive mother to her children and a valuable partner to her husband. Chuck and Sandra loved to spend time with each other, loved to dance together and were each other's best friend. They shared an irreverent sense of humor and teased each other constantly. For no apparent reason, Chuck often referred to Sandra by the name Martha, to which she always answered, and she could always be heard feigning disapproval as she hollered "oh Chuck!"

Sandra loved to travel, especially to places with historical significance. She was a member of the Daughters of the American

Revolution and was proud to have had three ancestors sign the Declaration Of Independence. She was equally proud to have been a direct descendant of William Bradford, framer of the Mayflower Compact and first governor of Plymouth Colony. Sandra was preceded in death by her parents, Charles and Alma Adams, her husband, Chuck Gwin, and her son, Eric Gwin. She is survived by her sons, Mark Gwin (Liz) of Gering, NE, Gary Gwin (Alisa) of Cheyenne, WY, her daughter Kathy Erickson (Eric) of Montrose, her cousin, Kent Thornton of Boulder, CO, 11 grandchildren, 11 great grandchildren, numerous nieces and nephews and a number of close friends.



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ISSUE 513 March 24, 2025

ART & SOL

TWO OLD FRIENDS, 1,000 MEMORIES, AND A MONTROSE CONNECTION: CAROLE ANN MCKELVEY REVIEWS, 'IT STARTED WITH A TURTLE'



Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald, holding "Mrs. Thompson" Courtesy photo.

By Carole Ann McKelvey,
For the Montrose Mirror

DENVER – When you ask most people if they know of Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald, most will say something like "Isn't he that vet on that Animal Planet show?" (A show which has not been on TV since the 1970s!)

Yes, but Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald is so much more than that. He is a professional comedian and an internationally known conservationist and of all things, a former rock 'n' roll bouncer.

(For this writer, he has been a personal friend for more than 20 years – ever since he began trying out fledgling comedy at the Comedy Works and George McKelvey's Comedy Club in Denver, both clubs started by my late great husband George McKelvey.) Some of his early attempts at comedy are in themselves just plain hilarious. You can imagine my excitement when my editor at the *Montrose Mirror*, Caitlin Switzer, asked me to do a feature on Kevin Fitzgerald and his new memoir, *"It Started With A Turtle,"* just published by Archway Productions.

It was amid the stillness of the COVID-19 pandemic that Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald, at age 72, took time to reflect on his journey through life. The result is his debut memoir, *"It Started With A Turtle,"* a collection of stories spanning decades of adventure, humor, and heart. Archway calls it "a one-of-a-kind book offering readers an unblinking glimpse at a life well-lived."

"During the shutdown there were no comedy clubs to play," Fitzgerald says, as we sit down to talk and have lunch at a Denver Olive Garden. Dr. Fitzgerald wrote his first book – by far not his first delve into writing – by hand, to have it typed later by an assistant.

Dr. Kev, as friends call him, has broken his extraordinary memoir down into five essential parts: His early Roman Catholic upbringing in Denver; a trip into the world of rock and roll as a bouncer to mostly fund his education; his journey into veterinary medicine and subsequent unpredictable entry into the world of comedy; and

his international conservation efforts. It is a must read.

Here is the wild part: His connection to Montrose –

Early on, Kevin Fitzgerald, the student, travelled with other students and a professor to learn about treating cattle. The adventure led him to what he calls "a small bump in the road called Montrose." He can't believe how much the area overshadowed by the San Juans has changed over the years.

His professor knew a rancher near Montrose who would trade treating his cattle for housing for a veterinary study of rattlesnakes. Thus, a young Fitzgerald found himself anesthetizing and tagging rattlesnakes for a Denver Zoo funded study near Montrose on a ranch, the name of which now escapes him. But, hey, that was more than 40 years ago.

On the ranch, students and Fitzgerald caught and anesthetized rattlesnakes and implanted them with tracking devices. Fitzgerald became intrigued by studying rattlesnakes due to one of his "remarkable mentors," legendary rattlesnake researcher David Chizsar. During graduate school Fitzgerald got a work/study job in Dr. Chizsar's laboratory, which housed no less than 200 rattlesnakes in the basement of the CU psychology building.

"Years later, in private practice at a small veterinary hospital," says Fitzgerald in his memoir, "I have continued to be interested in rattlesnakes. Every summer, we see dozens of dogs who have been bitten by a rattlesnake."

Continued next pg

CAROLE ANN MCKELVEY REVIEWS, 'IT STARTED WITH A TURTLE' From previous pg

The majority of these dogs are bitten on the face, because they put their head down close to see what is rattling. His veterinary clinic keeps anti-venom on hand, as other clinics know to send snake-bite cases to them.

One day, he states in his memoir, he heard a man shouting before he saw the dog. "Help me, please someone help me! My dog has been bitten by a rattlesnake!" Guiding the "roaring man" and the huge dog he was carrying, Dr. Fitzgerald immediately took them to an exam room asking when the dog was bitten. He found out the dog had been bitten in Daniel's Park, south of Denver where there is a large population of rattlesnakes. "Luna" a large chocolate Labrador had "dramatic swelling progressing rapidly" from a bite to the face. In Luna's case, Fitzgerald writes that the location of the bite, her size, and her early presentation acted in her favor. "I turned to her anxious and rattled owner," he writes.

He explained the next procedures and getting some anti-venom into Luna. "She is young, she is strong, you got her right in . . . We can help this dog. "Your dog is in the right place. I have seen a few of these." He assured the owner that "the prognosis for his dog was very good." He sent the reassured owner on his way and began saving Luna's life. Two days later, he writes, Luna went home to her family, "with quite an adventure to tell her friends about."

Fitzgerald wonders why snakes fascinate us so? "Maybe due to their behavior, 'legless but swift.' Or, 'their lidless, unblinking eyes?'" And the many myths that swirl around these vipers?

It is in this conversational, teaching memoir, the reader is gripped by this veterinarian, humanitarian, comedic and relentlessly conservationist human being, Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald.

Told in five parts, the memoir traces Fitzgerald's journey from his Irish Catholic upbringing in 1950s Colorado; to his exhilarating adventures working concert security for iconic rock bands during the 1960s and '70s; to the joys and challenges of now 41 years in veterinary practice at Ala-

meda East Veterinary Clinic; to his comedic journey on stage, where he has shared the spotlight with legends such as Joan Rivers, Pat Paulson, and George Lopez; and finally, his passionate wildlife conservation work in the Arctic, Antarctica, the Everglades, and Mongolia.

This memoir has the reader immersed in tales of adventure, humor – likely with tears of laughter running down your face – to an urgent plea for the planet and its wild creatures.

"As my generation of 'boomers' fades, and new ones come to the fore, this book gives a glimpse into our time, our culture, our music, our humor, all through the eyes of someone who experienced it," Fitzgerald states. "I would like readers to see that our lives are not one-dimensional, and that we can do many different things. I would like them to see the importance of humor in our lives, the urgent importance of conservation and their role in it, and to help them recognize the massive beauty of the natural world around us."

And, oh, has Dr. Kev. experienced it all. Often accompanied by his beloved animal companions, "Fritz," "Fritz 2," "Mrs. Thompson," and "Stewy," the female tortoise who still shares his life.

"It Started With A Turtle" is not just a memoir; it is a sweet exploration of life's richness, with entertaining anecdotes woven alongside thoughtful reflections on the importance of music, humor, and protecting biodiversity. Parts of this remarkable memoir will have tears of laughter, and then, pain, running down your cheeks, as it did this writer.

Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald has practiced veterinary medicine in Denver for 42 years. On March 15, 2025, he said in an interview that the children of his original pet-owners now bring their treasured fur babies to the very same clinic and vet. He helped pay for his education working for rock promoters and providing security for touring bands. "And, yes, I did get hit a few times, but always tried to talk to them (trouble-makers) to calm them down if I could." He reminisced about an old friend, now gone, who did similar security at George McKelvey's Comedy Club near Aurora. One night

a drunk patron of the show slammed the hulking, but likeable John Cooney into a vehicle and broke his arm. Such is the bane of 'bouncers.'

For 11 seasons, Dr. Kev was one of the featured veterinarians on Animal Planet's popular series "Emergency Vets" and "E-Vet Interns." The stint as the handsome young vet on the show, handling all sorts of animal mishaps and injuries, actually secured him a spot in the annual *People Magazine's* 'Handsome Men on the Planet' list. Today Dr. Kev remains a confirmed bachelor, living in his Victorian Denver home in the historic Washington Park area of town. He spends his time with long-term comedy and conservationist friends, doing comedy and speaking gigs when not attending to his animal patients at Alameda East.

One of the hilarious bits Fitzgerald recounts in his comedy shows is about the time a family came into his clinic with a bewildered dog with a ping-pong ball glued to its head. He writes:

"The Golden Retriever's eyes darted nervously around the bright, harshly lit exam room. She was a nice-looking dog, but she was clearly agitated.

"Close to the dog stood her little pack of humans: a clearly shaken woman and three small children." . . .

"Then it hit me. The Golden Retriever had a ping-pong ball centered squarely on top of her head. The woman spoke for the first time. 'My three-year old Krazy-Glued a ping-pong ball on top of Daisy's head.' 'I looked at her in utter astonishment. One of the waiflike little girls spoke next. Almost four-years old, she was all big eyes and thatched straw-colored hair. 'Then Mom cut Daisy's skin off.' 'The mom then said how she took a scissors and tried to pull up the skin, cut the hair away from the ball and snip it free, 'but I cut her skin.' 'There was a palpable contrition in her voice.' 'Now the ball is still there, and she is bleeding.' Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald remembered how years before a physician and old friend had taught him that Neosporin was the answer to Krazy-Glued skin. 'It lubricates the area and has some solvent that loosens the chemical bond.

CAROLE ANN MCKELVEY REVIEWS, 'IT STARTED WITH A TURTLE' From previous pg

"I put a muzzle on the frustrated Daisy, had the worried mother hold the dog's head and liberally applied Neosporin to the base of the ball." The ball, he writes, like magic, quickly released into his hand. After taking Daisy back to the treatment area to sew her up, he brought the relieved Daisy back to "her little clan."

When retelling these stories in his comedy act, Fitzgerald says, "You can't make this stuff up!"

He was mentored by his old friend and comedy legend the late George McKelvey, first at the Comedy Works started by McKelvey, and then George McKelvey's Comedy Club on South Hampden. It is his early comedy gigs that prove so hilarious in the retelling in the memoir. In a beginning attempt to master comedy, Dr. Kev, turned to the help of his furry, feathered and slimy friends. An example of his early antics doing his brutal "Three-minute open mic night shows"--

Fitzgerald had ended up with three Colorado leopard frogs after helping police retrieve them and some exotic snakes from cages at a drug dealer's residence.

He set them up in a clean aquarium in his home office and procured crickets, and worms for their dining. When the weather warmed up, he planned to release them as they are native to Colorado.

"I wondered," he writes in his memoir, "how they might earn their keep." He bought some Rockies purple tube socks and cut slits for frog legs and heads. Then he bought a purple unitard to match for himself and made a cape to go with it.

"With these simple preparations, my act 'Aldo Bondi and the Frogs of Power' was born. With great anticipation, I drove down to the club with the frogs sharply attired in their new outfits. I could not wait to get onstage! Arriving at the club, I changed into my frog-tamer's outfit and before long it was showtime.

"Once onstage, I ran the boys through the stunts we had practiced. First, they performed the difficult three-frog pyramid.

Magic! Next came the crowd favorite, the hair-raising 'Ring of Fire.'" Fitzgerald had bent a clothes hanger into a ring and wrapped it with a sheet soaked in gasoline. Once lit he threw a frog through it and caught it on the other side. "Viola, more magic!"

Standing backstage, he had hired the stripper girlfriend of a friend to appear wearing a raincoat covering a G-string and pasties. Once onstage she doffed the coat and, he writes, "with all her charms" she turned on a fire extinguisher and doused the flames. "The lovely Tina," he writes, "she took a bow, picked up the raincoat and left the stage." For his finale, Fitzgerald held up a walnut and paper bar napkin and told the crowd that most people don't know frogs are good trackers. He hid the walnut and put the frogs down on the stage where they hopped aimlessly about. "The frogs explored the stage with excited hops, showing absolutely no interest in locating the walnut. At the end I collected the frogs, thanked the crowd and exited the stage. The audience," he says, "was mixed in their reactions."

After he performed at the Comedy Club the owner, the late George McKelvey was livid. Finally, McKelvey, "said: 'Kev. You idiot. Frogs of Power! More like Frogs of Shit! Those frogs didn't even try to find the walnut.'

"Now," writes Fitzgerald, "I was confused. That was the point, why would frogs try to find a walnut?"

"Then he (McKelvey) went on. 'Now let me ask you, if one of your frogs hopped into someone's drink, I mean, are there any diseases they could transmit? Am I at liability here?'

"George," writes Fitzgerald, "had a good point. More than that though, the act didn't work. I had learned that except for Kermit, frogs are just not cut out for show business and are indifferent performers. Thankfully, the Spring came soon and I released the frogs on the banks of a shady local reservoir. They eagerly took to the

water and embraced their freedom. I never saw them again.

"When I look back," Fitzgerald says, "I can see the audience was perplexed by the act, the frogs were inconsistent partners, and I had to pay Tina fifty dollars for the extinguisher bit, in a three-minute spot that I was doing for free."

Fitzgerald said he learned that "comedy is a long race. And he was more determined than ever to set his sights on coming up with a whole new act."

Over time, Fitzgerald has perfected his current paid comedy act which usually brings down the house as he takes command of the stage with confidence. He's a regular on local stages.

Today his true passion is really conservation, and he believes when a species becomes extinct, the world becomes a less interesting place. A life-long bachelor, Fitzgerald has lived for many years in Denver with his long-time companion, his dog, Mrs. Thompson. Dr. Kev says she was about 10-15 years old when she was rescued by a cop, nearly frozen solid while chained to a post. Police felt she should be put down, but Fitzgerald asked that he be given a chance with the tiny chihuahua and see if he could save her. She went everywhere with him after he adopted her.

He isn't sure just how old she was when she unfortunately died and stepped onto the Rainbow Bridge about two weeks ago. After many years of companionship, Dr. Kev is heart-broken but cheered by all the outpouring of love he's received. "But we all face death at some point," he says, "and I know I'll see her again someday."

For more information, visit his website, www.DrKevinFitzgerald.com, or find him on Facebook ([Kevin T Fitzgerald](#)) and YouTube ([Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald](#)). The book is now available for purchase at major retailers and online platforms. For a true sense of the person who is Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald, watch an old episode of *Animal Planet*.

CARTOON BY TIM JONES

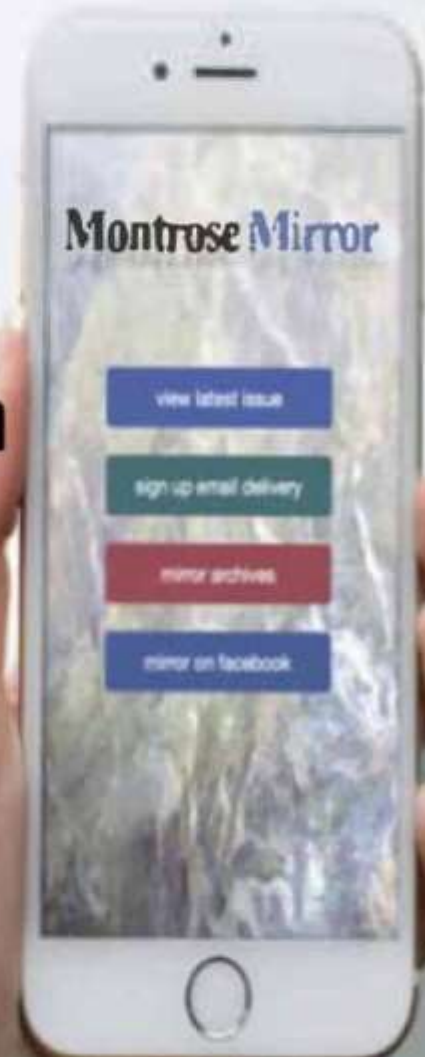
WEEKLY CARTOON

SOUR GRAPES

by Tim Jones



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REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

'THE MYSTICAL DESERT' WILL BE ON DISPLAY FROM MARCH 18 THROUGH APRIL 26



Courtesy image: Dawn (Sangdrol) Blanchard.

By Dawn (Sangdrol) Blanchard

MONTROSE—On a Sunday Spring morning I would often get up early, put on my favorite hiking boots, and paint-stained jeans. I'd load my oil paints and sketch pad, and a hastily packed lunch, driving out north of Flagstaff to just above the Tuba City turnoff. I'd feel joy and freedom, like a child who had the whole day to play. All was good in the world; I was headed to the Navajo Reservation to capture the mystical painted desert, the Chinle, the part of the world that had captured my heart.

I'd drive down a dirt road with my hand drawn map of where I'd already visited, looking for formations I hadn't seen before. The reservation has very few roads that are paved – and even less people or houses. There are a few communities of hogans, some family groups scattered in ravines sculpted by years of weather. But it is mostly made up of quiet desert hills and canyons. One of the real beauties of the painted desert is its quiet, peaceful energy. Visually there are very few trees to make a whistle of the wind, and birds are scarce except the desert dove that calls early in the morning. There isn't any sound of traffic, no hum of electric wires or poles, and no tall microwave towers. Just peaceful, quiet space.

Sacred and Mystical

The Painted Desert, unique in its vast, colorful formations, relates to the Navajo beliefs in the creation of the Dine' as they prefer to call themselves. The Navajo believe they emerged into this world from this area of the Arizona desert, and it is associated with deities and spiritual beings hosted in ceremonies and rituals still performed to this day to maintain the balance and harmony of the land and its people.

A Hopi friend once told me the word "Chinle" meant "Where all things come together." He said he was taught that it was very sacred to his people since their beginning. It is made up of rich earth elements considered healing and is the basis for all life according to their beliefs.

The layers in these beautiful formations get their color from the minerals they are made up of, and each color and mineral carry its own vibration, or energy – much like crystals which are often used in spiritual and sacred practices.

Scientific

This formation of earth is from the late Triassic period, roughly 210-230 million year ago. These geological formation spans across several states, including Nevada, Utah, northern Arizona, western New Mexico and parts of western Colorado. In Colorado it spans through and around the Colorado National Monument and surrounds the town of Fruita.

The Chinle formation is a layer in the Grand Canyon, and itself is made up of several layers that have different colors giving this unique part of the earth a 'candy stripe' look: **Shinarump:** A prominent white sandstone found at the base of the Chinle Formation in some areas.

Petrified Forest: A well-known layer of the Chinle Formation, particularly in Petrified Forest National Park, where it contains abundant petrified wood.

Owl Rock: Consists of pinkish-orange mudstones mixed with hard, thin layers of limestone.

Sonsela: Divided into three parts: the upper Flattops One Bed, the middle Jim Camp Wash Beds, and the lower Rainbow Forest bed.

Blue Mesa: Another member found within Petrified Forest National Park.

Sacred to an Artist

As an artist we are often seeking new subjects to capture with paint, pencil, pastels and even cameras. Well-known artists have historically tried to translate the incredible feeling these formations give you when you are among them. As if they are large beings standing proudly before you, ancient and protective. The surfaces are rough like what we can imagine to be a dragons' skin, rich with delicate, almost lace-like patterns, traced by wind, rain and time. You can feel their presence in the world, so old and wise, you want to become one with their exist-

ence. They hold ancient secrets: petrified wood, dinosaur bones and footprints from way before man roamed the earth.

But how do you capture that in art? Ansel Adams tried with black and white photography, Georgia O'Keeffe in paints, and many other lesser know artists, like myself, over the years.

I tried colored pencil, then watercolor, and finally settled on oil. Once I started painting, it almost became an obsession – a commitment – a promise to myself. I wanted others to see these like I did – sacred, mystical, like a precious and highly valued gem, present in the world.

For many years I have created countless drawings, watercolors, and over 25 oil paintings of this ancient part of our amazing land, each one an attempt at creating a statement of the experience and beauty. I'm certain, while many people who see the art say they are beautiful, I wonder if they experience what I felt when I was creating these paintings – the expression, the color pushed, the skies married to the land. But that's ok, at least I tried to share that sacred, almost religious, experience I had every time I visited those quiet badlands. I still can feel the sun on my face as I ate my cheese sandwich taking a lunch break, sitting on the back tailgate of my truck swinging my feet in my favorite hiking boots. My wish was that each viewer of this art would have at least a taste, a touch of the joy and love I felt when creating this expression.

The Author

The author Dawn (Sangdrol) Blanchard is a designer and artist who studied illustration and fine art at Northern Arizona University. She lived in Flagstaff for over 17 years and explored the reservation with anthropologists and friends of the Hopi tribe to better understand its special beauty. She has received representation from well known galleries in Tucson, Santa Fe, Sedona, Tubac and Cottonwood. She now lives in Montrose, Colorado and owns a special shop in old downtown, "Meditation Spaces Art Gallery".

She is also a board member of The Montrose Center for Arts, and her collection "The Mystical Desert" will be on display from March 18 through April 26. Gallery hours Tues-Sat. 11am – 5pm. A special opening scheduled for Thursday, March 27th from 5 pm until 7. Visit www.montrosecenterforarts.com to learn more

Stillbirth * Miscarriage * Infant loss

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,
regardless of how long ago your loss occurred.

Share your story or just listen, and find support among other
bereaved parents and families.

While we are all unique, and our situations for our loss differ,
it is important to know you are not alone.

MIRROR CHURCH DIRECTORY

ALL SAINTS ANGLICAN CHURCH

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

Office Hours: By appointment.

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

 don@allsaintsmontrose.org)

Worship Service Times: Sundays 9AM,

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

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

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

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

BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH

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

Olathe, Co 81425

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

Pastor Gabe Skillo

Sunday School 9:15 a.m.

Sunday 10:30 a.m.

Sunday 6 p.m.

Wednesday Bible Study/Prayer 7 p.m.

CELEBRATION CHURCH

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

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

Office Hours: By appointment

Phone: (970) 497-4925

Email: celebrationmontrose@gmail.com

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

Worship Service Times: 9am and 10:45am

Senior Pastor:

Pastor Brandon Mathis

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

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

Demographics: Multi-generational

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

Student (middle & high school) at 9am.

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

CHRIST'S CHURCH OF THE VALLEY

Name of Church: Christ's Church of the
 Valley

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

Address: 10 Hillcrest Plaza Way. Mont-
 rose, CO 81401

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

Contact information:

Phone: 970-249-0530

Email: CCVMontroseCO10@gmail.com

Website: ccvmontrose.org

Name of current Senior Pastor: Ken Law-
 rence

Worship service times: 10:30 a.m.

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

in our Lord Jesus Christ to the glory of
 God.

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

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

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Denomination: Christ Lutheran Montrose
Affiliation: Lutheran Church Missouri Syn-
 od

Address: 1980 N. Townsend Ave., Mont-
 rose, CO 81401

Contact: 970-633-0226

Website: www.montroselutheran.org

Email: montroselutheran@gmail.com

Pastor: Tim Onnen

Worship: Sundays at 9 AM

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

find friendly people gathered in a welcom-
 ing environment being comforted and en-
 couraged by the forgiveness and love of
 Jesus, and sharing that with one another.

We are a small congregation of seniors
 and middle-aged, sprinkled with young
 children and teenagers.

COMMUNITY SPIRIT CHURCH

United Church of Christ (UCC)

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

Office hours: Call or text for appointment

Phone: 970-765-7070

Email: spirit@communityspiritucc.org

Website: communityspiritucc.org

Current Pastor: Rev. Wendy Kidd

Worship service: Sundays at 11am

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

where everyone can live freely and au-
 thentically.

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

COVENANT HEBRAIC FELLOWSHIP

Denomination affiliation. No affiliation

Address Office hours N/A

Contact: 720-951-9941,

office@ccfmontrose.net,

www.ccfmontrose.net

Name of current Senior Pastor. Led by
 elders

Worship service times. Noon on Satur-
 days. Children's Church will be offered as
 needed.

Covenant is a Hebraic roots community

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

MIRROR CHURCH DIRECTORY *From previous pg*

FIRST CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

Denomination: Church of the Nazarene

Address: 705 South 12th Street

Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 9 am- Noon and by Appointment

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

Pastor: Buddy Cook

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

Wednesday: Prayer Boot Camp - 7 PM
Mission Statement: *Montrose First Church of the Nazarene exists to make Christlike*

disciples in Montrose Colorado and around the world.

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

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH MONTROSE

Affiliation: Presbyterian

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

Contact: 970-249-4732, info@fpcmontrose.com, www.fpcmontrose.com

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Jesse G. Mabanglo

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

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

HILLCREST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Denomination affiliation: United Church of Christ

Address: 611 South Hillcrest Drive, Montrose, CO 81401

Office hours: By appointment

Contact information:

Phone number: (970) 249-9047

Email address: office@montroseucc.org

Website: montroseucc.org

Current Pastor: Rev. Wendy Kidd

Worship service times: Sunday, 10 a.m.

Hillcrest Congregational UCC is a welcoming, open and affirming church, open to all no matter who you are or where you are

on life's journey.

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

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

MONTROSE MISSION OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

Affiliation: Orthodox

Meets: 2057 S. Townsend, Montrose, CO

81401 and Cimarron Creek Clubhouse.

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

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

MONTROSE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Denomination Affiliation: United Methodist

Address: 19 S. Park Avenue Montrose CO. 81401

Office Hours: M-Thu, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Contact Information: 970-249-3716, office@montroseumc.org, [mont-](http://montroseumc.org)

roseumc.org

Current Senior Pastor: Rev. Kevin Young

Worship service times:

8:30 a.m. Sanctuary & Virtual

9:45 a.m. Christian Education & Fellowship

11 a.m. Sanctuary

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

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

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

ROSEMONT BAPTIST CHURCH

Affiliation: Southern Baptist

Address: 1598 E. Niagara Road, Montrose, CO 81401

Office Hours: Tues-Thurs, 9am-4pm

Contact information:

Phone: 970.249.4887

website: www.RosemontBaptist.org

email: office@rosemontbaptist.org

Senior Pastor: Rolland Kenneson

Worship Service Times: Our engaging and relevant Sunday Worship Service is at

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

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

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

matter what stage of life they are in.

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

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

MIRROR CHURCH DIRECTORY *From previous pg*

SPIRITUAL AWARENESS CENTER

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

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

rose; Everyone is welcome. The Spiritual Awareness Center is an interfaith spiritual community welcoming spiritual seekers and people of all faiths, providing a safe place to explore and nurture the individual's unique connection to the Divine through Unity services, classes, family and community projects. People of all ages are welcome.
 There are currently no Sunday School or nursery services provided but craft supplies are available for youth.

ST. STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

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

GRAND JUNCTION STUDENT AWARDED ANNUAL UNITED COUNTRY YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP

Special to the Mirror

KANSAS CITY, MO – Against the backdrop of United Country Real Estate’s 100th Anniversary Convention in late February, the company’s second-annual Youth Scholarship Program truly stood out.

After its launch in 2024, this year the Youth Scholarship saw a 60% increase in applicants and a significant boost in funds raised over last year. Managed by United Country’s auction services team, the program is intended for United Country affiliates’ children or grandchildren pursuing post-secondary education.

While the scholarship’s inaugural year

secured \$1,500 each for two deserving students, that figure ballooned to \$5,000 each for the upcoming 2025-26 school year. A live auction – typically including luxury branded materials and customized trips – during United Country’s Annual Training & Awards Convention helps raise funds for each following year’s scholarship. Featured most recently were a guided bear hunt in Colorado, turkey hunt in Montana and fishing trip in Alaska.

Earning the Youth Scholarship this time were Charleston “Charley” Green, daughter of Hilliary Green, an affiliate broker with United Country | Leipers Fork, Frank-

lin, Tenn.; and Kaylee Mautz, daughter of Deanna Mautz, a broker associate with Grand Junction-based United Country | Real Colorado Properties.

Green distinguished herself as a leader with a passion for global business and cultural connection. She’s the founder and president of *Empower Her*, and has been Junior Class President, Student Body President, and President of the National English Honor Society. A recipient of numerous academic honors, Green plans to pursue international business at the University of South Carolina, and has a passion for Spanish and global finance.

“This opportunity means so much to me and I promise to make the most of it,” Green said. “I can only hope to one day pay it forward and help someone in the same way United Country has helped me.”

Mautz was also recognized for her leadership and academic excellence, as well as her interest in environmental conservation. She’s been President of the National Honor Society, Vice President of Membership for Future Business Leaders of America, and founded her school’s trap shooting program. Mautz plans to major in Ecology and Conservation at Texas A&M University, while also competing on the university’s heralded archery team.

“I am incredibly honored to receive this scholarship (which is) not only helping me achieve my academic goals, but also my professional goals,” Mautz said. “With it, I’m one step closer to becoming a natural resources manager and changing the way we think about sustainability.”

Applicants of the United Country Youth Scholarship Program are reviewed by an independent judging panel using a comprehensive scoring rubric based on academic achievement, leadership, and community involvement.

“United Country is honored to support these exceptional students as they take the next step in their academic and professional journeys,” said United Country Auction Services President Shawn Terrel. “Our scholarship program continues to grow, backed by our affiliates’ enduring spirit of giving and stewardship. We can’t wait to see the results next year will bring.”



Pahgre's
970-249-6442

Rib City
970-249-7427

Stone House
970-240-8899



Fiesta Guadalajara
970-249-2460

Alpen Confections
970-648-0609

Jimmer's Steak & BBQ
970-252-1227



Beer Barn II
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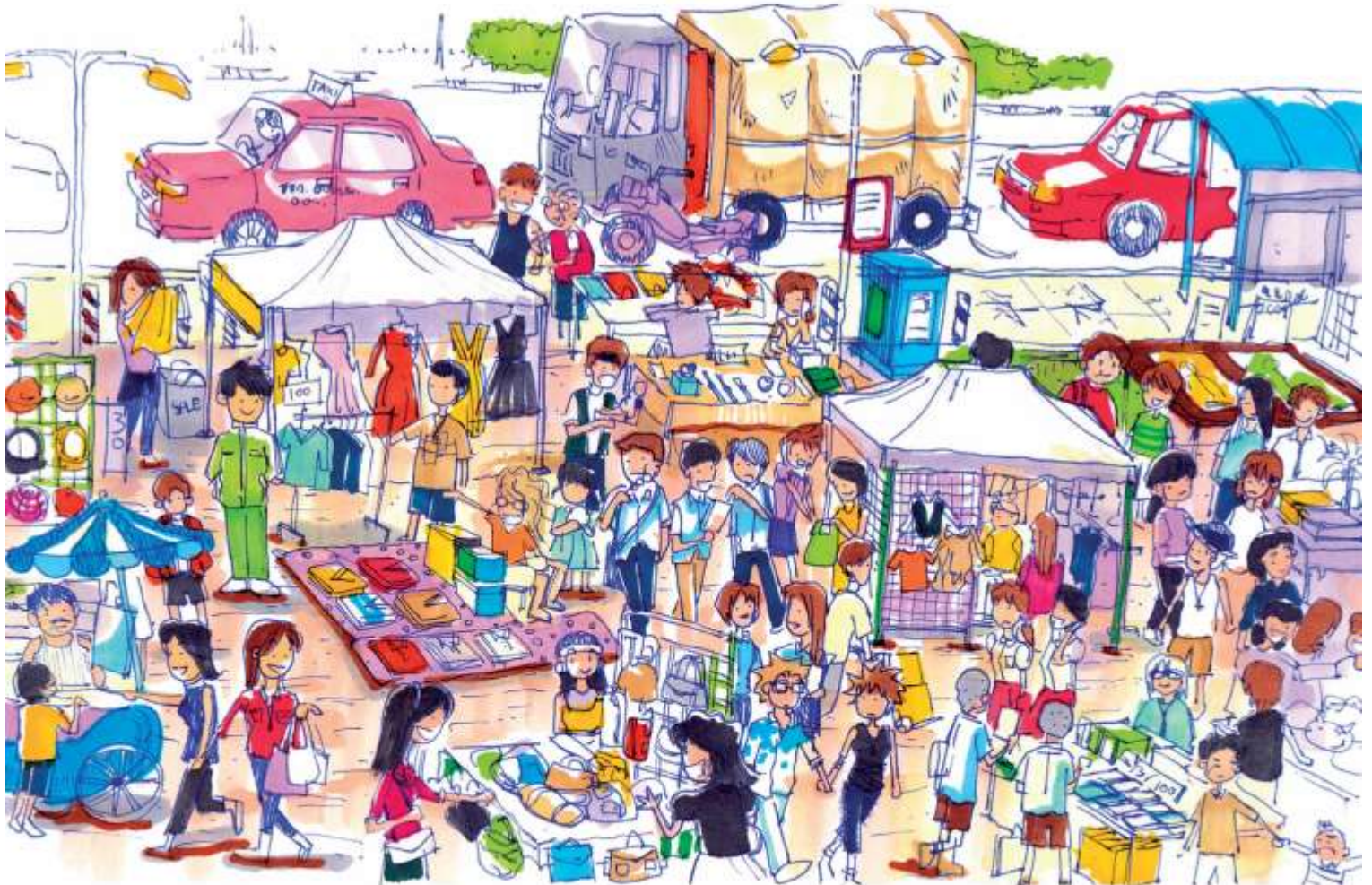


2025 March Madness CRAFT SHOW

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

Nestled in the San Juan Mountains of Colorado

Light after Loss: A Therapeutic Grief Retreat

**April 25-27th, 2025
Ouray, Colorado**

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.

Facilitated by Erik Cooper, LMFT
Lindsey Ermatinger, LPC and
Rhonda Follman, Life & Leadership Coach

Key Features

- Open to any stage in the grieving process
- Variety of healing modalities
- Individualized EMDR sessions
- Relaxation & hot tub at Twin Peaks Lodge
- Grief support through the holidays
- Ages 18+



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Rhonda Follman
(970) 596-3958
rhonda.follman@yahoo.com

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CONTACT DETAILS

📞 970-249-8266
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The Satisfied Woman

10 WAYS TO BUILD INTIMACY IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP

1. Talk.
2. Touch.
3. Listen.
4. Reminisce.
5. Sex.
6. Support.
7. Quality Time.
8. Show Appreciation.
9. Date Night.
10. Vulnerability.

There really is no good definition for intimacy. It means different things to different people. True intimacy requires active participation and intention. It doesn't simply happen. It is deeper than passion. It is stronger than commitment. It is a way of living your life with the awareness that in every moment, every action, we choose to either reveal or safeguard ourselves. We choose to show up, stand tall and tell the truth, or shrink and hide. It means having the courage to choose connection with, rather than isolation from, our deepest, darkest self, and then sharing that with another. That, in my opinion, is intimacy.

So if you're wondering how to improve (or even experience) intimacy in your relationship, it's an on-going process, but here are some simple and actionable suggestions.

Talk

Long-term relationship, especially marriage or cohabitation, often breeds laziness in communication. We've told all the stories, we've got nothing new to say, life is "life-ing," so outside influences and pressures become the prevalent topics. "Did you pay the car insurance?" "Did you remember to get Q-tips at the store?" No wonder couples fall out of love. That's not much of a connection. It's definitely not sexy or interesting. But once upon a time, that person was! And so were you. So try to connect with that again. Establishing deeper intimacy starts

with communication. Talk about problems, don't let them fester. Talk about dreams, don't be afraid to share those—or worse, stop having dreams. Talk about desires. What is it you want from life, from your partner, from your career, for your kids. Just talk. And explore together. Clamming up leads to self-protection, isolation, resentment and loneliness. If it's hard to open up or find things to discuss, try ordering an Intimacy Conversation deck of cards. Not the sex ones, although those can be fun too, try the ones that introduce uncomfortable and personal topics of conversation that make you both think about things on a deeper level. It takes the pressure off when the question is written on a card, and then it becomes more of a game. Try "Best Self" Intimacy Deck. It has 170 different prompts for deeper, more meaningful conversation.

Touch

Life is so busy, and we are always on our way somewhere or rushing around with our hands full. Pause. Be intentional. Do you pet your dog? If you're like me, you stop halfway into a room, drop everything to the floor and bend down to kiss their head and ears, gushing to them about how wonderful they are. Which brings you both immediate feelings of joy and love. Touch triggers the hormone oxytocin, enhancing feelings of trust, security and comfort. Now, do you rush up to your partner and yank them into an embrace and kiss them all over their head, while they're innocently grooming or looking out the window? I'm betting no. So maybe offer a little tail wagging to your partner too. A gentle caress as you walk by. A hug from behind while they're doing dishes. Sit right next to them on the couch instead of on the opposite end. Sit beside them in a booth at a restaurant, instead of across from them. Hold hands while walking through a parking lot. Build habits around casual touch that you've probably

lost over the years. We tend to create accidental distance and drift apart physically as we grow apart emotionally. Little things add up. In either direction. Study after study repeatedly shows that couples who touch each other are happier. Make it a point to offer that. Even if you don't want to. Do it anyway. Watch what happens.

Listen

Do you listen to your partner when they're talking to you? Or do you just talk AT each other... while one speaks, the other is waiting to respond? Are your conversations more like an arm wrestling match? Do you mentally rehearse what you plan to say while they're talking? Or, worse, interrupt and cut them off so you can say what you want to say? Super disrespectful, even when it's intended with excitement and a desire to connect and relate. Try active listening techniques. This is a high-level skill that will serve you well in not only your relationship, but in job interviews or when speaking to someone you want to either impress, engage, or establish rapport with. It's also an FBI Hostage Negotiation Tactic. Fun fact. Try repeating back their words in your response. Build that in there to show you're listening and to actually engage. Example: You had a crappy day, you're in a reactive mood, and your partner is oblivious, thinking about dinner. This is a fight waiting to happen. You: "I hate my job, I have a massive headache and I just need a F@\$%^&* break..." Partner: "That sucks, sorry babe. You feel like cooking or should



By Gia Pirelli. Courtesy photo.

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I heat a frozen pizza?" OK, WRONG. Try this instead: "I had a rough day, I'm feeling a little low energy and I could really use some support." Partner: "You had a rough day? I'm sorry, how can I support? Do you want to go grab some dinner somewhere and talk about it?" Two things happened there (on both sides) You communicated your vulnerability, what you're feeling and what you need without being pissy. Partner showed active listening by repeating back what you said, then offered the support you were seeking, while solving their own problem, and in a way that serves you both. Win. Communication is an art. And learning how to speak and communicate with people, especially your partner, is a skill worth cultivating.

Reminisce

It's fun to share memories and tell stories, whether to each other or to friends. You get to relive experiences together. Don't go searching your mental database for a time they screwed up or let you down. It's not a cross-examination or an opportunity to catalog complaints. Talk about when you met, a funny story that you both remember, a place you went that was breathtakingly beautiful, a restaurant you both loved, find something that you both remember as positive and then relive that experience together. It's also a good idea to place physical evidence around the house. Frame a small picture of the two of you, early-on in your relationship, smiling and happy. A time that makes you smile now when you think about it. Even if for a split second. Put it somewhere you will see it frequently. Stop looking for reasons to be annoyed and start looking for the things that brought you together. Thoughts shape beliefs, which create behaviors that become habits. Choose to soften and choose to shape your reality with intentional thoughts instead of negative feedback loops.

Sex

Dr Ruth says, "When it comes to sex, the most important six inches are the ones between the ears." Sex is as much mental as it is physical. Intimacy, trust, understanding, and honesty play a crucial role in sexual enjoyment. Lacking even one of those ingredients results in a disap-

pointing or lackluster experience. And then it breeds anxiety, stress or feelings of guilt or obligation and sex becomes a chore, like taking out the trash. It can get pretty weird after that. You don't have to have costumes and props or any sort of theatrics. Just basic connection and touch. Start by simply looking into each other's eyes. Intimacy is so much more than being naked in front of someone. And it's so much more than Tab A goes in Slot B. Connecting with your partner, the one you love and have chosen to share your life with, should be a place of emotional warmth, safety, security, protection and bonding. It is an expression of deep trust and vulnerability. Do you regularly skip sex in favor of everything else, and then fall into bed, exhausted, thinking you'll get to it later? Life is busy. So if this is you, then schedule it. You schedule literally everything else in your life. I'm not saying to create a spreadsheet—unless that's how you roll, but just be intentional and make space in your day or in your week. Happy couples have sex every day, or darn near. So it shouldn't be an annual event on a birthday or anniversary. Note: If you're uncomfortable with your body or feeling a little insecure as you've gotten older, try putting a red lightbulb in the bedside lamp. (You can thank me later.)

Support

What is support? The definition of support is "to bear the weight of; hold up." Do you bear any of your partner's weight? Do you help shoulder their burden? Are you even aware of their burdens? Do you ever ask? Look for ways to support, to bear the weight of your partner. They may never ask for it. Men often don't. Be intuitive. Tune into them and offer ways to lift some of the weight. Maybe don't say "ugh! give me that, I'll do it." But, "Here. Let me help..." Asking, "Do you need help?" almost always results in a no. So find ways to be helpful, to be of service and be genuine about it. If you can't offer support without being bitter, angry or resentful, then don't. Maybe go see a therapist about those feelings first. And then circle back to the suggestions here. Support is something we all need. And it can be something as simple as a cup of coffee or

as complicated as 'I'll cover the bills while you find a new job.' There is always give and take in any healthy relationship. Make sure you're a lifter, not a leaner. And this goes for all your relationships. Not just your partner.

Quality Time

Do you do things together? Or do you brush your teeth together and then go about your day, utterly cutting your partner out of your life until you come home from work, flop on the couch and then scroll through your phone? Do you make plans to do things outside of the home? Watching television or pulling weeds doesn't count. Do you get away from your home environment to go do things together as a couple? For example, go for a hike, go camping, boating, hot springs, take a drive, watch a sunset, ride your bike, go to a park, go rafting, go to a movie... Spend quality time together and try to build it around something fun and adventurous. It doesn't have to be sky diving, but find something different or new you can do together to create new memories, share new experiences, and to escape the hum-drummer of domestic routine.

Show Appreciation

Sometimes we take people or things for granted. It doesn't mean we don't appreciate them, it simply means we assume they will always be available to us. It's so important to show appreciation and gratitude every single day. Simple acts of kindness or praise can go a long way. Mark Twain once said, "I can live for two months on a good compliment." Positive feedback deeply impacts a person's well-being, increases their motivation and improves the way they interact with the world, the way they interact with you. Saying please and thank you is a simple start. Offer appreciation for not only things they do, but things they say, or how they look. When you receive a compliment it feels good. So offer compliments and praise freely. Tell them what you love about them. This is a great practice either first thing in the morning or just before you go to sleep. Make it a habit.

Date Night

Take time, once a week, to have date night. It can be anything the two of you

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enjoy where you're spending romantic time together, just the two of you. Go to dinner, go to a concert, go dancing, go have tacos, whatever floats your boat. Just make time and space to be together, at night, dressed in something attractive (see last week's article) and give yourselves something to look forward to. Then practice literally all of the steps in this article on your date. Note: if you're the couple who can sit through an entire meal in silence, while staring at everything but each other, then bring the Intimacy Cards.

Vulnerability

Brene Brown, one of the most important authors on self discovery, often says to herself, "Don't shrink, don't puff up, stand your ground." I find this so incredibly helpful when facing a situation of either deep vulnerability or something emotion-

ally uncomfortable. Vulnerability is not weakness, quite the opposite. Vulnerability is being brave enough to express your fears, discomforts, failures, and doubts. Furthermore, it shows deep trust and honesty to your partner, which invites reciprocity from them. When both of you live in self-protection mode and avoid any topic that might provoke feelings of uncertainty, fear, insecurity, abandonment, or unworthiness, you effectively cap the capacity of your relationship at a fairly shallow level. Be brave. Show up and be seen.

We fall in love based on how we are treated. We fall out of love for the very same reason. Your partner is your rock, your best friend, your safe harbor. And if they're not, then take a good look at why. Simone DeBeauvoir once said, "Love does not consist in gazing longingly at one an-

other, but rather in gazing together in the same direction." Reconnecting with yourself, first, then with what you loved about that person is critical in shifting your perspective and behavior. Love is a choice. It's not always wine and roses. Sometimes it's farts and weeds. So it's up to you to show up. Every day. Make the choice to do the work and invest in yourself, in your partner and in your life together. If your "check engine light" is on, do something about it. Don't just drive it 'til the wheels fall off. Similarly, in your relationship, if your check engine light is on, then it's time for maintenance. Drop in and get to work.

Gia Pirelli is a successful business woman, entrepreneur, and jewelry designer. Read more about her here: <https://www.giovannadesigns.myshopify.com>

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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.

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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 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](#).

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.

FIVE YEARS LATER, FAMILY DEMANDS JUSTICE FOR GAGE



Family and loved ones of the late Gage Lorentz continue to seek justice after the 25-year-old Montrose man was murdered on March 21, 2020, by a park ranger at Carlsbad Cavern National Park in New Mexico. Above, Gage's mother Kim spoke during the rally in Montrose on Saturday. Photos by Harry Switzer.



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