



PAGOSA SPRINGS, ARCHULETA COUNTY, COLORADO 81147

www.PagosaSUN.com VOLUME 116 — NO. 22, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2024

Town, county boards discuss U.S. 160 reconstruction project

By Derek Kutzer
Staff Writer

At a joint meeting on Feb. 20, the Pagosa Springs Town Council and Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) discussed a number of topics of mutual interest.

However, it became apparent that the most urgent issue facing both entities is how the local governments are going to help people — both locals and visitors alike — navigate the upcoming U.S. 160 reconstruction project slated to begin in the spring.

Commissioner Warren Brown explained he attended the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) presentation about the main street construction the week before, adding that many downtown business owners expressed that they are “very worried” about how the construction will affect their businesses. Brown said that he invited Kevin

Bruce, Archuleta County transportation coordinator and head of Mountain Express Transit (MET), to the joint meeting because some business owners had expressed an interest in utilizing the MET to help navigate the upcoming construction project.

Brown explained that the CDOT presentation was “well attended” by concerned business owners, and what “I kept hearing repeated was, ‘well, maybe MET can do that. Maybe MET can do this. Maybe MET could even put in a new bus stop. MET can help us.’”

So, he said, “I asked that this be added to the agenda.”

He continued, “I think all of the suggestions need to be considered, because we’re gonna have some business people ... that are going to struggle to stay in business.”

He added that both local government entities “need to be extremely

■ See Reconstruction A8

Certificate of occupancy issued for justice facility

By Derek Kutzer and Josh Pike
Staff Writers

On Feb. 22, an ongoing disagreement between two local government entities came to a resolution when the Pagosa Springs Town Council voted to approve a certificate of occupancy (CO) for Archuleta County’s justice facility on Harman Park Drive.

The building in question sits within the town limits, and, therefore, the town contends, should be subject to the town’s Land Use and Development Code (LUDC) — something the county disagreed with.

At the heart of the disagreement was the question of if the county is legally bound to abide by the town’s LUDC, particularly a provision that states, “Rooftop appurtenances, such as mechanical equipment and anten-

nas, shall be screened from view.”

The town contends that the building failed to comply with this section of the LUDC and, in April of 2023, the council approved a letter, authored by Town Attorney Bob Cole, spelling out the town’s intention to “withhold a certificate of occupancy” for the building, unless the county “complies with all conditions” of the town’s building code.

Mayor Shari Pierce explained while reading a prepared statement at the meeting that the county had refused to comply with the code and seemed poised to take the issue to court, despite multiple efforts on behalf of the town to broker a deal with county officials over the issue.

Pierce added that the issue goes back to 2020, when the county first

■ See Facility A8

Conflicts continue over Weber gravel mining lease

By Josh Pike
Staff Writer

Conflicts continued between the San Juan Water Conservancy District (SJWCD) and the Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation District (PAWSD) over control of the Running Iron Ranch property at recent meetings.

At the Dec. 14, 2023, PAWSD meeting, the board of directors heard a proposal from Andy Weber requesting an extension to the gravel mining lease he holds on the property.

The existing lease with Weber (prior to the proposal) indicates that he would sell gravel exclusively to PAWSD for its Snowball Water Treatment Plant expansion project and would cease mining and move on to

remediation work by the end of 2023.

Weber explained to the board that the vein of gravel from which he is currently extracting is larger than previously estimated and requested that the lease be extended so he can continue mining and sell the gravel to outside buyers.

Weber offered that, in exchange for the gravel lease extension, PAWSD would receive a \$1.50 royalty on each ton of gravel extracted and sold to outside buyers.

The board also heard comments from residents of the Log Park subdivision, who expressed opposition to extending the gravel lease, citing concerns about the impact of gravel extraction on their quality of life.

■ See Conflicts A8

On to state!



SUN photo/Randi Pierce

The Pagosa Springs High School Pirate basketball team poses for a team picture after its Sweet 16 win and the tradition of cutting down the net. The win sends the Pirates on to the Great 8 round of the 4A basketball playoffs in Denver on March 2.



SUN photo/Randi Pierce

The Pagosa Springs High School Lady Pirate basketball team gathers for a photo after their one-point Sweet 16 win over the Eaton Reds. The next stop for the Lady Pirates is the Great 8 round of the 4A basketball playoffs in Denver on March 2.

Shari Pierce named publisher of The SUN

By Jim O'Rourke
Staff Writer

The Pagosa Springs SUN has a new publisher. Long-time employee Shari Pierce has been promoted, and the change becomes effective right away.

“I’m super excited to announce Shari as our publisher in Pagosa Springs,” said Jim O’Rourke, CEO/owner of O’Rourke Media Group (OMG), which owns The SUN. “We acquired the SUN and PREVIEW last September, and I’ve really enjoyed

getting to know and working with Shari. Transitioning into a new company after being sold is not easy for any business, and Shari has worked really hard to make sure that we maintain excellent service and commitment to the community. She’s the perfect choice to keep the SUN moving forward.”

Pierce has worked at the newspaper for the past 39 plus years, starting in the mail room inserting papers and has pretty much done or helped in every functional area of the business

ever since. For the past 20 plus years, Pierce has been the advertising and circulation manager and has been a key contributor toward the financial success and viability of The SUN.



Officially speaking, Pierce replaces her sister Terri House, who was the previous publisher/owner and sold the company to OMG in September 2023.

In her free time, Pierce enjoys spending time with her family, quilting, painting, photography and volunteering in her community.

This is a strategic move that validates the importance of the publisher role for local community newspapers and OMG’s commitment to making sure The SUN continues to meet reader, advertiser and community expectations.

“So many newspapers in the country have done away with local publishers over the past 10-15 years, and that is absolutely a factor with the decline and challenges in the newspaper industry. I’m super confident

■ See Publisher A8

	Index	
Opinion	A2	
Letters	A3	
Obituaries	A5	
Raymond Walter Girardin		
Corey John Henriksen		
Business	A6	
Preparing for the upcoming U.S. 160 construction		
Education	A9	
Future Business Leaders of America: 35 advance to state competition		
Outdoors	A10	
Commissioners discuss potential wildland fire mill levy		
Sports	A10	
Pirates defeat Holy Family, set sail for Great 8		
Public Notices	A14	
PREVIEW		
Sudoku	12	
PREVIEW Calendar	15	
Crossword	16	
Classifieds	19	
PagosaSUN.com		
ExplorePagosa.com		
		

Opinion

The Pagosa Springs SUN

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OUR VIEW

A vexatious bill

Earlier this month, a bill was introduced in the Colorado House of Representatives that would, if passed and signed into law, make the Colorado Open Records Act (CORA) a little less open and a little more vexatious.

The bill, House Bill 24-1296, was introduced by Rep. Cathy Kipp, Rep. Matt Soper and Sen. Janice Marchman on Feb. 14 and concerns "modifications to lessen the burdens of responding to records requests for custodians of records under the 'Colorado Open Records Act,'" according to the Colorado Legislature website.

It didn't take long for opposition to the proposed changes to be expressed.

The following day, Colorado Freedom of Information Coalition (CFOIC) published a post on its blog outlining the changes proposed and portions it views as problematic.

Among those are provisions that would allow requesters to be labeled as "vexatious" by custodians of records, which would bar the requester from obtaining records for 30 working days. The requester would have to appeal the determination they are vexatious in district court.

According to the bill, a "Vexatious requester" means a person or entity that submits a request for public records and

that, by the person's or entity's conduct, demonstrates an intent to annoy or harass a custodian, the entity for which the custodian works ... another employee of that entity, a person who depends on services from that entity, or another entity which may or may not be an entity listed in subsection (2) of this section; except that a person or entity is not a vexatious requester solely due to the number of requests the person has filed or the number of public records sought."

Despite the fact the bill excludes mass media and news people from being vexatious requesters and while we agree that no one should harass governmental entities or their employees for information, we feel this measure leaves too much room for a custodian to use the provision to prevent the dissemination of what should be made publicly available in a timely manner.

As the CFOIC summarizes, "it would be up to the records custodian to decide who can't get records for 30 working days because of factors that may include: 1) the number of requests filed; 2) the total number of pending requests; 3) the scope of the requests; 4) 'the nature, content, language, or subject matter of the requests'; 5) 'the nature, content, language, or subject matter of other oral and written communi-

cations to the custodian'; 6) 'conduct that the custodian determines is placing an unreasonable burden on the custodian'; 7) 'conduct that the custodian determines is intended to harass'; and 8) 'any other relevant information.'"

Other concerning provisions of the bill would slow response times, allowing government entities to take longer than the current three working days to fill most requests, and further limit what can be made available to the public.

Despite Kipp publicly stating the intent is not to reduce governmental transparency, we feel many of these proposed changes do just that, and we oppose anything that makes it harder for media and members of the public to be aware of what our governments are doing.

As Steve Zansburg, CFOIC president and an attorney, said via the blog, "It is sad that at a time when we are being bombarded with misinformation and disinformation, lawmakers are seeking to curtail the public's right to receive accurate information, through public records, on a timely basis and without having to borrow funds to obtain them. Such steps backward should be vigorously opposed by all who believe in transparency and accountability."

Randi Pierce

LOOKING BACK



From the March 11, 1993, Pagosa SUN — The Pagosa Pirates celebrate after winning the regional championship with a 68-45 victory over Hotchkiss. The Pirates go to the 3A tournament in Denver as the No. 4 seeded team — the first Pirates basketball team at the tourney since 1985.

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LEGACIES

By Shari Pierce

100 years ago

Taken from SUN files of
February 29, 1924

As announced weekly in these columns, the school bond election will take place at the court house tomorrow afternoon between the hours of 2:00 and 5:00 o'clock. The qualified electors of District No. 1 will vote FOR or AGAINST the proposition whether the district shall issue \$75,000 in bonds for the purpose of constructing a school building in Pagosa Springs.

Pagosa is without a school building, it is a needed institution and there should be no vital opposition to the proposition, yet it is hoped that the voters will be out in force and overwhelmingly register their approval of the future welfare of the children of this district.

The town board has traded an old engine to C.W. Houser for sufficient planking to re-floor the San Juan street bridge, which work will commence shortly under the supervision of Street Commissioner Fred Arnold.

Edw. Teysier, the contractor in charge of the Putnam hill road work, returned last week from a business visit to Santa Fe and is making preparations to resume the work west of town.

75 years ago

Taken from SUN files of
February 25, 1949

As stated in the legal notice published in The SUN last week and this week a special meeting of the electors of District 1 will be held at the Pagosa Springs school Saturday afternoon at two o'clock for the purpose of voting on the questions of the uniting of this district with districts 4, 14, 16 and 9. An election will also be held in each of these districts mentioned for the same purpose. The question must pass in each of those districts and in this district also.

The plan of the local school board is to build a new gymnasium as soon as the weather permits in the spring. The old gym would then be made into classrooms to handle additional students. It is expected that the students from the other districts would be transported to town.

The movement to join the districts was brought about by a number of factors. The main consideration was the fact that the larger school could be operated much more economically than a number of small schools. It would also give all of the students a much better education program and could offer them much more in the way of activities. Many of the smaller schools are unable to obtain qualified teachers and this would also eliminate that hardship.

50 years ago

Taken from SUN files of
February 28, 1974

The school board met Monday night of this week to discuss future planning. Several studies and reports indicate that the school population is sure to show substantial growth within the very near future.

These same studies also show that the present facilities are just about adequate with the present enrollment. School board members said that it is evident that some plans must be made to handle increased enrollment when and if the growth occurs.

The approach to the problem by the board has been to study the various alternatives and to make plans to implement the most desirable of these as needed. This, according to Superintendent Hahn, allows any enlargement of facilities to be well planned and anticipated, rather than waiting until something must be done, and then taking care of the problem without any definite plans of the how the solution fits into a long range plan.

25 years ago

Taken from SUN files of
February 25, 1999

The Pagosa Pirates raised the bar with their performances at the state wrestling tournament last week, establishing a new standard for the program with two individual state champions, a two-time state champion, and a second-place team finish.

Pagosa wrestlers accomplished a similar feat in both 1977 and 1978 when the Pirates managed second-place finishes in the Class 2A division and in 1978 when two Pirates finished as state champions at a tournament. This year's accomplishments were firsts for the Pirates since Pagosa moved up into the Class 3A classification.

Jason Silva and Cody Backus won state championships in their weight classes, at 130 and 135 pounds respectively. Silva became the first Pirate athlete to win two individual state champions in a sport.

Josh Schmidt brought home a second-place finish at 145 pounds.

Two other Pirate veterans, juniors George Kyriacou and Shane Prunty, also finished the state championships as medalists. Kyriacou finished fifth at 215 pounds and Prunty took sixth at 275 pounds.

Letters

Letters to the Editor are printed as received and are not edited for grammar or punctuation, but may have been edited for content or style.

Letters to the Editor are opinions and information in them has not been verified for accuracy.

The opinions of letter writers do not necessarily represent those of the paper.

Joyful noise

Dear Editor:
Pagosa was treated to a "joyful noise" this past weekend when the Colorado Christian Choir (CCU) from Lakewood included our community in its winter tour. On Friday, this talented group of musicians sang and conducted choral clinics with our Elementary, Middle, and High School students, who then joined the CCU choir to present a wonderful concert Friday evening at the High School. On Sunday, the CCU choir divided itself between the Pagosa Bible Church

and St. Patrick's Episcopal Church to fully participate in the two churches' worship services. Comments from the CCU students were uniformly positive about all of their engagements in our town.

CCU deserves a huge thank you for visiting and interacting with Pagosa's students and residents. The choir's Director, Dr. McNeil, was full of compliments for the warm welcome provided to the choir by our community. Moreover, the essential efforts by Katrina Thomas, Pagosa Family School Music Educator, to entice the CCU Choir to visit Pagosa was key to this wonderful endeavor.
Tony Aldwell

Vote

Dear Editor:
Don't forget to vote! Oh, and don't say "I don't need to vote." If you are a citizen of this beautiful and precious land we call America, then it is your duty to vote! Don't say; it will not matter if I don't vote. It does matter, unless you just want to give up your rights to this beautiful and precious country. You need to vote in all our elections, including primary elections, because it all matters. To give back a small piece of your time is So Very Important. STAND UP FOR AMERICA. VOTE!
See you at the poles.
Debbie Copple

Wake up, Colorado

Dear Editor:
Colorado is known for its majestic mountains, rushing rivers, and clear blue lakes. Now thanks to a group of liberals in our State House, Colorado is likely to become a favored destination for child sex trade.

According to an editorial in the Denver Gazette and heartfelt videos of Rep. Scott Bottoms on X (formerly Twitter) and Rep. Ryan Armagost on Facebook explaining the outcome, House Bill 1092 proposed by Rep. Brandi Bradley was sent to the House State Civic, Military, & Veterans Affairs Committee, known as the "kill committee" to die. This bill would have required adults convicted of sex with a child to serve prison time instead of the current option for probation.

Under the current law, one third of all convicted sex offenders involving a child receive probation according to District Attorney John Kellner who testified at the hearing. Hard to believe that sending a pedophile to jail - four years for class three felony and eight years for a class four felony involving sex with a child - could possibly be debatable. Yet the argument by Democrats, who struck down the bill, included the rationale that the perpetrators were victims themselves. That, my friends, is enabling behavior at its ugliest. They

defended pedophiles. They had a perfect opportunity to potentially break the cycle, and they chose not to. Unbelievable.

We are talking about children two to five years old here. Even at the high end of the scale, eight years, is not nearly enough time for anyone stealing a child's innocence and potentially changing their lives forever just to indulge their own perversion. The rape of a child should carry with it the harshest penalty.

The public hearing on the bill involved more than fifty witnesses, many who were survivors of child sex abuse and child sex slavery, testifying and sharing their painful experiences.

However, when all was said and done the Democrats on the committee were more swayed by the testimony of two public defenders who were against the bill - for some inexplicable reason. Subsequently, it was killed by Reps. Steven Woodrow, Andrew Boesenecker, Elisabeth Epps, Jenny Willford, Kyle Brown, Naquetta Ricks, Jennifer Lea Parenti, and Manny Rutinel. Republicans voting for the measure and against adults raping children were Ryan Armagost, Scott Bottoms, and Brandi Bradley.

Why eight Democrats voted this bill down is beyond me. Their decision is a sad commentary on the morals of elected leaders in determining the direction of our state. Do we want to be known as a travel destination for the pervert class or can we aspire to be more honorable and do our part to end the plague of child sexual exploitation?

This outcome is unacceptable on so many levels. Surely, we can do better as a state and a people. What kind of Colorado do you want to leave for future generations?
Sally Kennedy

Not amusing anymore

Dear Editor:
I love my dog. He's affectionate, protective, and generally obedient. Less admirable is his greed. If he could speak, I'm sure he'd tell you that he's being persecuted - cruelly deprived because he isn't permitted to grab every available scrap of food. He becomes demanding, and his behavior is unacceptable. It was amusing when he was a puppy. He's fully grown now. It's not amusing

any more.

Likewise, certain people react badly to not getting their own way. They're charming, engaging, and often quite entertaining. Until someone says no. That's when the fangs appear and the behavior deteriorates. It's clear that greedy beings will happily disrupt everyone's well-being to get what they want. They are, however, insatiable. And exhausting.

I've taken a firm stand at home. My dog now understands that incessant whining won't result in additional treats. Now that he's gotten the message, harmony and order have been restored.

This is probably a good guide for dealing with obnoxious behavior in people. Foul language, name-calling, lies, acting out - these are techniques people use when they can't rely on facts. This is how bullies behave. I'm saying no. Firmly. Creating a thriving and harmonious society begins at the ballot box. Behavior does matter, as does character. A poorly behaved person, like a poorly trained dog, is impossible to control. And exhausting.
K. Muth

Working moms

Dear Editor:
Some of my children's fondest memories are those preschool years where they were able to be home and play with neighborhood friends. Our neighborhood at that time was one of "Working Moms" who were blessed to be able to do their work "at home" and allow the children to play around the neighborhood. The little ones were able to play make-believe, etc.

What kind of work did we do, you might ask? Well, there was the house-cleaning, then the laundry that had to be hung "out" on the line to dry; later in the day, we had to bring it in, fold the towels, etc., then "sprinkle down" the rest, roll them up and place them in a basket over night - during the following hours, the "sprinkling" would spread evenly throughout the garments and be ready to iron the next day; then, of course, meals were cooked from scratch, no frozen food and we even sewed our children's clothes to save money! Yes! We were so proud, being raised during WWII, we were used to having to be patient and "make do" and be thankful for the blessings of a loving marriage and children.
■ See Letters A4

28th Annual Knights of Columbus Lenten Fish Fry



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Letters

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Please submit your letter electronically in a format that can be copied and pasted to editor@pagosasun.com or via the form at www.PagosaSUN.com. Letters must not be in all capitals.

All letters must:

- be 500 words or less
- be signed by the author, unless emailed
- include the author's address and daytime phone number
- be received by The SUN by noon on Tuesday (deadline may move up due to a holiday)

Letters will be limited to two per month per letter writer.

Letters quoting other people must contain proper attribution.

There is no guarantee letters will be published.

Poetry, anonymous letters, letters that are libelous or in poor taste, or that attack a private citizen or business will not be published.

If necessary, only one letter pertaining to a candidate or political issue will be printed in each edition up to three weeks prior to the election.

The SUN generally does not edit letters, but reserves the right to do so.

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Goals & Accomplishments

SUN staff asked representatives of publicly funded agencies in Archuleta County to individually answer a trio of questions relating to the goals and accomplishments of themselves and their agencies at the turn of the year. Their answers will be printed in The SUN over the coming weeks. Answers are printed as received and are not edited.

Archuleta School District

Bob Lynch, Archuleta School District Board President



What are your three biggest accomplishments of 2023?

The most important achievement at the district is an overall improvement in academic performance. This is a broad statement and reflects improvements over the low scores, relative to state averages, that occurred following the pandemic. We see progress but are in no way satisfied with just being closer to or slightly above average. Superintendent Holt and our

School Principals are focused on the day-to-day work that gives our students the best chance to maximize their learning potential and our leaders share progress reports monthly with leading indicators showing that the district is moving in the right direction.

A second area of accomplishment is ultimately a credit to our community. In November of 2023 the voters in our county overwhelmingly approved a continuation of the Mill Levy Override that enables Archuleta School District to maintain competitive salaries for all district employees. This effort was led by local citizens and school staff who are devoted to the success of the district. A key to achieving academic success is to attract and retain the best teachers and the success of this initiative helps ensure that our kids will have great teachers

A third area of achievement for the district was the continued expansion of the Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways at the High School. Our local school is at the forefront of a sea-change in education where students are offered learning options while in high school that can lead to great careers in areas including building trades, automotive, health care, culinary arts, and computer science. This area of opportunity for our students continues to expand. Just last fall two new classes in the CTE area were approved by the board of education. Students can now take courses to work as Patient Care Technician and Drone Operator.

What are your three top goals for 2024?

In the next year the district will engage in a major effort to update the Master Plan for all facilities. The last time an assessment of facilities was undertaken was 2018, so a top-to-bottom update is essential. While maintenance staff do a great job keeping the facilities running,

the fact is that aging buildings and infrastructure need to be assessed for their suitability as learning environments now and into the future. In February of 2024 the board will evaluate options about how to conduct this audit of facilities by selecting a firm as a consulting partner to work with our community to do this work. This process will take the better part of a year and each phase will involve the community.

A second goal is to continue to strengthen our relationship with our community. As part of the process to update the Master Plan for the district, community members will be invited to be involved in the process by reviewing the work as important milestones are achieved. We will make decisions about our facilities together and we will need all voices including parents, students, teachers and other community members to be involved so that we make the best decisions for our kids.

The third goal I want to mention is for the Board to stay focused on all of the strategic goals we set two years ago. The current board established a focus on the following strategic areas when we hired Superintendent Holt. We agreed to focus on; improve student outcomes, attract and retain great educators, ensure staff and student well-being and safety. We also identified high-level projects including; assess the condition of our facilities and create a high quality English Language Development Program. Our focus will remain on these most important areas.

What is your action plan to meet your goals?

While it may get a little boring to talk about the same goals year to year, the only real way to make progress is to avoid the temptation to move on to the next hot topic. We may adjust the plan or find new tools that work better, but the goals for great schools here in Pagosa must stay constant. The most important thing we have done as a board is to stay the course and stick with the goals we set and the metrics that tell us, whether good or bad news, how we are doing.

Our board meetings each month are built around the goals we established. We task the Superintendent and Building Leaders with providing reports on progress each month. The Board doesn't move the goal posts or change the metrics or chase the next shiny object, we stick to what we committed to in the fall of 2022 and expect steady progress in that direction.

The year 2024 will see the goal of assessing our facilities become manifest in the form of a new Master Plan. We pledge to involve the public as we gather objective information about our facilities and come together as a community with a plan for addressing whatever gaps or weaknesses we uncover.

Schools reflect a community's values. I encourage you to support students and teachers in any way you can.

Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation District

Jim Smith, board president



What are your three biggest accomplishments of 2023?

PAWSD had many challenges in 2023 relating to unfunded mandates required by State and Federal regulations. The PAWSD Board and its employees met and continue to meet those challenges in order to provide outstanding service to its customers.

In February 2023, a loan agreement between the Colorado Water Resources and Power Development Authority and PAWSD was entered

into for the expansion of the Snowball Treatment Plant for \$33,444,000 at a 2.75% annual interest rate for 30 years. The total cost of the Snowball project is \$44,105,000.

Stantec, a rate study company, presented its findings to PAWSD in August 2023 regarding a rate study for both water and wastewater. Stantec stated PAWSD could need \$50 million to satisfy capital improvement expenses relating to wastewater in order to meet mandatory regulatory

requirements in the next 10 years.

The Board approved a contract with Plummer Associates, Inc. for engineering services on a modification plan to meet State and Federal wastewater mandates. The Stantec study emphasized the need to approve rate increases in both water and wastewater charges. The PAWSD public board meeting on changes to water and wastewater rates is scheduled for February 15, 2024.

The Capital Improvement Plan for 2023-2042 was approved by the Board in 2023. PAWSD employees spent many hours developing this comprehensive plan.

What are your three top goals for 2024?

What is your action plan to meet your goals?

PAWSD will continue operating under a conservative budget with good internal controls to meet the unfunded mandates required by State and Federal regulations as well as general operational expenses.

I am hopeful PAWSD will be able to partner with the City in addressing mandatory wastewater requirements for benefit of all customers.

Justin Ramsey, on site engineer for rebuilding the Snowball Water Treatment Plant, is working with the contractor, SGM, to meet construction deadlines.

Letters

Continued from A3

This was in the early fifties. We had purchased our first home, part of an FHA -funded neighborhood: 850 sq.ft., two bedrooms, one bath! We were so proud. All in the neighborhood were veterans from WWII, had returned home, married their sweet-

hearts and were building their families. Including our three, there were 15 preschoolers living in our immediate neighborhood. It was understood that if they were playing in your yard, you had the right to correct them if necessary! So, of course, all were well-behaved with lasting memories.

All were available when needs arose, especially sickness of course. I lost both parents to cancer during those early years and my neighbors were always available to my children when an emergency arose.

Forever blessed to be able to "work at home" while the children

were preschoolers the most rewarding work I ever did. My professional positions later on paid me money, but the lasting rewards came from that neighborhood of "Working Moms"

Yes, what a blessing!

Patty Tillerson

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Goals & Accomplishments

SUN staff asked representatives of publicly funded agencies in Archuleta County to individually answer a trio of questions relating to the goals and accomplishments of themselves and their agencies at the turn of the year. Their answers will be printed in The SUN over the coming weeks. Answers are printed as received and are not edited.

Pagosa Springs Medical Center, Upper San Juan Health Service District

Kate Alfred, Chair of the Board of Directors of the Upper San Juan Health Service District



What are your three biggest accomplishments of 2023?

What are your three top goals for 2024?

What is your action plan to meet your goals?

Pagosa Springs Medical Center had a good year in 2023. CEO Rhonda Webb, M.D., and her administrative team, managed expenses and stayed within budget while increasing the number of patients we served. The Board reviewed and took action to invest cash reserves earning over \$600,000 in interest income, all of which contributed to PSMC's 2023 bottom line (unaudited) of \$1,210,874. It might come as a surprise to people, but many rural hospitals fail. One of the biggest reasons is that rural

areas tend to have a high percentage of patients covered by Medicare and Medicaid (approximately 70% of PSMC patients) and Medicare/Medicaid reimburses at a rate significantly less than the cost to actually deliver the care.

In 2023, PSMC's CEO, Rhonda Webb, MD, was recognized by a national publication as one of the top leaders of critical access hospitals in the U.S. This recognition was partly due to Dr. Webb's work on the Board of the Colorado Hospital Association and the Board of the Western Healthcare Alliance where she advocates policy and legislation for the benefit of rural healthcare.

In 2023, our Board studied the potential of new services to support the financial health of PSMC and to address patient needs. The Board approved a Health In Motion service line to expand orthopedic services, physical therapy services, pain management, sports performance and wellness. In 2022, PSMC acquired the Medical Wellness Building at the southwest corner of 160 and Pagosa Boulevard, and PSMC has almost completed the plans to renovate the building. We anticipate the Health In Motion service line being operational in the Medical Wellness Building by the end of 2024, and look forward to another good year for PSMC in 2024 providing quality, compassionate healthcare and wellness for each person we serve.

Dr. Rhonda Webb, CEO, Pagosa Springs Medical Center



What are your three biggest accomplishments of 2023?

In 2023, Pagosa Springs Medical Center had many successes to maintain quality rural healthcare. One of our most significant successes is PSMC retained and expanded its team of talented employees who are committed to our mission of quality, compassionate healthcare, and wellness for each person we serve. What a privilege it is to lead this team. In 2023, PSMC expanded our specialists

in primary care, orthopedics, surgery, and neurology and we maintained our specialists in cancer care, cardiology, and pain management. It is a community benefit that the PSMC team of providers possess the expertise available in a city but offer the personal touch of a neighbor.

To maintain the quality of care in our facility, PSMC has ongoing maintenance and upgrade obligations for our equipment, buildings, and

technology. The cost of medical center maintenance is challenging for PSMC to afford. To meet our maintenance needs and responsibly manage our budget, PSMC pursued grant funding for a variety of projects. In 2023, PSMC received many generous grant awards to: (1) renovate our Medical Wellness Building for physical therapy services and the Health In Motion service line, (2) construct a building that will house oxygen generation equipment, and (3) replace and improve inadequate IT infrastructure. In addition, generous donors in the community made substantial contributions toward the renovation of the Medical Wellness Building and toward the purchase of radiology equipment.

What are your three top goals for 2024?

What is your action plan to meet your goals?

PSMC operates the only ambulance service in Archuleta County and we wish to continue to be strong enough financially to do so.

In 2024, we plan to work at the local, state, and national level to help people understand the fragile nature of rural hospital sustainability. While insurance companies are posting billions of dollars of net income, our reimbursement from Medicare and Medicaid is less than it costs to deliver care.

Obituaries

Raymond Walter Girardin

Raymond Walter Girardin was born to Louis and Helen Francis Girardin on Aug. 15, 1950. He married Mary Susan Sweitzer on Nov. 21, 1972. He passed away surrounded by his loved ones on Feb. 15, 2024, at the age of 73 years old. There will be a celebration-of-life service at 11 a.m. on March 9, 2024, at Restoration Fellowship, located at 264 Village Drive, Pagosa Springs, CO 81147. A potluck-style lunch will follow the service, so please bring a dish to share and join us in celebrating the life of Raymond Girardin. In lieu of flowers, there is a new fund being set up through Mercy Health Foundation, (970) 764-2800, for Home Hospice Care for veterans in memory of Raymond Girardin. More information will be provided on March 9 at the service.



Corey John Henricksen

Corey John Henricksen, 28, was born June 1, 1995, and passed away Thursday, Feb. 15, 2024.

Corey is survived by his mom and dad, Lori Dee Henricksen (Corderman) and Patrick Joseph Henricksen, his brother, Alec Joseph Henricksen, and his wife, Carsyn Elizabeth (Rogers), and their 2-month-old son, Joel Joseph. Also surviving are grandmas Jean Monica Henricksen and Audrey Dee Derr, as well as eight aunts and uncles, 10 cousins and one second cousin.

Corey was preceded in death by his grandpas, Leonard John Henricksen and Daniel Dean Corderman, and uncle Michael Dean Corderman.

Corey was born in Denver, Colo., and moved with his family to Grand Junction, Colo., in 2000. He graduated from Fruita Monument High School in 2013. Corey played football and



lacrosse and worked at the Fruita Recreation Center, where he was a lifeguard.

After graduation, he attended Concordia College in Mequon, Wis., for two years playing for the lacrosse team. He then transferred to Fort Lewis College in Durango, where he helped lead the lacrosse team to two playoff appearances in his two All-RMLC years on the team. Corey graduated in 2017 with a degree in political science.

Corey fell in love with Durango; we do not think he would have ever left Durango. While in college, Corey worked at the Durango Recreation Center as a lifeguard and started coaching youth lacrosse. He worked at Purgatory Mountain for six seasons, first as a lift operator and then as a snow maker/groomer driving a snowcat. During the summers, Corey was a raft guide for Colorado Outback Adventures. He loved the river, Purgatory Mountain and his co-workers.

He took pride in doing his best at all his jobs. Corey continued to coach lacrosse at the youth level, for the Durango High School and Fort Lewis College lacrosse teams. He was currently an assistant coach for the Durango High School team and was looking forward to the upcoming season.

Corey was a great kid (young man), everything a parent could ask for: kind, compassionate, accepting of others, smart, hardworking, passionate and extremely talented. Corey loved rafting, lacrosse, Star Wars movies and a "calm" game of cards with friends. Corey will be deeply missed by his family and friends.

Please join us for a celebration of Corey's life on Saturday, March 2, at the Powerhouse Museum at 1295 Camino Del Rio in Durango from 5 to 9 p.m. Please bring pictures and your stories of your good times together. There will also be a wake on Friday, March 1, from 3 to 6 p.m. at Hood Mortuary at 1261 East 3rd Ave. in Durango.

In lieu of flowers, please donate to the Epilepsy Foundation. Or, tip your raft guide in memory of Corey.

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Business

Preparing for the upcoming U.S. 160 construction

By **Mary Jo Coulehan**
Pagosa Springs Area Chamber of Commerce

It is certainly the talk of the town — the major U.S. 160 construction project scheduled to start this year and anticipated to take two years to complete.

This project will have a major effect on our community on so many levels; therefore, we must prepare now on many levels.

Are you ready to get engaged so the difficulties that are anticipated might be minimized? Don't be one of those residents or businesses that sits back and just complains because it is a major project and affects your day-to-day interaction in the downtown area, whether that is just going to the post office, working downtown or getting children to school.

Here are some ways we can start now.

We know these next few years will

be challenging; however, the outcome will be well worth the effort. Not only will the main highway be improved, but so will much-needed town infrastructure and business access improvement.

I often refer to the Glenwood Springs bridge reconstruction, which affected that community for years as well. Businesses and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) worked closely creating shop local programs, alternative transportation offerings and other adjustments to try and minimize the disruptive effect. And while challenging, many businesses flourished, people took alternative transportation or walked more, and they got through several years of construction with the end product being an incredible addition and positive change to the benefit of the city.

There will be many facets to working through this construction. What might help all involved is to first com-

plete the survey that the Main Street group has put together. It is seeking ideas, areas of the most concern and ways we can all work together. It is available at <https://forms.gle/i7GSmRKVFZ3adpGp7>. The survey will also be listed on the Chamber's home page.

Take the survey and inform those working on the project about your concerns as well as ideas. There will be various groups getting together to work on more specific needs, such as transportation, parking and accessibility. Find out about these groups and volunteer to sit on a group or find a representative (often a town council or county commissioner member) and communicate ideas through them. We have smart and involved people who may have lived in another city, went through a similar project, and have some constructive ideas and success stories to share. We don't have to reinvent the wheel. Let's take what might have been successful somewhere else

and put it to good use here.

Start looking at how this project might affect your business or your daily life. The Main Street board will be holding monthly update meetings. Attend one of these meetings or, when the time comes, sign up for construction updates.

Along with the Main Street, the Chamber will be working with various organizations to help problem solve and disseminate information.

What can you do differently during this time? Since the project will be phased throughout the downtown area, get with other businesses and start brainstorming ideas now. The Chamber is happy to help facilitate any of these conversations or offer our conference room for meetings.

Just like COVID affected so many of our businesses, some of the ideas that came from this era changed the way we do business — and for the positive. Use this time to look at how you do business and how you might be able to do it better. The Chamber will be no exception.

We will need to relocate our major events and look at the way we do business since it will be difficult for people to come to our place of work. Take a deep breath and take the plunge. Don't hide from the inevitable, but start looking at what you can do now. Help be a part of the creative process to make a difficult situation better.

Four Corners Office for Resource Efficiency welcomes new executive director

By **Kathleen O'Connor**
Four Corners Office for Resource Efficiency

The Four Corners Office for Resource Efficiency (4CORE), a leading nonprofit organization dedicated to providing climate solutions through boots-on-the-ground water conservation, energy efficiency and clean transportation programs in the Four Corners region, is excited to announce the appointment of Jenny Hill as its new executive director.

Hill takes the helm after seven years of leadership under the previous director, Laurie Dickson.

With an extensive background in both the business community and the nonprofit sector across the Four Corners area, Hill brings a wealth of experience and a deep commitment to implementing climate solutions. Raised in Durango, Hill previously served as the multimodal manager for the city of Durango, where she demonstrated her regional knowledge and dedication to fostering clean transportation practices.

Prior to assuming the role of ex-

ecutive director at 4CORE, Hill served as a project manager for over a decade, specializing in transportation and community planning.

Her educational background includes master's degrees in urban design and urban and regional planning from the University of Colorado in Denver, as well as a bachelor's degree in international business.

With more than 20 years of experience in clean transportation, renewable energy, resource conservation, energy efficiency and green building practices, Hill is well-equipped to lead 4CORE into its next phase of growth and impact.

Hill's dedication to community service is evident through her involvement in various boards, including her prior service on the 4CORE board and the a living wage coalition board. During her tenure as treasurer of the 4CORE board, she played a pivotal role in organizing successful events such as the Beyond Solar Home Tour and Soiree fundraisers, demonstrating her proficiency in fundraising and donor engagement.

Hill expressed her excitement about

her new role, stating, "I am honored to join the 4CORE team and build upon its legacy of providing climate solutions for people in the Four Corners region. I look forward to continuing 4CORE's mission and making meaningful strides towards a clean energy economy."

For more information about 4CORE and its initiatives, please visit www.fourcorners.org.

About 4CORE

4CORE is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit with the goal of providing programs and projects that ensure immediate energy and cost savings, especially for our lower-income residents.

We provide beneficial electrification and renewable energy installations, encourage the adoption of clean transportation with electric vehicles and provide water conservation education and best practices.

4CORE serves Southwest Colorado by promoting resource conservation, energy efficiency and renewable energy through education and programs that strengthen the local economy and foster a healthy, sustainable environment.

New community development action plans available

By **Laura Lewis Marchino**
Region 9 Economic Development District of Southwest Colorado

The Region 9 Economic Development District of Southwest Colorado produces community development action plans (CDAPs) as part of the region's comprehensive economic development strategy.

CDAPs are updated every two

years and list the priority projects addressing various aspects of economic and community development for each county.

The CDAPs are useful tools for organizations working with communities and are a central source for understanding the full range of priority projects that are in process or desired.

A project listed in a CDAP meets

the community plan requirement requested by many state and federal funding applications.

Region 9 coordinates input from community stakeholders and brings final documents to be approved by each board of county commissioners.

The completed CDAPs are available on Region 9's website at www.region9edd.org/cdaps.

Commissioners discuss marijuana licensing, revisions to regulations

By **Josh Pike**
Staff Writer

The Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) discussed marijuana regulations and licensing at a number of recent work sessions.

Discussions took place at its Jan. 16, Feb. 6 and Feb. 27 work sessions.

County Manager Derek Woodman opened the Jan. 16 discussion by explaining that the county provides scholarships for local students and funds for local organizations with 10 percent of the cost of each marijuana license renewal in addition to \$5,000 contributed annually by the county.

He stated that this provides for approximately \$6,200 in funding for the grant each year.

Woodman explained that the county staff were interested in publicizing the grant more widely, but that caution would have to be taken to prevent the grant from receiving an excessive number of applications, which create a large amount of work for staff.

He proposed that, if the county reworks its marijuana ordinance, it could dedicate 100 percent of marijuana licensing costs to the grant, which would increase the amount of funding available.

Commissioner Ronnie Maez proposed that the amount of grant funding could be increased by adding marijuana permits, which Woodman

commented is also an option.

Maez noted that there is no cap on the number of liquor licenses in the county and questioned why there is one on marijuana establishments.

Woodman and County Attorney Todd Weaver commented that the cap exists because it was implemented by a previous BoCC, which Maez agreed with.

Maez asked if it would be possible to change the cap, with Woodman stating it would be.

Maez commented that limiting the number of licenses allows for a "monopoly" and is not "free enterprise."

Executive Assistant Mary Helminski explained that the county is at its cap of seven active cultivation licenses and that she regularly receives calls inquiring about acquiring additional licenses.

Weaver explained that, previously, state regulations required that 80 percent of marijuana sold by a dispensary had to be self-cultivated, although he added that this regulation has been relaxed over time.

Maez commented that the county would need to investigate the expenses of processing marijuana licenses if it considers allocating a larger portion of the marijuana licensing costs toward the grant.

However, Maez added that he was unsure why a cap on the number of marijuana cultivation licenses is still in place.

"It's been in place for many years," Woodman commented.

"So, maybe it's time for a change," Commissioner Veronica Medina added.

At the Feb. 6 work session, discussion of marijuana regulations and licensing continued.

Weaver opened the discussion by stating that the county marijuana ordinance is "severely out of date" and proposed that the county create a task force to revise the regulations that includes members of the marijuana industry.

He commented that he was bringing the issue to the commissioners to obtain their opinions on what other groups should be represented on the task force.

Weaver stated that the regulations are more than 10 years old and state regulations and licensing have "significantly evolved" since then.

He stated that the revision could also include consideration of whether the cap on marijuana licenses should be removed or revised.

Commissioner Warren Brown stated that he would like the task force to include representation from the Development Services Department as well as members of the public.

He added that applications for the task force should be broadly distributed in the community to acquire additional applicants and involve the community.

■ See Regulations A7

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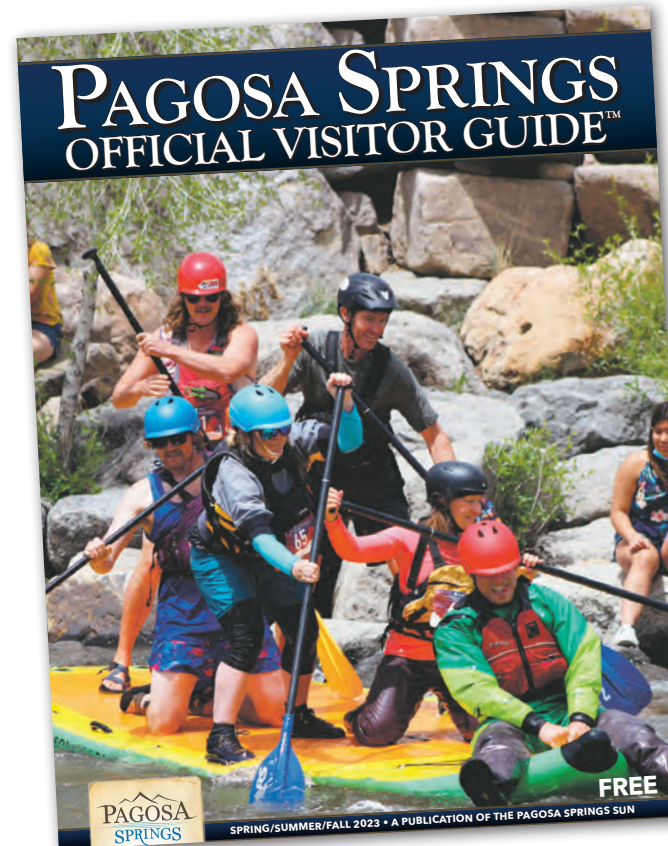
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Ballots due soon for March 5 primary

By **Randi Pierce**
Staff Writer

With the March 5 presidential primary election just around the corner, voters are urged to no longer return ballots via mail.

Ballots are due back by 7 p.m. on Election Day, March 5. Postmarks do not count.

Instead, according to Archuleta County Clerk and Recorder Kristy Archuleta, voters should now utilize the county's election drop boxes or return ballots to the county's election office.

The county has two ballot drop boxes with video surveillance that are open 24/7. One is located on the sidewalk outside 449 San Juan St. (the former county courthouse). The other is at the TARA Community Center in Arboles.

The election's office, which serves as the Voter Service and Polling Center, is located at the back of the 449 San Juan St. building. It is open 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday beginning 8 a.m. to noon on March 2

and 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Election Day. From 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Election Day only, a polling location will be set up at the Pagosa Lakes Property Owners Association Clubhouse clubhouse located at 230 Port Ave.

Archuleta notes in an email to The SUN that the county's motor vehicle and recording office will be closed on Election Day.

More about the election

Mail ballot packets were sent to all active, registered Democratic, Republican and unaffiliated voters.

Unaffiliated voters who have not declared a party preference received two ballots in their mail ballot packet. Those voters must return only one ballot in order for their vote to count.

Following are the official nominations that are being voted on for the presidential primary.

Democratic ballot

The Democratic ballot will include the following candidates for president: Jason Michael Palmer, Gabriel Cornejo, Frankie Lozada, Dean Phillips, Stephen P. Lyons, Marianne

Williamson, Joseph R. Biden Jr., Armando "Mando" Perez-Serrato and a noncommitted delegate.

The election notice explains, "The Colorado Democratic Party submitted a request for a 'Noncommitted delegate' to appear on the 2024 Presidential Primary Ballot under the provisions of Colorado Revised Statutes 1-4-1204(3). Per statute, a vote for the Noncommitted delegate provides 'a place on the primary ballot for electors who have no presidential candidate preference to register a vote to send a noncommitted delegate to the political party's national convention."

Republican ballot

The Republican ballot will include the following candidates for president: Vivek Ramaswamy, Asa Hutchinson, Nikki Haley, Ron DeSantis, Chris Christie, Ryan L. Binkley, Donald J. Trump and a write-in option.

The notice explains the certified write-in candidates filed the required paperwork with the secretary of state.

"These candidates may not be listed on the ballot; however, voters may write the candidate's name on the ballot in the appropriate space provided in order to cast a vote for that candidate," it states.

The certified write-in candidates are Rachel Hannah "Mohawk" Swift and Walter Iwachiv.

In a press release, the Colorado Secretary of State's Office explained, "The U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to hear arguments to the Colorado Supreme Court's decision that Donald Trump is ineligible to appear on the Colorado Presidential Primary ballot. His name will appear on the 2024 Presidential Primary ballot as a result."

How to register to vote

Those eligible can register to vote up to and including Election Day at www.govotecolorado.gov or at the county's election's office.

More information on registering to vote is available at https://www.archuletacounty.org/192/Elections_randi@pagosahun.com

Regulations

Continued from A6

Medina commented that the task force should include representation from the Archuleta County Sheriff's Office (ACSO) and other law enforcement.

Medina and Maez commented that they would like to hear Weaver's and Helminski's analysis of legislation concerning marijuana regulations currently being considered by the state legislature prior to forming a task force.

Weaver commented that, due to changes in state laws, the county dog, fire, noxious weed, nuisance and noise ordinances need to be revised.

Sheriff Mike Le Roux commented that the ACSO spends an "inordinate amount of time" on enforcement actions against illegal marijuana grows.

Le Roux stated the county previously tried and failed to revise the county land use regulations regarding personal marijuana grows and proposed that these regulations should also be considered as part of a broader revision of marijuana rules.

He added that he would also like to look into ways to use funds from marijuana licensing for enforcement against illegal grows as he believes that reducing illegal growing benefits marijuana retailers.

Weaver questioned if the cap on

marijuana cultivation licenses is incentivizing the creation of illegal growing operations.

Maez reiterated his comments that caps on cultivation permits lead to monopolies in the industry.

The group also briefly discussed if marijuana being legal in more states has altered the industry in the area.

Weaver concluded by stating that forming a task force could help answer these questions and develop effective revisions ordinance.

Brown proposed that a member of "our church communities" should be included on the task force.

The discussion continued at the Feb. 27 work session, with Weaver explaining that he and Helminski reviewed the changes to marijuana licensing being considered by the Colorado Legislature and determined that they would not impact local marijuana licensing.

He asked if the county could move forward with establishing a committee to revise the ordinance.

Weaver stated that the representatives for the committee that were discussed included members of the public, representatives from the county Development Services Department, marijuana industry representatives, law enforcement representatives and church members.

He asked if there were any additional committee members the BoCC would like to include.

Brown commented that a tourism representative should be included.

Maez pointed out that members of the public could also engage with the process by commenting at the public meetings for the committee since they would be held publicly.

Maez and Medina asked what the purpose of the task force would be.

Weaver explained that the county marijuana ordinance is "so out of date ... it's basically prohibition looking and it just needs to be revised."

He added that there are also new types of marijuana licensing not considered in the ordinance.

The committee would create recommendations for the BoCC to consider on ways to revise marijuana regulations, including potential recommendations on types of licenses, hours of operations or other issues, Weaver stated.

He commented that the committee would likely make piecemeal recommendations on various topics, which could then be integrated into the "comprehensive drafting" of a new ordinance.

Brown asked if Weaver could reach out to other communities to obtain examples and recommenda-

tions for changes.

Weaver responded that he would do so, adding that he would focus on communities that recently revised their regulations since state marijuana regulations have become less stringent over time.

Maez commented that he would like the creation of other products from marijuana to occur in commercial or industrial areas.

Weaver stated that THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) extraction is not a home industry and requires complex machinery.

He added that looking at this issue would also involve determining if a revision to the land use regulations is necessary.

Medina concluded the discussion by stating that there appeared to be a consensus for staff to move forward with creating the marijuana task force.

Weaver stated that he would put creating the task force on the agenda for the next BoCC meeting.

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County purchases eight vehicles

By **Josh Pike**
Staff Writer

The Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) approved the purchase of eight vehicles for various county departments totaling more than \$700,000 at its Feb. 6 meeting.

According to the agenda documentation, the vehicles purchases included a truck for plowing snow and other responsibilities at the Steven's Field airport at \$58,967.20, a truck for hauling dumpsters between the county transfer station and the landfill at \$249,247, and a dump truck for \$99,999 that the Road and Bridge Department will use for road patching and will later be outfitted with equipment for snow plowing.

The purchases also include, the agenda indicates, a pickup truck with

a snowplow for the Maintenance Department priced at \$63,878, a pickup truck with a snowplow for the Road and Bridge Department priced at \$70,977, and two vehicles for the Coroner's Office priced at \$57,045 and \$59,429.

The documentation indicates that both pickups will be used for snow plowing in the winter and transportation to job sites in the summer.

The agenda states that the final item purchased was a used road grader for the Road and Bridge Department, which will replace an old road grader sold in 2023. The road grader will be bought through a lease-to-own arrangement with annual payments of \$79,395.70 over five years.

According to the agenda, all items were budgeted in the 2024 county budget.

Later in the meeting, the BoCC approved a resolution allocated payment in lieu of taxes (PILT) monies received by the county to the Fleet Department to support the purchase of the new vehicles for the coroner's office in addition to body covers to be used for bodies handled by the office.

Commissioner Warren Brown explained that the money being appropriated to pay for these purchases was "over and above the anticipated income" from PILT.

He added that the county receives PILT money from the federal government to compensate for the property taxes not collected on public lands in the county.

Commissioner Ronnie Maez added that PILT funds are awarded annually and that the amounts awarded are unpredictable.

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Property Tax, Rent, Heat Rebate offers relief for seniors, low-income residents

By **Derek Kuhn**
Colorado Department of Revenue

Coloradans eligible for a Property Tax, Rent, Heat (PTC) Rebate should apply before April 15 to ensure they also receive a TABOR, or Taxpayer's Bill of Rights, refund.

With the passage of the Identical TABOR Refund Act in December 2023, Coloradans who do not plan to file a state income tax return can still receive the refund if they apply for a PTC Rebate by April 15.

The PTC Rebate is available to Colorado residents to help with their property tax, rent and/or heat expenses. The rebate is based on income, and includes people with disabilities and older adults.

For tax year 2023, the rebate amount can be up to \$1,112 for applicants. If applications are received by April 15, applicants can also receive a TABOR refund, which equates to \$800 for single filers and \$1,600 for married couples filing jointly.

Eligible Coloradans include se-

niors (age 65 or older, or surviving spouse age 58 or older), Coloradans with disabilities, and individuals with a total income of less than \$18,026 or a married couple with total combined income of less than \$24,345.

"It's important to support all Coloradans, especially those in underserved and underrepresented communities," said Brendon Reese, Department of Revenue Division of Taxation director. "We want Coloradans experiencing hardship to know that there are resources out there to help, and PTC rebates are one of them. With the flattened TABOR refund, you can receive a refund even if you didn't file a state income tax return for 2023 — you just need to submit a PTC Rebate application."

The PTC Rebate has provided relief to about 15,000 Coloradans since 2019. This program ensures seniors and Coloradans with disabilities can remain occupied in their heated homes year after year.

The PTC Rebate application is also available in Spanish, and to provide

better customer service to non-English speaking Coloradans, Taxation Division call centers can now assist non-English speaking PTC applicants through a translation service.

More information, including qualifications, is available at <https://tax.colorado.gov/PTC-rebate>.

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Reconstruction

■ Continued from front

thoughtful and bring ideas that are not traditional ... to the table to help them make it through this period of time ... We should do whatever it takes.”

The Main Street Advisory Board, of which Brown is a member, has some “creative ideas” about how to alleviate some of the impacts of CDOT’s road reconstruction project, he noted.

However, Brown explained that it would take the town and the county working together if they hope to utilize MET.

He also clarified that the MET is not “a stand-alone entity. They are the county of Archuleta,” he said. “I think we are going to have to seriously work together to make sure our downtown survives, and I think we are going to have to do things that we have not normally done.”

Brown tossed around ideas, such as “additional bus routes, bus pickups, maybe a temporary parking area,” suggesting that “we could bus those folks in to cut down on the traffic congestion into our downtown area ... to make sure that we’re still getting the foot traffic in and to alleviate the congestion.”

He continued, “I think all of this is doable, but I think on everybody’s end there has to be just a lot of grace given that we are going to agree more than we are going to disagree, because this isn’t about the town and the county. This is about us collectively as a community.”

Brown expressed concern about CDOT’s plans, saying that he heard at the CDOT presentation that “there will be no parking on main street for that period of time.”

He suggested he hoped the two entities could break “the barrier” between the town and the county, adding that “if the town fails, the county

fails. And we can’t afford to fail.”

Commissioner Ronnie Maez clarified that if “the MET did this and the MET did that,” there would have to be “an increase in the cost of the usage of” the service.

Maez suggested that the costs of this expanded usage would need to be “shared” with the town, because it would be “out of the norm of what we normally put into it.”

Brown added he thinks the MET is “gonna have to hire more personnel to make these things happen,” with Bruce chiming in to say that currently MET has only three full-time drivers, including himself, and only five part-time drivers.

Bruce noted that adding additional fixed routes would need to be accompanied by paratransit routes — a type of transportation service that supplements fixed-route transit by providing individualized rides without fixed routes or timetables for the disabled and elderly.

This would be required by the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), Bruce explained.

It is not “as easy as just saying we want to do this ... we would absolutely need some additional staffing,” Bruce said.

Mayor Shari Pierce expressed that she wondered if the two entities were “getting ahead of ourselves” since CDOT hasn’t found a contractor for the project yet and doesn’t have its final construction plans.

She asked James Dickhoff, the town’s community development director, when the two entities could expect to see CDOT’s plans for the construction project.

Dickhoff explained that he thought it would probably be sometime in May, once CDOT has hired a contractor for the project.

“Then we can have some of those

more meaningful discussions on the sequencing, where they are gonna start and how they are gonna work their way through town,” Dickhoff said.

Pierce added that once “CDOT has a plan that they can give us that says, ‘during this time, this is the area where we’ll be working in,’ then that can help us inform what decisions we need to make and where we need to help people move around.”

She continued, “So, I’m thinking maybe instead of getting ahead of ourselves tonight that we look at this once that information is available.”

Maez retorted that it doesn’t hurt to think about it while also trying to anticipate the problem beforehand, saying that “it’s kinda like huntin’ ... you gotta know what you’re huntin’ and you gotta understand what you’re huntin’ and you gotta anticipate what it might do, and then with that anticipation you know exactly which way you’re going to go.”

Bruce added that the MET “can’t start thinking about it in May to make it happen by June,” saying that it needs to be figured out and planned sooner rather than later.

He suggested that any new parking lot, park-and-ride area or bus stops which would entail people parking remotely to make it downtown would need “to be convenient, and I think your best chance of success is finding a way to do that downtown.”

Bruce noted that he has had conversations with County Manager Derek Woodman about dollar amounts, and they determined that running the MET seven days a week would require about \$50,000 “for three months to have it run just a downtown shuttle.”

“If there’s a desire to move forward with some concept like this, then we will need to hire another person who is capable and qualified,” Woodman said.

Conflicts

■ Continued from front

The Log Park residents questioned when the gravel mining on the property would cease given the regular lease extensions the PAWSD board has granted Weber in recent years.

Weber and the Log Park residents debated the extent of Weber’s progress on remediating the mining area, with Weber claiming he has made significant progress on remediating the site and the neighbors expressing doubts about these claims and stating that little progress appeared to have been made.

Following a discussion where board members noted the high costs faced by PAWSD due to required regulatory projects and commented that the royalties could help support PAWSD’s payments on the loans for Running Iron Ranch, the board voted to enter negotiations with Weber on the lease extension.

It also directed PAWSD staff to investigate approaches for mitigating the noise and dust produced by the mining operations and what royalties are paid by other gravel mining operations in the area.

At the Jan. 9 SJWCD meeting, the board discussed the issue of Weber’s proposal to PAWSD and broader problems in the relationship between the two entities.

The SJWCD board expressed general opposition to the extension of the gravel mining lease, citing the opposition of the Log Park neighborhood to mining and the potential value of the gravel for the SJWCD’s reservoir project as reasons for opposition.

The board also raised concerns about communications with PAWSD, commenting that proposed leases and other documents for the Running Iron Ranch property are not delivered to the SJWCD in a timely manner after PAWSD receives them and are instead only delivered to the SJWCD after the PAWSD board approves them.

Following a discussion of the worsening relationship with the

PAWSD board where PAWSD’s ongoing explorations of selling the Running Iron Ranch property featured, the board voted to draft a letter to PAWSD clarifying its legal position concerning the gravel lease and PAWSD board’s general behavior toward the SJWCD.

SJWCD board member Bill Nobles suggested that the letter should request a written response from PAWSD, although board members agreed that there was a chance that PAWSD would simply ignore the letter.

The SJWCD board also expressed an interest in hearing more of the concerns from Log Park residents.

SJWCD lawyer Jeff Kane also noted that the implied opposition to the SJWCD’s reservoir project expressed by the PAWSD board could damage the SJWCD’s efforts to show diligence on the water rights that will be used for the reservoir project.

The letter from the SJWCD was delivered to PAWSD on Jan. 18 and opens by noting the PAWSD board’s discussions of the lease extension and that the board has signaled willingness to hold a work session to discuss selling the Running Iron Ranch.

It continues to state that the SJWCD board is opposed to extension of the gravel lease and “any suggestion that the Running Iron Ranch is for sale.”

The letter adds that both the lease extension and the possibility of a sale are in “conflict with the long-term objectives for which the property was purchased.”

It comments that, in a 2015 agreement between the SJWCD, PAWSD and the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB), all three entities recognized the importance of retaining the Running Iron Ranch as a site for future water storage.

Such water storage would be of greater value than any money paid by a purchaser today, the letter adds.

The letter states that the three-way

agreement also designated the SJWCD as being responsible for the long-term management of the water storage project while stating that PAWSD should make “every effort” to retain the ranch during a 20-year planning period.

“Unilateral PAWSD work sessions focusing on sale are contrary to both the letter and spirit of the 2015 agreement,” the letter states, adding that the ranch is “uniquely situated” to serve as a location for water storage.

“We appreciate that some current PAWSD directors do not like the purchase and financing terms agreed years ago for the Running Iron Ranch,” it states. “Nevertheless, SJWCD expects the PAWSD Board to honor PAWSD’s contractual obligations to SJWCD and CWCB.

“We also expect the PAWSD Board to act in a manner consistent with the reality that planning for the community’s long-term water future takes a sustained cooperative effort. Cooperation begins with practices like engaging with the SJWCD Board in regular discussions regarding shared interests. Arrangements for any use of the Running Iron Ranch need to be a product of joint negotiations involving PAWSD and SJWCD, each bringing our respective views. The PAWSD Board’s recent practice of acting unilaterally regarding uses of the property undermines the ability of the SJWCD to focus on long-term development of the Running Iron Ranch. We waste valuable time and energy countering the perception that PAWSD alone can determine the future of the Running Iron Ranch and our community’s water resources.”

The letter continues to state that SJWCD “will not consent” to extending the gravel mining lease, adding that such an extension is contrary to the agreement PAWSD and SJWCD reached in 2023 on the lease.

The letter notes that the SJWCD would support the extension of a grazing lease for the Webers on Running Iron Ranch.

“We look forward to your timely response and a more cooperative and productive relationship between the SJWCD and PAWSD Boards in 2024 and beyond,” the letter concludes.

At the Feb. 15 PAWSD meeting, the PAWSD board briefly discussed the letter, stating that the board would hold a special meeting for an executive session on March 7 at 2 p.m. to discuss the district’s response to the SJWCD letter.

PAWSD Programs Manager Renee Lewis noted that the executive session would be for the board to receive legal advice from the district’s attorney concerning its response to the SJWCD letter.

She added that the attorney recommended a “firm” response to the letter’s allegations that PAWSD is in breach of the three-way agreement.

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He also pointed out that the MET is not only limited by staffing, but also its equipment.

“We only have X number of vehicles, and so if we do this shuttle hop and then we have to add another because of paratransit, we’re tapped,” he said.

Council member Matt DeGuise stated he thinks that maybe “a slow, roll-in approach” would be best, “because when we first start construction people aren’t gonna feel as frustrated as they are a year in, or 18 months into it, when they may be more willing to start hopping onto public transit.”

Council member Leonard Martinez added that the time window for decision making is narrow.

“We only have three months. The scenario planning needs to take place now,” he said.

Commissioner Veronica Medina appeared to agree with DeGuise, say-

Facility

■ Continued from front

presented its sketch designs to the town’s Design Review Board (DRB).

The staff report from that DRB hearing indicates that the town made the county aware that its design plans did not include screening on the roof for “exposed and visible exterior mechanical equipment,” Pierce stated.

The DRB approved those sketch plans, but with the condition that “equipment areas should be represented on final plans, demonstrating appropriate required screening,” Pierce said.

This condition was again “verbally requested” by the town at the final major design review in July of 2020. At that hearing, the town asked the county for a “revised plan sheet, showing the mechanical equipment screening,” Pierce said.

Again, the DRB approved the design plans, but with the condition for the county to address the rooftop screening issue at some point before a CO could be issued.

Often, town staff explained in 2023 while hearing a variance request on the matter, the town works with developers through the process of bringing everything into compliance with the code, but it also reserves the right to deny a building permit or even a CO if the development fails to meet certain conditions laid out by the town.

The town awarded the county a building permit, again with the condition that it would provide a mechanical screening plan at a later date, according to Pierce.

She quoted from a report produced by Community Development Director James Dickhoff, stating, “When the county submitted their permit application, we inquired about the mechanical screening and were told that the mechanical contractor had not yet finished the mechanical engineering to determine the location and extent of the needed screening.”

She added, “The county representative asked if the town could process and issue the building permit while the mechanical engineer completed their work, so that the general contractor could get started with laying the foundation, as time was of the essence.”

The town ultimately agreed to issue the building permit “to help the county start their construction project,” but this came with the county’s “promise” that a “mechanical screening plan would be provided at a later date,” Pierce said.

“The screening plans were never provided and [town] staff identified the lack of screening at the final building inspection,” Pierce said.

In January of 2023, the county came before the Pagosa Springs Planning Commission asking for a variance to waive the town’s code on rooftop screening.

The town denied this request, citing the LUDC clause on variances that states, “it is not intended that variances be granted to ... merely remove inconveniences or financial burdens that the requirements of the LUDC may impose on property owners in general.”

At that variance hearing, County Manager Derek Woodman cited the financial burden it would place on taxpayers to complete the screening since it was not budgeted for in the county’s 2023 budget.

On Jan. 17, 2023, the Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) voted unanimously to “overrule” the decision of the town’s planning commission via a resolution.

The resolution outlines several areas where the county argues it has “sole authority” over the building, stating legal rationale for the county to overrule the town’s decision.

“The county is only subject to

ing, “We may not necessarily need all of it right now, because it will take people time to adjust and say ‘I’m tired of sitting in traffic,’ so we may have a couple months to figure it out.”

Council member Madeline Bergon also suggested she thinks that the two entities might have more time than some were suggesting.

“I wouldn’t stress on having something like this, this year. Realistically, having a well-thought-out plan for 2025, the second year of construction, makes a lot of sense,” she said, and, in the meantime, “we can do what we can to be creative with our alternative parking spots downtown.”

Pierce suggested expanding the Main Street Advisory Board committee, which is focusing on this issue.

She recommended adding a county staff member and an additional town council member.

“We can take advantage of what the

what’s called ‘location and extent review’ by the town, so we are not required to comply with all the nuances of the town’s Land Use Development Code. Period,” County Attorney Todd Weaver said.

Citing Colorado case law, he said, “The courts have long held that public entities have the power to overrule or disregard restrictions of municipal zoning regulations.”

This action by the county prompted the town intent to withhold a CO for the building in an effort to get the county to come into compliance with the town’s LUJDC.

In the April of 2023 letter to the county, Cole claims that the county misread the state statute on the matter, arguing that the case laws cited by the county actually “don’t apply in this situation,” because, in those cases, unlike Pagosa Springs, the municipality involved was not a “home-rule municipality under a home-rule charter.”

In the letter, Cole states that authority for a home-rule municipality “comes out of the Colorado Constitution. And the Colorado Constitution says that if you’re a home-rule entity, you have the power to write the legislation on all matters of local and municipal concern.”

At the most recent meeting, Pierce pointed to the crux of the disagreement: that the county believes state statute gives it the right to waive “the need for them to follow the town’s” LUJDC, whereas “the town believes that legal authority requires them [the county] to follow the [town’s] code.”

And on the cost-burden issues, she stated that the town has made the county aware of several “low-cost options” for screening the rooftop equipment.

She added that, in an effort to be good community partners, the town has waived about \$54,000 in fees related to “remodels and construction of county facilities,” stating that this amount “would easily cover the costs” of screening to meet the town’s code requirements.

She said that town staff “worked many hours to attempt to bring the screening of the courthouse issue to a resolution which would benefit all parties.”

But, she said, “Here we are, almost four years later, still trying to settle the issue of whether screening is legally required on the courthouse.”

“My hope,” she said, “is that the county understands the town’s position on the screening and will provide appropriate screening on the courthouse and the transit facility and any future construction as is required.”

She added that she didn’t see a resolution anytime in the near future, citing a Feb. 2 BoCC meeting in which the commissioners seemed poised to take the issue to court and even suggested issuing its own building permit for the county transit facility.

“I do not like feeling like the town is being threatened,” she said.

However, considering that the town has spent more than 50 hours and several town council and planning commission meetings “on this one issue,” Pierce said that she did not think it was a good practice “to continue to spend funds on staff time and attorney fees.”

She said that she also believes that the town should “not bow down to threats,” but in an effort to resolve an “untenable situation,” outside of court, she recommended going ahead and issuing the county a CO for the building, saying this was taking “the high road.”

“I would like to see a motion that the town issue a certificate of occupancy for the county courthouse building,” she said.

Council member Gary Williams stated that he agreed with Pierce and does not want to spend “\$50,000 in

Main Street board already has in place, and then we can add an additional council member,” as well as an “additional county staff person to that group, because they have already been working on the issue for some time and have a lot of knowledge” on it, she said.

Brown explained that the reason he “wanted to bring” this issue up at the meeting was that he doesn’t want the two entities to be blindsided by it.

Maez added that the two entities should try to avoid getting “phone calls” complaining, “Why didn’t you guys think about this? Why didn’t you anticipate this?”

It was ultimately decided to add commissioner Maez, Bruce and Martinez and the subcommittee studying the issue.

The committee will continue to meet once a month on Thursdays.

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lawyer’s fees” litigating this issue in the courts. He then made the motion, which was seconded.

But before a roll-call vote could be taken, council member Mat deGraaf said, “I am not in favor of issuing a certificate of occupancy, at all.”

He added he felt like the county was “bullying us, and I don’t appreciate it. You mentioned being threatened, and that’s not professional in any way shape or form.”

He noted that private businesses have to comply with the building code to “put screening up,” and that he did “not understand why it was so hard for the county to follow the building code that they agreed to when they put the plans in place” over four years ago.

“What is gonna stop the next person who is building a building to say to us, ‘Well, you waived it for the county. Why do I, as a private citizen, have to pay this?’ This is a very slippery slope,” he said.

Williams stated he agreed with “my colleagues that it’s distasteful that they decided not to follow” the code, but “the costs of enforcing this seem high and I think we have better things to spend our time and money on.”

Council member Leonard Martinez expressed that he was in favor of Pierce’s notion of taking “the high road,” but also said that the town needs to make sure that something “like this never happens again.”

Martinez suggested being more proactive in demanding that code requirements be met earlier in the process, instead of after a building has already been built, saying this is how to avoid “getting ourselves into this kind of corner.”

When the motion came up for a roll-call vote, the motion passed 4-2, with Pierce, Williams, Martinez and Lindner voting in favor of the motion and deGraaf and council member Madeline Bergon voting against it.

Williams thanked Pierce and staff for working with the county commissioners to “try to solve this difficult issue.”

At the Feb. 27 BoCC work session, Woodman explained that the town council had voted to grant the CO to the county.

“Good job, town council,” Woodman said.

Commissioner Veronica Medina stated it was “touted” as the council taking the “higher road” and expressed her appreciation for Pierce raising the issue and the council for discussing it.

“There were two town council members that did oppose it, but I think overall the feeling is that ... there is a mutual feeling of, ‘Let’s move forward together and work better together,’” Medina said. “So, I think all of us need to look at this as an opportunity to move together forward and start really working on some of the projects that we need to do together and really have that mutual respect for each other because we’re in a new time. Whatever’s happened in the past has happened in the past. We need to move forward and work better together, we really do.”

“There’s not a high road or a low road,” Commissioner Ronnie Maez said. “When you suggest that there’s a high road, people automatically assume that there’s a low road. So ... there’s only two roads, and that’s county and ... municipal government. And what we need to do is to recognize to operate together in the same manner as far as what the Colorado Revised Statutes allows. And we need to exemplify that to each other and work together. But I do thank them for releasing the CO.”

“Absolutely, it was great news, I think,” Woodman said, adding that the town and county need to continue to cooperate on common projects.

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Publisher

■ Continued from front

that Shari and her team in Pagosa Springs are up for the challenge of continuing to grow and keep The SUN viable for many years to come. And, it’s OMG’s job to make sure we support whatever is needed to make this happen locally in Pagosa Springs,” O’Rourke said.

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Education

Future Business Leaders of America: 35 advance to state competition

By Lauren Ball

Pagosa Springs chapter, Future Business Leaders of America

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For more information, please follow us on Instagram at FBLA_Pagosa.



Photo courtesy Wings Early Childhood

Heidi Tanner kicks off the Wings Early Childhood monthly music program with her violin. Children and teachers gathered to enjoy the live music performance. Tanner took some time to teach the children about string instruments and explore the numerous sounds a violin can create. They were intrigued throughout the performance, but especially perked up when hearing a familiar song, "Baby Shark," played on the violin. Monthly music will continue with a flutist in March.

School district audit identifies material weakness

By Robert Moore

Staff Writer

At the Feb. 13 regular meeting of the Archuleta School District (ASD) Board of Education, the board heard about its 2023 audit from a presentation by Jessica Bogner, audit partner at Wall, Smith, Bateman.

According to the written audit report, the district received an unmodified audit opinion.

The document also identifies a material weakness in the district's internal controls over financial statements.

In presenting her report, Bogner did not cover the "Management's Discussion and Analysis" section of the audit, but recommended that the board review it, stating, "This is a really good comparison if you're looking from current year to prior year. Our financial statements only present current-year information, so this would be a good guide to come back to and see what has changed in the past year."

Per the financial analysis section of the audit report, the district's total net position for 2023 was \$3,675,810, compared to the 2022 total net position of \$4,502,156.

The section notes that the primary factors causing the decrease in the net position were the decrease in total assets and the decrease in operating grant revenues.

In reviewing the income statement, Bogner noted that the district had total revenues of \$23.5 million and total expenditures of \$23.6 million for a decrease in fund balance of \$115,000, the fund balance in the general fund increased by \$196,000, the grant fund "zeroed out," and that the district's other nonmajor funds had a decrease of \$312,000.

Bogner then reported that, when the auditors reviewed the internal controls over the district's financial reports, "we did identify a material weakness that we will go through, but we didn't identify a significant deficiency or non-compliance as material to the financial statements."

For the federal funds that were expended by the district, Bogner next indicated that the audit did not identify

any material weaknesses or significant deficiencies, and added, "You do qualify as a low risk — so that means we only have to test 20 percent of that 2.9 billion of federal funds expended. Next year you will not qualify as a low risk because of the identified material weakness, so we will be required to test 40 percent of that of the federal funds expended."

Bogner, at the request of the district's finance director Michael Hodgson, then summarized the material weakness, stating that it was an internal control deficiency.

According to the audit document, "The District's system of internal controls did not prevent or detect and correct financial misstatements," and the recommendation is that "the District should strengthen internal controls with adopted policies and procedures to include a review process of monthly and year-end reconciliations of balance sheet accounts to ensure accurate financial statement reporting. The District is converting to a new system in fiscal year 2024 and should ensure complete training to identify system capabilities and implement reconciliation procedures accordingly."

"My personal opinion is that the problem was half with the training we received from the previous system and half with how they had us set it up ... so, it's the combination of getting it set up right in the first place, getting training from somebody that knows what they're doing, and it might be just a better system too. Skyward [the new software system] works only with school systems," Hodgson said.

Asked if there were specific actions they are taking, Hodgson replied that "internal controls to find mistakes earlier — yes. And we are, for example, in payroll, subdividing some expenses. Where they were all going previously into one account, we are now subdividing that out into multiple expense accounts, so if there's something wrong we can find it more quickly ... and having myself and Rick sign off on the bank reconciliations."

With no additional findings to report, Bogner concluded by stating, "Your staff is very easy to work with

... we really appreciate working with you guys, and that's not something we say about a lot of people, so you guys should be really happy with your staff."

Bob Lynch, board president, then thanked Hodgson and his staff for their work and said, "We are in good financial shape, and we have a really strong Finance Department."

Financial highlights

The financial highlights as outlined by the school district management team in the audit document include:

- The general fund experienced a \$196,059 surplus in fiscal year 2023. This reversed the district's one-year of deficit spending that followed four consecutive years of surplus for the district. The fiscal year 2022 deficit was largely caused by a \$1,585,440 transfer to the capital reserve project fund to pay for necessary building, repairs including \$648,342 to replace the high school boilers.

- The general fund recorded a \$9,589,772 fund balance as of June 30, 2023. This amount is 49.4 percent of the district's total general fund expenditures and transfers for fiscal year 2023, an increase of 0.10 percent compared to the previous year.

- When considering all governmental funds (general fund, food service fund, designated grants fund, student activity fund and capital reserve project fund, but excluding the fiduciary fund), the district recorded a \$10,471,984 fund balance as of June 30, 2023, a decrease of \$115,704 or 1.09 percent compared to the previous year.

- The district had long-term debt at June 30, 2023, of \$909,095 including finance purchase agreements and accrued compensated absences. This is \$100,856 less than the district's long-term debt at June 30, 2022. The district's general obligation bond was paid off in December 2020.

- Despite Amendment 23, the state of Colorado continues to implement the budget stabilization factor to balance the state's budget. With \$626,570 withheld in fiscal year 2023 (\$347,874 less than fiscal year 2022) the total withheld from the district to date equals \$18,320,212. Looking forward, the

budget stabilization factor will reduce in fiscal year 2024 to less than half of the fiscal year 2023 amount, and it is proposed to reduce to \$0 in fiscal year 2025.

- The district's total combined net position as of June 30, 2023, was \$3,675,810, a reduction of \$826,346. This net position is a result of the implementation of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board statements 68 and 75, which require all entities contributing to the Public Employees Retirement Association to record their share of the state's net pension liability and the state's Health Care Trust Fund liability on the district's statement of net position.

Without the district's \$25,844,770 share of Colorado's pension liability and the \$880,833 share of the other post-employment benefits (commonly known as OPEB) liability, the district's total combined net position as of June 30, 2023, would be \$30,401,413, compared to \$24,362,067 last year.

- In November 2018, the voters of the school district passed a \$1.7 million annual mill levy override (MLO) to attract and retain high-quality staff, to fund full-day kindergarten and to fund school resource officers in each of the three schools. Because the state started funding full-day kindergarten for the 2019-2020 school year, the school board decided not to collect the kindergarten MLO funding beginning in fiscal year 2020.

In November 2023, the voters approved a continuation of the \$1.7 million MLO that does not sunset.

- During fiscal year 2022-2023, the district spent \$2,925,712 (including Pagosa Peak Open School allocations) in 16 federal grants and awards. This spending amount includes food service and Secure Rural School spending.

The three COVID-19 related Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) grants had \$1,239,862 remaining as of June 30, 2023. The ESSER1 grant ended in September 2022, ESSER2 ended in September 2023 but was completely spent by June 30, 2023, and ARP ESSER3 ends in September of this year.

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Pagosa Peak Open School announces director finalists

By Randi Pierce

Staff Writer

On Monday, Pagosa Peak Open School announced three finalists for its school director position.

The school's current director, Angela Reali-Crossland, announced in December 2023 that she would not be renewing her contract at the end

of its current term.

The finalists announced are Emily Murphy, of Pagosa Springs; Brianna Kaiser, of Denver; and Brian Clyne, of Brownsville, Texas.

Murphy currently serves as the school's assistant director.

No additional information on the finalists was released.

At the board of directors' meeting

on Feb. 21, board vice president Jesse White outlined that five applications were received, with interviews taking place that week with all five in order to narrow them down to the finalists.

He indicated that final interviews are anticipated to take place mid-March and will consist of each finalist meeting with four interview panels.

randi@pagosahun.com

PCC Southwest to offer free programs in forestry, wildfire mitigation

By Lisa Snyder

Pueblo Community College Southwest

Pueblo Community College (PCC) Southwest will offer two no-cost certificate programs in forestry, wildfire mitigation and natural resources starting this year.

The programs were made possible by a \$429,140 Forestry and Wildfire Mitigation Workforce Development grant PCC Southwest recently received from the Colorado Commission on Higher Education.

There is a limit of 20 students for each program. The courses are open to anyone high school age or older. Students can pursue an entry-level wildland fire certificate through PCC's wildland fire academy or enroll

in a two-semester certificate program in forestry and wildland fire.

The wildland fire academy, a one-week course, will be held the first week of June in Pagosa Springs. Registration details are being finalized.

By completing the academy, participants can apply for an incident qualification card, known as a red card, or pursue a career as a junior wildland firefighter or member of a frontline fire crew.

The forestry and wildland fire certificate program will be offered beginning in August. This certification will equip students to begin careers in areas such as logging, forest-thinning operations, the forest product/timber industry and more. Registration will open March 11.

Each curriculum offers hands-on practice and field experience. Students will learn essential workforce skills such as communication, teamwork and critical thinking. In addition to firefighting, potential career paths include positions in community engagement, conservation, education and land stewardship.

PCC Southwest also plans to offer a two-year degree in forestry and natural resources in the near future.

Those interested in receiving information about the programs can contact Perry Pepper, regional director of academic services, at Perry.Pepper@pueblocc.edu or (970) 564-6205; or Heather Houk, agriculture program coordinator, at Heather.Houk@pueblocc.edu or (970) 564-6230.

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Outdoors

Commissioners discuss potential wildland fire mill levy

By Josh Pike
Staff Writer

The Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) discussed the potential for an emergency services mill levy to support wildfire fighting in the county with Sheriff Mike Le Roux at its Feb. 20 work session.

Le Roux began his presentation by noting that Colorado state law allows county governments to, with voter approval, establish a property tax for the specific purpose of funding wildfire fighting operations.

He stated Archuleta County is “unique” in the fact that the Archuleta County Sheriff’s Office (ACSO) runs a wildfire initial attack crew.

He indicated that this crew includes two seasonal staff dedicated to this task and three vehicles, in addition to resources from the ACSO Office of Emergency Management.

Le Roux stated that this crew is responsible for an approximately 200-square-mile area in the county that falls outside of the Pagosa Fire Protection District (PFPD) boundaries.

He added that the PFPD covers approximately 350 square miles.

He explained that the ACSO pays about \$55,000 a year for this firefighting crew, including staff pay, insurance premiums and other expenses.

Le Roux stated that, in 2023, the county had its largest fire response to date for the Coal Mine Fire, which occurred partially on county lands and partially on Southern Ute Indian Tribe (SUIT) lands.

He explained that the on-scene costs for the fire were approximately \$1.2 million, which was paid by the SUIT, although the county incurred \$25,000 in food costs to feed firefighters at the scene.

Le Roux commented that the ACSO has an “excellent” working relationship with the PFPD and both agencies spend substantial amounts of time attending to fires in the other’s district and providing mutual aid.

However, he stated that there is potential for the portion of the county covered by the ACSO’s fire service to generate revenue to assist in firefighting through the establishment of an emergency services mill levy.

He added that he wanted to discuss the issue with the commissioners and determine if they have an interest in moving forward in the future to attempt to establish such a mill levy.

Le Roux noted that the PFPD has a

mill levy within its district to fund its operations, but that no mechanism to recoup firefighting costs exists for properties outside the PFPD district and these properties do not have a guaranteed structure fire response as the PFPD has to prioritize structures within its district in the event of simultaneous fires.

However, he added that the PFPD responds to structure fires in the entire county when possible since it is “the right thing to do.”

He commented that he was unsure if the property tax increase could be applied to only the properties currently served by the ACSO or if it would have to apply to the entire county.

Commissioner Ronnie Maez stated that he would like to know how the tax would have to be applied as well and commented that he believes the PFPD would support such a mill levy as it would benefit its operations.

He added that he is aware of one situation where a structure burned in the county area because the PFPD’s resources were already mostly allocated to another fire within its district.

Le Roux commented that the ACSO’s equipment is aging and the unexpected expenses of wildfires can be damaging to the agency’s budget.

“We continue to do what we do,” he said. “And this doesn’t change our response. But, I just wanted to make you aware if you weren’t that there is statute that allows for money ... to be generated and then appropriated for wildland fire response.”

Commissioner Warren Brown asked how many wildfires the county had last year.

Le Roux stated that the ACSO had 15 to 20 responses for fires, ranging from single lightning-struck trees to large fires like the Coal Mine Fire.

The group then discussed the limited resources for firefighting that the ACSO has, with Maez noting that the three vehicles the organization possesses are likely insufficient for fighting many fires and Le Roux pointing out the limited number of staff available and the need to rely on other groups, such as the PFPD or the Archuleta County Road and Bridge Department for key firefighting tasks.

Le Roux added that the ACSO also leases its equipment to the U.S. Forest Service to generate some revenue.

“I’m not sure there is the ... public will for additional taxes given the current state of things,” Brown commented. “But, it’s always cheaper to

work on prevention than it is to pay out for firefighting recovery. What I think I would like to see is, before our next budget cycle, I would like to see some public meetings held on this. I would like to have the opportunity for the public to give their input and what their thoughts are about bringing this on the taxpayer and see if it is something that they see worthwhile. If the public supports it, I think that we have an answer right there.”

Maez commented that he “would be behind it either way,” but that further education would likely be necessary on the benefits of the property tax increase.

“It’s better to have and not need than to need and not have,” he said.

Le Roux commented that he saw this discussion as the beginning of an effort.

“Some are contributing, some aren’t, everybody’s getting the service,” he said. “I think it needs to be fair across the board for everybody.”

Commissioner Veronica Medina commented that wildfire risk is increasing the cost of insurance or causing insurance companies to refuse to cover properties in the area.

She noted that the impact of local wildfire response on insurance rates and availability could be an effective way to promote the idea of the mill levy to the public.

Le Roux stated that many subdivisions are creating wildfire preparation and mitigation plans, but that this is not possible for many regions in the county.

Maez asked Brown, who has a background in insurance, if insurance companies still use Insurance Services Office (ISO) ratings for fire response and if a mill levy would have the potential to improve the ISO rating for the community.

Brown stated that ISO ratings are still used, but that there is little consistency on how the ratings are applied.

Le Roux commented that the mill levy would create a funding source to help support the potentially high costs of a wildfire response and alleviate the need to take actions like appropriating \$1.5 million midyear to cover an unexpected fire event.

Maez commented that public education will be critical for improving the chances of the mill levy passing in the future.

Medina added that improving the insurance rating or increasing insurance access is also a critical issue.

Maez noted that fire mitigation is critical, as well as lobbying the Forest Service to reduce fuel loads in local forests.

Le Roux commented that the Forest Service has a large budget for fire response and the PFPD is supported by the taxpayers, but that the ACSO performs similar fire response and does not receive any financial support from the taxpayers.

County Attorney Todd Weaver commented that a wildland fire mill levy would likely have to be countywide.

He added that the funds could be used for a variety of fire mitigation activities as well as supporting firefighting.

Le Roux expressed agreement with Weaver and noted that having local funds for fire mitigation could be more effective than having to rely on sources like federal grants.

Medina asked if residents within the PFPD would also have to pay a potential county wildland fire tax.

Weaver stated that they would have to pay both the county and PFPD mill levies.

Maez noted that this would be similar to the county having a road mill levy which would still be paid by residents of local metro districts.

Weaver added that he would have to do additional research to see if a mill levy could only be applied to specific areas.

Le Roux commented that he would be happy to pay the cost of the mill levy to ensure that fire mitigation would occur.

He added that this cost would likely be far less than the cost of hiring a private contractor to do fire mitigation on a property.

Medina commented that she supported Le Roux’s proposal.

She proposed that the county could create a system where residents could pay a certain amount per year to get guaranteed fire response to their property.

“I don’t know how much traction you would get,” she said. “It’s kind of outside of the box, only if a mill levy wouldn’t go through. But maybe that’s part of the conversation when you have the public meetings. What is that appetite?”

Le Roux noted that the ACSO has to respond to wildfires in its jurisdiction, but that it has expenses that are currently not covered by specific funding.

Medina added that she would also be willing to pay a certain amount yearly to ensure fire response.

The discussion concluded with Le Roux thanking the BoCC for its consideration.

Conservation Helping Hand funding available

By Cynthia Purcell
San Juan Conservation District

The San Juan Conservation District (SJCD) is proud to offer a program we started 18 years ago, Conservation Helping Hand, to assist landowners with property in Archuleta County and parts of Hinsdale and Mineral counties.

Are you interested in implementing a conservation practice on your property, but need help with the cost? We will be awarding grants to pay for 50 percent of your project, up to \$4,000.

Conservation practices to promote more efficient irrigation systems, the use of planned grazing systems, and healthy forest restoration that will benefit both livestock and wildlife will be considered.

The SJCD collaborated with the Upper San Juan Watershed Enhancement Partnership (WEP) to inven-

tory all agricultural water use within the Upper San Juan Watershed, Blanco and Navajo basins. This was a community-driven process to understand local water supply needs and information gaps. As a result of this inventory, landowners within the project areas will be given higher priority to receive funding to implement irrigation system improvements.

We will be accepting applications until April 26. Applications will be reviewed by the elected board members and prioritized based on the targeted resource concern, environmental benefits and cost of implementation.

Funded project applicants will be notified by May 15. All projects must commence by July 1 and be complete by Sept. 27.

Applications are available at the SJCD Office at 505A County Road 600. Please stop by or call (970) 731-3615 for more information.

Camp Colorado Scholarship deadline March 1

By Jean Zirnheilt
Weminuche Audubon Society

This is the final opportunity for area students between the ages of 13 to 17 to apply for a scholarship to American Birding Association’s 2024 Camp Colorado in June.

The scholarship, which covers camp costs, is an incredible opportunity to attend this camp outside Rocky Mountain National Park for a week in June. Each day campers visit a different ecosystem in the region from the prairies to the mountains.

If you have an interest in birds and enjoy exploring beautiful places, this is the camp for you. Details on the camp may be found on our

website, weminucheadubon.org, under the scholarship tab.

To apply for the scholarship, students should submit an essay of 400 to 600 words describing his or her experiences in the outdoors and reasons for wishing to attend the camp, along with a letter of recommendation from an adult who is not a relative. The March 1 deadline may be extended if you contact us by then for permission to accept a late application.

Submissions to the Weminuche Audubon Society may be sent by email to weminuche.audubon@gmail.com or by mail to P.O. Box 1087, Pagosa Springs, CO 81147.

For further information, contact Jean at (970) 731-2985.

Colorado offering wildfire mitigation tax incentives

By Bill Trimarco
Wildfire Adapted Partnership

If you had actual out-of-pocket expenses for wildfire mitigation in 2023, you may qualify for a taxable income subtraction and a tax credit on your Colorado state taxes.

The subtraction can be for 50 percent of your expenses up to a \$2,500 subtraction. In addition, if your federal taxable income is less than \$120,000, you can also claim up to 25 percent of wildfire mitigation expenses up to \$2,500.

Landowners will need to submit

a Subtractions from Income Schedule (DR 0104AD) and a Colorado Individual Income Tax Return (DR 0104).

If you received any kind of reimbursement for your mitigation, that amount cannot be counted. There are other details and limitations, so please check out the information available at <https://tax.colorado.gov/wildfire-tax-benefits>. Under “Income Tax Incentives” you can click on Income “Tax Topics: Wildfire Mitigation Measures” to see the particulars.

You can learn more about ways to prepare for wildfire at wildfireadapted.org or by calling (970) 385-8909.

BLM seeks public comments on proposed rule

By Maggie Magee
Bureau of Land Management

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is seeking public comments on a proposed supplementary rule affecting motorized and nonmotorized vehicle use, day-use areas, seasonal wildlife habitat and camping on public lands in the Tres Rios Field Office and the Silverton area of Gunnison Field Office.

The rule restricts certain activities; defines allowable uses in special management areas; provides for visitor health and safety; and protects wildlife, natural and cultural resources on BLM-managed lands in Archuleta, La Plata, Montezuma, Dolores, San Miguel, Montrose, Gunnison, San Juan, Ouray and Hinsdale counties.

New study demonstrates how climate and irrigation influence salinity of waters in Upper Colorado River Basin

By Alexandra Weill
U.S. Geological Survey

A newly published study from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) explains how salinity in the Upper Colorado River Basin has changed over the past few decades and shows how climate, irrigation and the flow of groundwater contribute to salinity in the watershed. The study correlates overall salinity declines in the river basin since the 1980s with a transition from wet to dry conditions.

High salinity can limit water available for agriculture, drinking water, aquatic life and infrastructure, with significant impacts to the economy and human health.

Salt occurs naturally in water, but salt loads are influenced by irrigated agriculture, geology, land cover, land-use practices and precipitation. Salinity can exacerbate corrosion of lead pipes and increase lead levels in drinking water and mobilize other metals or pollutants, as well. High salinity levels in the Colorado River reduce agricultural yield, damage infrastructure and

“The BLM works closely with the local communities we serve to develop land use plans with a shared vision for managing a wide range of resources and resource uses,” said BLM Southwest District Manager Stephanie McCormick. “The supplementary rule would allow the BLM to implement decisions that support the unique quality of life enjoyed by Southwest Colorado communities.”

The BLM has recorded growing visitation to southwest Colorado, which increases pressure on public land resources such as critical winter wildlife habitat, recreation destinations, and archaeological sites.

The rule would implement and make enforceable decisions related to rules of conduct issued in the Tres Rios Field Office Resource Management

Plan, the Tres Rios Field Office Transportation and Access Plan—Travel Area 1, the Dolores River Corridor Management Plan, the Alpine Triangle Recreation Area Management Plan, and the Silverton Travel Management Plan.

To review the proposed rule, visit <https://public-inspection.federalregister.gov/2024-03732.pdf>. Written comments must be received by April 29 to be considered. Comments related to the Tres Rios Field Office should be directed to the BLM, Attn. Tyler Fouss, 29211 Highway 184, Dolores, CO 81323, or submitted electronically to tfouss@blm.gov. Comments related to the Gunnison Field Office should be directed to BLM, Attn. James Lovelace, 2500 E. New York Ave, Gunnison, CO 81230, or submitted electronically to jlovelac@blm.gov.

are estimated to cause \$348 million per year in damage to infrastructure and crop production. “This study shows us how irrigation and climate work together to influence salts going into streams,” said USGS Hydrologist Olivia Miller, lead author on the study. “Future climate change in the Southwest, combined with changes in irrigation, may affect stream water quality, but we don’t yet understand how these interactions will play out, so our next step is developing a model to test scenarios of future climate change.”

Wet periods have higher salinity loads because increased runoff from rain and melting snow and increased groundwater movement bring more salts into rivers. In contrast, drier periods have lower salinity loads. Irrigation also plays an important role, contributing salts to the river more efficiently than any other source.

“Salt loading to the Upper Colorado River and tributaries is a significant economic and environmental concern which limits the utility of the Colorado River and creates economic damages to downstream water users,” said Don

A. Barnett, executive director of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum.

For the new study, USGS scientists created a dynamic model that simulates the flow of water and salts throughout the whole Upper Colorado Basin between 1986 and 2017, allowing them to estimate salinity in the river and identify its sources for every year over that time.

The study confirmed previous findings that salts come primarily from groundwater (66-82 percent), with smaller portions attributed to runoff and springs. The salts in groundwater may initially come from infiltration of irrigation water, but once dissolved in groundwater, tracing the source is difficult. Groundwater is stored for long periods underground, meaning that there can be a time lag between when the salts enter the groundwater and when they end up in the river. As a result, while salinity management efforts focused on surface runoff processes may produce small results in the short term, larger impacts may take longer to work through the groundwater system.

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Sports

BASKETBALL

Pirates defeat Holy Family, set sail for Great 8

By Robert Moore
Staff Writer

The Pagosa Springs High School Pirates basketball team is on its way to the Great 8 round of the 4A basketball playoffs after defeating the Holy Family Tigers in the second round.

The No. 4 Pirates defeated No. 13 Tigers 51-45, in the playoff game hosted by Pagosa on Saturday, Feb. 24.

The Pirates and the Tigers battled evenly through the first quarter. Pagosa jumped out to a 5-0 lead, but Holy Family closed to within one, trailing 9-8 at the end of the period.

Coach Wes Lewis indicated he was pleased with the team's defense in the first quarter, stating, "I thought our defense was really good to start there. We [were] well prepared, knew what they were going to try to do, and felt like we did a really good job on the defensive side and frustrated them early."

In the second quarter, the Pirates outscored the Tigers 15-5 to take a 24-13 lead into the locker room at halftime.

"In the second quarter we got going a little bit offensively," Lewis said. "And to hold a team like Holy Family to 13 points in the half was pretty impressive, in my opinion. So, really proud of that effort."

The Pirates extended their lead to 30-13 to open the third quarter. Holy Family then went on a 12-0 scoring run while the Pirates committed a number of turnovers, allowing the Tigers to get back in the game, trailing 30-25.

Pagosa then scored seven straight points to close the third period with a 37-25 lead.

The teams took turns going on small scoring runs in the fourth quarter, but the Pirate defense and free-throw shooting down the stretch iced the game for Pagosa, with the final score landing at 51-45.

Lewis credited the team effort for the victory.

"I thought we were good," he said. "We made free throws down the



SUN photo/Randi Pierce

Colt Lewis threads his way through the Delta defense in first-round action in the 4A boys' basketball state championships. Lewis' 19 points and six assists led the Pirates to a 59-45 victory over the Panthers.

stretch, which was big, kind of sealed the game for us, and just a real solid effort from everybody at different times — just a team win. There was no one individual star, one individual player that did it. It was just a complete team win, team effort."

The coach also discussed what the win means.

"I told the boys in the locker room, I thought it was the biggest win that the basketball program has had on

the boys' side since 2013 when they won the state championship," he said. "So, a real tip of the cap to my guys and to our team ... we're the first 4A boys' team to qualify for a state tournament since we've been bumped up to 4A."

The Pirates were led in scoring by Colt Lewis, who contributed 19 points, two rebounds, two assists and three steals. Blake Laner posted a double-double with 13 points and

14 rebounds to go with two assists. Nathaniel Kinsley had 10 points, one rebound, two assists, two steals and one block. Ridge Wilson chipped in four points, nine rebounds, one assist, one steal and one block. Chase Harper added four points and one assist. Seth Zeigler scored one point and added three rebounds, and Creede Dozier had two assists and three steals.

For the game, the Pirates had 30 rebounds, 10 assists, nine steals and two blocks. The team committed 15 turnovers and made 15 of 23 free throws for 65 percent.

Setting sail for the Great 8

The Pirates will now travel to Denver to face the No. 5 Colorado Academy Mustangs on March 2 at 5:30 p.m. in the Denver Coliseum.

The Mustangs have a record of 20-5.

Wes Lewis indicated the team is preparing for a tough matchup.

"Colorado Academy's got a really ... legitimate point guard," he said. "They've got a couple of kids that shoot it extremely well from the 3-point line and they've got some really good size ... So, they've got a nice team, they're well-coached ... So, we've got a lot to prepare for this week."

robert@pagosasun.com

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Kindergarten Round-Up

at Our Savior Lutheran School

Tuesday, March 5 • 6 PM • 56 Meadows Drive

Please plan on arriving around 5:45 PM and signing in. Kindergarten teacher, Ms. Susan Beard, will describe a day in Kindergarten and lead her students in various recitations highlighting what they have learned this year. She will then take questions and meet with parents. Registration forms for the 2024-2025 academic year will be available at that time. Please plan on joining us!



SUN photo/Randi Pierce

Blake Laner rises above a Holy Family defender to score two of his 13 points in Pagosa's 51-45 victory over the No. 13 Tigers. Laner also snagged 14 rebounds to help punch the Pirates' ticket to the Great 8 round of the 4A basketball playoffs in Denver.

22ND ANNUAL

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Sweet 16

SUN photos/Randi Pierce

Members of the Pirate and the Lady Pirate basketball teams earn and celebrate their victories on Feb. 23 and 24 that propelled the teams to the Great 8 round of the 4A basketball playoffs in Denver on March 2. The Pirates are ranked No. 4 with a record of 24-1, and the Lady Pirates are ranked No. 5 with a record of 21-4.



BASKETBALL

'We want it': Lady Pirates advance to Great 8

By Robert Moore
Staff Writer

The Pagosa Springs High School Lady Pirate basketball team punched their ticket to the Great 8 round of the 4A basketball playoffs by winning a nail-biter against the Eaton Reds in second-round action on Friday.

The No. 5 Pirates defeated the No. 12 Reds by a score of 40-39.

Coach Sarah Osborn stated that she expected a tough, close game with Eaton.

"I told the girls from the beginning, no matter what, that they weren't a 12-ranked team, they had a tough schedule all year," Osborn said, adding, "We knew it was going to be a five-point game, no greater gap than a five-point game the entire time."

Pagosa and Eaton battled evenly throughout the game Friday. A 3-pointer and fast break layup by Karsyn Shahan near the end of the first period gave the Lady Pirates a 9-7 lead.

The scoring for both teams picked up in the second quarter, but another 3-pointer at the end of the period, this one by Annie O'Donnell, extended the Pagosa lead to 24-20 at halftime.

The Reds outscored the Lady Pirates 12-6 in the third quarter to take a 32-30 lead into the final period.

The two teams traded the lead back and forth throughout the hotly contested fourth quarter. Four missed free throws by Pagosa in the final minute of play contributed to

the boisterous atmosphere, but the Lady Pirates' defense enabled them to close out the Reds by a score of 40-39.

After the game, Osborn attributed the victory to her team's defense.

"The one thing that I think is our advantage is we play very different defense than any of the teams in Denver... Our defense is better than their best scorer," she said. "And we were the only other team to hold

rebound and one assist. Adelyn Hittle contributed one rebound, one assist and one steal.

For the game, Pagosa had 31 rebounds, six assists, eight steals and one block, and committed 10 turnovers. The Lady Pirates struggled at the free-throw line, shooting six of 21 for 29 percent.

"Our community showed up for both [the girls' and boys'] teams, and that makes a huge difference to these kids. They were celebrated," commented Osborn, who also highlighted the team effort. "So, really, when I say team basketball, I mean it's all 11 of them that are suited up that make the difference."

On to the Great 8

The Lady Pirates will travel to Denver to face the Resurrection Christian Cougars at 4 p.m. on March 2 in the Denver Coliseum.

The Cougars are ranked No. 4 with a record of 22-3, while the Lady Pirates enter the game ranked No. 5 with a 21-4 record.

Pagosa was eliminated by Resurrection Christian in the playoffs last year and is returning with virtually the same team, according to Osborn.

"We lost by two ... and we could have sent it to overtime," she said. "It's just a fun rivalry. We want it ... We're ready. We're excited."

robert@pagosasun.com



SUN photo/Randi Pierce

Karsyn Shahan slices to the basket for two of her game-leading 13 points in the Lady Pirates 40-39 victory over the Eaton Reds. With the second-round victory, the Pirates advanced to the Great 8 round of the 4A basketball playoffs in Denver.

"Our community showed up for both [the girls' and boys'] teams, and that makes a huge difference to these kids. They were celebrated."

Coach Sarah Osborn

them under 40."

The Lady Pirates were led by Shahan with 13 points, eight rebounds, one assist, two steals and one block. Elizabeth Currier had 12 points, seven rebounds and one steal. O'Donnell added nine points, six rebounds and three steals. Kylie Ketchum chipped in three points, five rebounds and one steal. Daveyann Snarr added three points, three rebounds and three assists. Amber Snarr had one

Play hard, Pirates!

NOTICE

The final 3 candidates for the Director position at Pagosa Peak Open School are:

- Emily Murphy - Pagosa Springs, CO
- Brianna Kaiser - Denver, CO
- Brian Clyne - Brownsville, TX

WRESTLING



SUN photo/Josh Pike

Four Pirate boys' wrestlers were named to the Inter Mountain League all-conference first team for their performances in the 2023-2024 season. The wrestlers include, from left to right, senior Harley Armijo, who wrestled in the 215-pound weight class and held a 31-10 record; senior Conner Kelly, who wrestled in the 190-pound weight class and held a 29-13 record; sophomore Colton Lucero, who wrestled in the 144-pound weight class and held a 38-5 record; and senior Luke Tressler, who wrestled in the 138-pound weight class and held a 33-5 record.

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HUD Publisher's Notice

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Fair Housing act which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin, or an intention, to make such preference, limitation or discrimination." Familial status includes children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women and people securing custody of children under 18.

This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination call HUD toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. The toll-free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.



SUN photo/Josh Pike

Madisen Stretton, left, and Laykyn Baxstrom were named to the all-conference team for the Inter Mountain League for their performances during the 2023-2024 girls' wrestling season. Stretton, a freshman, wrestled in the 105-pound weight class and had a 15-9 record for the season while Baxstrom, also a freshman, wrestled in the 190-pound weight class and had a 12-8 record.

RECREATION NEWS

Registration open for spring rec programs

By Matt Zaborowski
Town of Pagosa Springs

All program registrations for 2024 will be released seasonally.

For the spring 2024 season, we have several programs available, including adult volleyball, 4- to 5-year-

old T-ball and adult soccer.

Online registration is available through the town website at pagosapragonsprings.co.gov or in person at the Ross Aragon Community Center.

Please call the Recreation Department with any questions, (970) 264-4151, ext. 524.



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Public Meetings

The following meetings are subject to change.

Thursday, Feb. 29

Main Street Advisory Board oral history project meeting. 4:15 p.m., virtual. See town website for participation information: <https://pagosaprinns.civicweb.net/portal/>.

Friday, March 1

San Juan Water Conservancy District work session. 11 a.m., 46 Eaton Drive, Suite 5. For more information, visit sjwcd.org.

Tuesday, March 5

Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners work session. 8:30 a.m., Archuleta County administration building, commissioners' meeting room, 398 Lewis St. View Zoom meeting at: <https://zoom.us/j/91609048375?pwd=dFFV0J1cGVKa1NHWHFsa2taeGxtZz09>, meeting ID: 916 0904 8375, passcode: 4141885. For more information, visit <http://archuletacounty.org/agendacenter>.

Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners meeting. 1:30 p.m.,

Archuleta County administration building, commissioners' meeting room, 398 Lewis St. View Zoom meeting at: <https://zoom.us/j/91609048375?pwd=dFFV0J1cGVKa1NHWHFsa2taeGxtZz09>, meeting ID: 916 0904 8375, passcode: 4141885. For more information, visit <http://archuletacounty.org/agendacenter>.

Pagosa Springs Town Council meeting. 5 p.m. Town Hall, 551 Hot Springs Blvd. See town website for participation information: <https://pagosaprinns.civicweb.net/portal/>.

Pagosa Springs Sanitation General Improvement District meeting. 5 p.m. Town Hall, 551 Hot Springs Blvd. See town website for participation information: <https://pagosaprinns.civicweb.net/portal/>.

Pagosa Fire Protection District Board of Directors meeting. 5:30 p.m., administration office, 165 N. Pagosa Blvd.

Wednesday, March 6

Archuleta County Fair Board Meeting. 6 p.m., CSU Extension office, 344 U.S. 84. For more information,

visit <http://archuletacounty.org/agendacenter>.

Thursday, March 7

Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation District Board of Directors special meeting. 2 p.m. 100 Lyn Ave. For more information, visit pagosaprinns.civicweb.net/portal/.

Combined Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. 5:30 p.m. Town Hall, 551 Hot Springs Blvd. See town website for participation information: <https://pagosaprinns.civicweb.net/portal/>.

Main Street Advisory Board work ses-

sion. 4 p.m., Ross Aragon Community Center, 451 Hot Springs Blvd. See town website for participation information: <https://pagosaprinns.civicweb.net/portal/>.

Your source for community news.

The Pagosa Springs SUN
970-264-2100

COMBINED NOTICE - PUBLICATION CRS §38-38-103 FORECLOSURE SALE NO. 2023-011

To Whom It May Concern: This Notice is given with regard to the following described Deed of Trust: On December 26, 2023, the undersigned Public Trustee caused the Notice of Election and Demand relating to the Deed of Trust described below to be recorded in the County of Archuleta records.

Original Grantor(s) Glenn W. Keilar and Miriam Keilar Original Beneficiary(ies) Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as Beneficiary, as nominee for Countrywide Home Loans, Inc., its successors and assigns Current Holder of Evidence of Debt The Bank of New York Mellon fka The Bank of New York, as Trustee for the Certificateholders of The CWALT, Inc., Alternative Loan Trust 2006-33CB, Mortgage Pass-Through Certificates, Series 2006-33CB Date of Deed of Trust October 14, 2005 County of Recording Archuleta Recording Date of Deed of Trust October 21, 2005 Recording Information (Reception No. and/or Book/Page No.) 20511341 Original Principal Amount \$360,000.00 Outstanding Principal Balance \$240,341.76 Pursuant to CRS §38-38-101(4)(i), you are hereby notified that the covenants of the deed of trust have been violated as follows: Failure to make timely payments as required under the Evidence of Debt and Deed of Trust. **THE LIEN FORECLOSED MAY NOT BE A FIRST LIEN.**

Lot 25, The Reserve at Pagosa Peak Phase 2, according to the plat thereof recorded October 5, 2005 as Reception No. 20510466, in the office of the Clerk and Recorder, Archuleta County, Colorado.

Also known by street and number as: 196 Dylan Dr, Pagosa Springs, CO 81147.

THE PROPERTY DESCRIBED HEREIN IS ALL OF THE PROPERTY CURRENTLY ENCOMBERED BY THE LIEN OF THE DEED OF TRUST.

NOTICE OF SALE

The current holder of the Evidence of Debt secured by the Deed of Trust, described herein, has filed Notice of Election and Demand for sale as provided by law and in said Deed of Trust.

FORECLOSURE: Notice is hereby given that I will at public auction, at 10:00 A.M. on Thursday, 04/25/2024, at the Archuleta County Treasurer's Office at 449 San Juan St. Pagosa Springs, CO 81147, sell to the highest and best bidder for cash, the said real property and all interest of the said Grantor(s), Grantor(s) heirs and assigns therein, for the purpose of paying the indebtedness provided in said Evidence of Debt secured by the Deed of Trust, plus attorneys' fees, the expenses of sale and other items allowed by law, and will issue to the purchaser a Certificate of Purchase, all as provided by law.

First Publication 2/29/2024
Last Publication 3/28/2024
Name of Publication Pagosa Springs Sun

IF THE SALE DATE IS CONTINUED TO A LATER DATE, THE DEADLINE TO FILE A NOTICE OF INTENT TO CURE BY THOSE PARTIES ENTITLED TO CURE SHALL ALSO BE EXTENDED;
DATE: 12/28/2023

Elsa P. White, Public Trustee in and for the County of Archuleta, State of Colorado
By: Elsa P. White, Public Trustee
The name, address, business telephone number and bar registration number of the attorney(s) representing the legal holder of the indebtedness is:
Amanda Ferguson #44893
Holiday, Watkins & Mann, P.C. 355 Union Blvd. Ste 259, Lakewood, CO 80228 (303) 274-0155
Attorney File # CO22628

The Attorney above is acting as a debt collector and is attempting to collect a debt. Any information provided may be used for that purpose.
Published February 29 and March 7, 14, 21, & 28, 2024 in *The Pagosa Springs SUN*. (225096)

County Court
Archuleta County, Colorado
Court Address:
Archuleta Combined Courts
109 Harman Park Dr., PO Box 148
Pagosa Springs, CO 81147
In the Matter of the Petition of:
Adult: Lisa Marie Johnson
For a Change of Name to:
Lisa Marie Johnson Canilao
DATE FILED: February 13, 2024
Case Number: 24C13
Division 1 Courtroom 1

PUBLIC NOTICE OF PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME

Public Notice is given on 2/16/24 that a Petition for a Change of Name of an Adult has been filed with the Archuleta Court.

The Petition requests that the name of Lisa Marie Johnson be changed to Lisa Marie Johnson Canilao.

By: C. Turner, Deputy Clerk
Published February 22, 29 & March 7, 2024 in *The Pagosa Springs Sun*. (229411)

County Court
Archuleta County, Colorado
Court Address:
Archuleta Combined Courts
109 Harman Park Dr., PO Box 148
Pagosa Springs, CO 81147
In the Matter of the Petition of:
Adult: Paulette Angela Bennett
For a Change of Name to:
Paulette Angela Biancucci
DATE FILED: February 20, 2024 8:44 AM
Case Number: 24C14
Division 1 Courtroom 1

AMENDED PUBLIC NOTICE OF PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME

Public Notice is given on 2/16/24 that a Petition for a Change of Name of an Adult has been filed with the Archuleta Combined Court.

The Petition requests that the name of Paulette Angela Bennett be changed to Paulette Angela Biancucci.

By: Cheryl Mulbery, Clerk of Court/Deputy Clerk
Published February 22, 29 & March 7, 2024 in *The Pagosa Springs Sun*. (229331)

District Court
Archuleta County, Colorado
Court Address:
Archuleta County Justice Center
109 Harman Park Drive
Pagosa Springs, CO 81147
In the Matter of the Estate of:
Kathi Lou Creech,
AKA Kathi S. Creech,
AKA Kathi S. Creech,
Deceased
Attorney or Party Without Attorney (Name and Address)
Charlotte P. Vochem, Attorney at Law
1351 Country Center Drive, PMB 477
Pagosa Springs, CO 81147
Phone Number: (512) 529-6288
E-mail: charlotte@vochemlaw.com

Atty. Reg. #54998
Case Number: 24PR30009
Division 1 Courtroom
NOTICE TO CREDITORS BY PUBLICATION PURSUANT TO § 16-12-801, C.R.S.
NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Estate of Kathi Lou Creech, AKA Kathi Creech, AKA Kathi S. Creech, Deceased
Case Number 24PR30009
All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to District Court of Archuleta County, Colorado on or before June 29, 2024, or the claims may be forever barred.
Bob Minchew
1401 Meadowold Cove
Round Rock, TX 78664
Published February 29 and March 7 & 14, 2024 in *The Pagosa Springs SUN*. (229743)

DISTRICT COURT, ARCHULETA COUNTY, STATE OF COLORADO
COURT ADDRESS:
Archuleta County District Court
PO Box 148
Pagosa Springs, CO 81147
Case No.: 2023CV030086
Division: 1
Plaintiff: PAGOSA LAKES PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION
v.
Defendants: AARON BOWMAN
Attorneys for Plaintiff:
ORTEN CAVANAGH HOLMES & HUNT, LLC
Hal R. Kyles, #23891
1445 Market St., Suite 350
Denver, Colorado 80202
Phone Number: (720) 221-9780
Matter ID #1019,0807

SUMMONS [BY PUBLICATION]

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF COLORADO TO THE ABOVE-NAMED DEFENDANTS:
You are hereby summoned and required to appear and defend against the claims of the complaint filed with the court in this action, by filing with the clerk of this court an answer or other response. You are required to file your answer or other response within 35 days after the service of this Summons upon you. Service of this summons shall be complete on the day of the last publication. A copy of the complaint may be obtained from the clerk of the court.

If you fail to file your answer or other response to the complaint in writing within 35 days after the date of the last publication, judgment by default may be rendered against you by the court for the relief demanded in the complaint without further notice.

This is an action of foreclosure pursuant to Rule 105, C.R.C.P. to the real property situated in Pagosa Springs, Colorado more particularly described as: Lot 361, Pagosa Highlands Estates according to the plat thereof recorded February 7, 1972 at Reception No. 75409, and as recorded in Book 156 Page 60, in the office of the Clerk and Recorder, Archuleta County, Colorado. Dated: February 6, 2024.
ORTEN CAVANAGH HOLMES & HUNT, LLC
By: /s/ Hal R. Kyles
Hal R. Kyles, #23891
Published in *The Pagosa Springs Sun*
First Publication: February 15, 2024
Last Publication: March 14, 2024

This Summons is issued pursuant to Rule 4(g), Colorado Rules of Civil Procedure.
Published February 15, 22, 29 & March 7 & 14, 2024 in *The Pagosa Springs SUN*. (228581)

Invitation for Bid - Magnesium Chloride Supply and Application: Notice is hereby given that Archuleta County will accept sealed bids for the supply and application of magnesium chloride to various County Roads. THREE SETS (ONE ORIGINAL AND TWO COMPLETE COPIES OF THE SEALED BID), clearly marked with "Supply and Application of Magnesium Chloride," and the name, address and phone number of the bidder will be received by Chad Eaton, Finance Director of Archuleta County, 398 Lewis Street, Pagosa Springs, CO 81147, until 2:00 p.m., **Thursday March 7, 2024**. Bids must be hand or courier delivered. Bids conveyed by fax, email or regular mail will not be accepted. As soon as practical after the closing time, the bids shall be opened in public and read aloud at the Archuleta County Administration Building, 398 Lewis Street, Pagosa Springs, CO. Bids received after the closing time shall be returned unopened to the bidder.

Bid specifications are available from the Archuleta County Road & Bridge Department, 1122 S. Hwy. 84, P.O. Box 1507, Pagosa Springs, CO 81147. Please refer all questions regarding this bid to Yari Davis, Road and Bridge Engineering Technician at (970) 264-8404; e-mail yarceneaux@archuletacounty.org. Answers to all questions, inquiries, or requests for additional information will be issued in the form of Addenda. The County will not be responsible for the authenticity or correctness of oral interpretations of the contract documents or for information obtained in any other manner than through the media of addenda. Bidders in their bids shall acknowledge receipt of each Addendum, and each Addendum shall be considered a part of the contract documents. Failure to acknowledge receipt of any Addendum issued may invalidate a bid as incomplete. Questions must be received no later than the close of business 7 days prior to the Bid Opening.

The bid shall be awarded by the Board of County Commissioners. It is the Bidders' responsibility to verify the exact date of the award. Bidders may, but shall not be required to, attend the award of bid. A bid tab shall be forwarded to all Bidders as soon as practicable thereafter.

The Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive any informalities and minor irregularities in bids, and to accept the bid deemed, in the opinion of the Board, to be in the best interest of Archuleta County.
Published February 22 & 29, 2024 in *The Pagosa Springs SUN*. (229187)

INVITATION TO BID

Separate sealed BIDS for the **North Pagosa Boulevard 2024 Resurfacing Project** will be received by **Archuleta County, Colorado** at the office of Davis Engineering Service, Inc. located at 188 South 8th Street, P.O. Box 1208, Pagosa Springs, Colorado 81147, until 2:00 P.M. local time on **March 28, 2024**, and then at said office publicly opened and read aloud.

The project consists of resurfacing existing asphalt roadways being approximately 826 feet of North Pagosa Boulevard from U.S. Highway 160 to the north just south of the intersection with Bastille Drive, and approximately 320 feet of Navajo Trail beginning at the intersection with North Pagosa Boulevard and then to the southwest past the driveways to the car wash. The asphalt surface is to replace the existing deteriorated asphalt surface, while essentially maintaining the existing horizontal and vertical alignments by removing and replacing material to accommodate a single 3 inch asphalt mat. Two borings in the project area revealed 2.5 and 3 inch existing asphalt thicknesses.

Project work includes, but is not limited to asphalt removal, subgrade preparation, asphalt paving, shouldering, pavement marking, traffic control, and other items typically associated with road construction.

Copies of the CONTRACT DOCUMENTS and PLANS may be obtained on or after **February 29, 2024**, at the office of Davis Engineering Service, Inc. located at the address mentioned above, upon payment of \$50.00 for each set. No refund will be made for returned copies. A **mandatory** pre-bid conference and inspection trip for prospective Bidders will be held at the office of Davis Engineering Service, Inc. (phone number (970) 264-5055), located at the address mentioned above, at 2:00 P.M. local time on **March 19, 2024**.
Date: **February 29, 2024**
Published February 29 and March 14, 2024 in *The Pagosa Springs SUN*. (229861)

NOTICE OF CONTRACTOR'S SETTLEMENT
County of Archuleta
State of Colorado

Notice is hereby given that on or after the 17th day of March, 2024, final settlement will be made by Archuleta County, for and on account of the contract of said: Pro Electrical Contractors, Inc.

Company
for the furnishing and installation of Improvements to the Archuleta County Airport - Stevens Field, Schedule I, AIP Project No. 3-08-0066-027-2023 and any schedule, co-partnership, association or corporation who has an unpaid lien against said Pro Electrical Contractors, Inc. for or on account of the furnishing of labor, materials, team hire, sustenance, provision, provender or other supplies used or consumed by such Contractor or any of the subcontractors in or about the performance of said work, may at any time up to and including said time of final settlement on said 17th day of March, 2024, file a verified statement in the amount due and unpaid on account of such claim with Archuleta County. Failure on the part of the claimant to file such final statement will relieve said Owner from all and any liability for such claim.

Archuleta County
State of Colorado
First Publication: February 15, 2024
Second Publication: February 29, 2024
Published February 15 & February 29, 2024 in *The Pagosa Springs SUN*. (228819)

NOTICE OF PURCHASE OF PROPERTY AT TAX LIEN SALE AND OF APPLICATION FOR ISSUANCE OF TREASURER'S DEED

To Every Person in Actual Possession or Occupancy of the hereinafter Described Land, Lot or Premises, and to the Person in Whose Name the same was Taxed or Specially Assessed, and to all Persons having Interest of Title of Record in or to the said Premises and To Whom It May Concern, and more especially to:
PATRICIA A. SCANLIN
6141 EDSALL RD, APT J
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22304

You and each of you are hereby notified that on the 5th day of November 2020, the then County Treasurer of Archuleta County, in the State of Colorado, sold at public tax lien sale to PATRICK G. MULLOY the following described property situate in the County of Archuleta, State of Colorado, to-wit:
LOT 28 IN THE PAGOSA HIGHLAND ESTATES, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF FILED FOR RECORD FEBRUARY 7, 1972 AS RECEPTION NO. 75409.

Account Number: R000879
Schedule Number: 583252910509
Tax Sale Certificate Number: 2023-0094
and said County Treasurer issued a certificate of purchase therefore to PATRICK G. MULLOY. That said tax lien sale was made to satisfy the delinquent property (and special assessment) taxes assessed against said property for the year 2019;

That said property was taxed or specially assessed in the name(s) of PATRICIA A. SCANLIN for said year 2019;

That said PATRICK G. MULLOY on the 29th day of January 2024, the present holder of said certificate (who) has made request upon the Treasurer of said County for a deed to said property;
That a Treasurer's Deed will be issued for said property to PATRICK G. MULLOY on the 10th day of July 2024, unless the same has been redeemed; Said property may be redeemed from said sale at any time prior to the actual execution of said Treasurer's Deed.
Witness my hand this 5th day of February 2024
Elsa P White, Treasurer of Archuleta County, Colorado
Published February 29, & March 7, 14, 2024 in *The Pagosa Springs SUN*. (229141)

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Estate of **James Daniel Avery**, Case Number **2024 PR 30007**.

All persons having claims against the above-named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to the District Court of Archuleta County, Colorado on or before June 22, 2024, or the claims may be forever barred.
Daniel L. Fiedler, Attorney at Law
190 Tallisman Drive, Suite D-6
Pagosa Springs, CO 81147
Published February 22, 29 & March 7, 2024 in *The Pagosa Springs SUN*. (229029)

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Estate of **Jeffrey Carl Elliot**, Deceased Case Number **2023PR030035**

All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to District Court of Archuleta County, Colorado on or before June 15, 2024 (date), or the claims may be forever barred.
/s/ Dagna Van Der Jagt Attorney for Jessica Elliott, Personal Representative of the Estate of Jeffrey Carl Elliott
2334 McCann Ave Lot 15 Cheyenne, WY 82001
Published February 15, 22, & 29, 2024 in *The Pagosa Springs SUN*. (228514)

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Estate of **LILLIAN W. FLEURIDAS**, also known as Lillian Yuk Win Fleuridas, Deceased

Case Number 2024PR30001
All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to District Court of Archuleta County, Colorado on or before June 15, 2024, or the claims may be forever barred.
Eddie Dale, Co-Personal Representative
31 Windward Drive
Pagosa Springs, Colorado 81147
(970)946-3958
Colette Lucienne Fleuridas, Co-Personal Representative
1220 Anderson Ranch Lane
Napa, California 94559
(925)963-5014
Published February 15, 22, & 29, 2024 in *The Pagosa Springs SUN*. (228459)

ARCHULETA COUNTY DECEMBER 2023 PAYABLES VENDOR	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
CIGNA HEALTH AND LIFE INSURANCE	EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	\$124,351.05
NONSTOP ADMINISTRATION & INSURANCE SERVICES INC	EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	\$46,424.60
HEALTHY ARCHULETA	FSFE CONTRACT ARPA #19 #20 #21	\$37,102.48
ECHO IT CONSULTING LLC	OC 2023 IT TROUBLESHOOTING	\$30,914.53
WELLS FARGO BANK	COUNTY P CARD PURCHASES	\$28,772.84
FLYERS ENERGY LLC	COUNTY FUEL	\$27,321.65
A SAFE PLACE IN PAGOSA INC	ARPA SUBMISSION #18 & #19	\$20,523.21
VAL'S VIP CLEANING LLC	PROFESSIONAL CLEANING SERVICES	\$18,175.06
RUNBECK ELECTION SERVICES INC	2023 BALLOTS AND SUPPLIES	\$15,574.64
SIMBECK AND ASSOCIATES INC	LF GEO COMPOSITE MATERIAL	\$15,549.00
PATAGONIA HEALTH INC	PHD SOFTWARE AND TRAINING	\$15,000.00
HINKLE & COMPANY PC	FINANCIAL AUDIT SERVICES	\$14,500.00
DAVIS ENGINEERING SERVICE INC	ENGINEERING SERVICES LANDFILL & CULTVERT	\$13,893.50
CROSSFIRE ACQUISITION SERVICES LLC	ROADBASE GRAVEL	\$12,615.55
TRIPLE C COMMUNICATIONS INC	DETENTION RADIOS	\$12,447.00
TURN KEY HEALTH CLINICS LLC	OCTOBER 2023 INMATE SERVICES	\$12,184.61
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION	STEVENS FIELD REIL RUNWAY	\$12,117.60
SHAMROCK FOODS COMPANY	INMATE FOOD	\$11,410.78
LA PLATA ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION INC	DHS ELECTRIC UTILITY	\$10,305.47
RON TURLEY ASSOCIATES INC	2024 SAS RENEWAL FLEET	\$9,167.00
PAGOSA SPRINGS MEDICAL CENTER	HEALTH FAIR SERVICES	\$8,414.69
COLORADO ROCK & DIRT EXCAVATION LLC	HEAVY EQUIPMENT RENTAL	\$8,271.40
DELTA DENTAL OF COLORADO	EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	\$7,913.34
MUTUAL OF OMAHA	EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	\$7,894.29
SHORT-ELLIOTT-HENDRICKSON INCORPORATED	ENGINEERING SERVICES	\$7,802.31
ILOOK ABOUT US INC	2023 ASSESSOR SOFTWARE	\$7,500.00
PICTOMETRY INTERNATIONAL CORP	ASSESSOR SOFTWARE SERVICES	\$7,045.74
THE LANE LAW FIRM P.C.	LEGAL PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	\$6,867.50
FOUR STATES TIRE AND SERVICE	FLEET TIRES	\$6,656.42
BLACK HILLS ENERGY	BLACK HILLS ENERGY	\$6,523.87
DELTA RIGGING & TOOLS INC	FLEET PARTS	\$6,324.00
PAUMANE SOCIETY OF PAGOSA SPRINGS	DECEMBER 29 CONTRACT PAYMENT	\$5,833.34
AT&T MOBILITY LLC	R&B CELL PHONE AND DATA USE	\$4,851.11
MHQ OF NEW MEXICO	FLEET REPAIRS AND RETROFIT	\$4,796.82
KUBL GROUP LLC	DETENTION REMOTE CONNECTION SERVICES	\$4,650.00
PINE VALLEY RENTAL & SALES INC	HEAVY EQUIPMENT RENTAL	\$4,633.31
ARCHULETA SCHOOL DISTRICT	COLLABORATIVE MANAGEMENT	\$4,389.28
MATT DEGELMAN	CATERING SERVICES	\$4,333.20
EDUCE LLC	PROFESSIONAL GRANT SERVICES	\$3,937.50
CABE'S COLLISION AND CUSTOMS LLC	FLEET REPAIRS	\$3,906.30
AXIS HEALTH SYSTEM	FLEET PARTS & SUPPLIES	\$3,829.77
CENTURYLINK	INMATE MEDICAL SERVICES	\$3,821.75
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION	COUNTY TELEPHONE UTILITY	\$3,816.61
VALUEWEST INC	2023 Q4 CSU DIRECTOR SHARE	\$3,750.00
WAGNER EQUIPMENT CO	APPRAISAL SOFTWARE	\$3,600.00
INLAND KENWORTH US INC	FLEET PARTS	\$3,171.65
CAPITAL BUSINESS SYSTEMS INC	FLEET SUPPLIES	\$3,168.58
BUCKSKIN TOWING & REPAIR LLC	COPIER LEASE & USE	\$2,882.26
MICHAEL F. ARNALL M.D. PC	INVESTIGATIONS TOWING SERVICE	\$2,600.31
THE PONDEROSA LUMBER COMPANY	AUTOPSY SERVICES	\$2,600.00
BROWNSTEIN HYATT FARBER SCHRECK LLP	HARDWARE & WINTERIZATION SUPPLIES	\$2,537.05
MEDICAL AIR SERVICES ASSOCIATION INC	PROFESSIONAL LEGAL SERVICES	\$2,429.25
TRAUTNER GEOTECH LLC	EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	\$2,337.00
NEWEGG BUSINESS INC	IT SUPPORT AND TRAINING	\$2,335.50
PAGOSA AREA WATER AND SANITATION DISTRICT	YTD REFRIGERATION SERVICES	\$2,322.00
DURANGO MOTOR COMPANY	LANDFILL REPAIR SERVICES	\$2,319.40
ALPINE PORTABLE TOILETS LLC	IT EQUIPMENT	\$2,089.91
PACE SYSTEMS	DHS WATER UTILITY	\$2,020.35
COLORADO BUREAU OF INVESTIGATIONS	FLEET REPAIRS AND SERVICE	\$1,719.85
BIDDLE CONSULTING GROUP INC	PORTABLE TOILET RENTAL	\$1,680.00
BAYFIELD FAMILY DENTISTRY	ANNUAL SOFTWARE	\$1,680.00
ALSCO	CWP BACKGROUND CHECKS	\$1,611.00
WESTERN PAPER DISTRIBUTORS	ANNUAL SOFTWARE RENEWAL	\$1,595.00
WEBER SAND & GRAVEL INC	INMATE DENTAL SERVICES	\$1,591.00
TOWN OF PAGOSA SPRINGS	PROFESSIONAL CLEANING SERVICES	\$1,567.94
ALPINE PORTABLE TOILETS LLC	JANITORIAL SUPPLIES	\$1,511.35
PACE SYSTEMS	ROAD GRAVEL	\$1,489.50
COLORADO BUREAU OF INVESTIGATIONS	SEWER FEE	\$1,471.25
BIDDLE CONSULTING GROUP INC	CAD SOFTWARE RENEWAL	\$1,350.00
ALSCO	AIRPORT FUEL	\$1,339.53
WESTEL INTERNATIONAL LLC	NOVEMBER 2023 FSS GRANT CCR PROGRAM SERVICES	\$1,333.10
	GLASS REPLACEMENT	\$1,300.00
	ANNUAL SOFTWARE SUBSCRIPTION	\$1,219.80
	FLEET PARTS AND SUPPLIES	\$1,200.00
	DETENTION SUPPLIES	\$1,174.75
	FLEET SUPPLIES	\$1,169.59
	DISPATCH SOFTWARE SYSTEM	\$1,163.00
	DHS DISPOSAL UTILITY	\$1,150.93
	DHS ALARM INSTALL AND MONITORING	\$1,057.80
	ANNUAL RENEWAL SHERIFF OFFICE	\$1,048.26
	COUNTY TREE PRUNING	\$1,025.00
	UA TESTING	\$1,010.00
	DES PAY REQUEST 5 COURTHOUSE	\$1,000.00
	FLEET PARTS AND SUPPLIES	\$991.01
	911 MONTHLY SERVICES	\$914.00

ARCHULETA COUNTY DECEMBER 2023 PAYABLES VENDOR	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
CIGNA HEALTH AND LIFE INSURANCE	EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	\$124,351.05
NONSTOP ADMINISTRATION & INSURANCE SERVICES INC	EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	\$46,424.60
HEALTHY ARCHULETA	FSFE CONTRACT ARPA #19 #20 #21	\$37,102.48
ECHO IT CONSULTING LLC		

The Blotter

Items listed in The Blotter report where an alleged incident occurred and the nature of the incident. Readers should not assume employees or owners of a place of business or a parking lot reported as the scene of an event are involved as perpetrators of the incident.

Archuleta County Sheriff's Office

Calls for service for three weeks: 666.

Feb. 2 — Fraud by check-other method, Hidden Drive.

Feb. 5 — Under investigation, no location listed.

Feb. 5 — Information only, Ace Court/County Road 600.

Feb. 5 — Under investigation, no location listed.

Feb. 5 — Third-degree assault-simple assault, violation of restraining order, harassment-strikes/shoves/kicks, crimes against at-risk adult/ juvenile-third-degree assault, West U.S. 160.

Feb. 6 — Violation of restraining order, Seminole Drive.

Feb. 6 — Warrant arrest, North Pagosa Boulevard.

Feb. 6 — Expired license plates, 14th Street/15th Street.

Feb. 7 — Drove vehicle without insurance, speeding mph over limit not listed, improper registration, West U.S. 160.

Feb. 7 — All other thefts, County Road 982.

Feb. 9 — All other thefts, disorderly conduct-misdemeanor, Village Drive.

Feb. 9 — Warrant arrest, Hills Circle.

Feb. 9 — Cruelty to animals-abandonment, Cloman Boulevard.

Feb. 10 — Information only, West U.S. 160/10th Street.

Feb. 10 — Unlawful sexual contact, harassment-strikes/shoves/kicks, trespass warning, Seminole Drive.

Feb. 11 — Drove vehicle when license suspended, expired license plates, Seminole Drive.

Feb. 11 — Violation of restraining order, West U.S. 160.

Feb. 11 — Dog at large, Oak Drive/West U.S. 160.

Feb. 12 — Domestic violence, harassment by phone or computer, obstructing peace officer/police animal/fireman, County Road 600.

Feb. 12 — Federal warrant, Majestic Drive.

Feb. 12 — Warrant arrest, warrant arrest, Park Avenue/Cloud Cap Avenue.

Feb. 13 — Trespass warning, Fireside Street.

Feb. 13 — Theft of rental property, information only, Meadowlark Drive.

Feb. 13 — Warrant arrest, County Road 359/Palomino Place.

Feb. 14 — Warrant arrest, Canyon Circle.

Feb. 14 — Defacing a firearm, Solomon Drive.

Feb. 14 — Warrant arrest, Vista Boulevard/Bonanza Avenue.

Feb. 14 — Warrant arrest, Vista Boulevard/Bonanza Avenue.

Feb. 15 — Agency assist, Twin-creek Circle.

Feb. 16 — County warrant, warrant arrest, County Road 982.

Feb. 16 — Warrant arrest, Colo. 151.

Feb. 16 — Information only, Brook Drive.

Feb. 16 — Violation of restraining order, County Road 982.

Feb. 17 — Criminal mischief, failed to notify police of accident, Davis Cup Drive.

Feb. 17 — Information only, County Road 500.

Feb. 18 — Information only, Coyote Court.

Feb. 19 — Warrant arrest, warrant arrest, warrant arrest, driving under restraint: SRD, Hersch Avenue/West U.S. 160.

Feb. 20 — Failure to register as a sex offender, Harman Park Drive.

Feb. 20 — Information only, USFS 639.

Feb. 20 — First-degree burglary, Solomon Drive.

Feb. 20 — First-degree aggravated motor vehicle theft, North Pagosa Boulevard.

Feb. 21 — Warrant arrest, West U.S. 160/Boulder Drive.

Feb. 21 — Drove vehicle when license suspended, Aspen Village Drive.

Feb. 21 — Warrant arrest, Eagle Drive.

Feb. 22 — Death by natural causes, Solomon Drive.

Feb. 22 — Death investigation, West U.S. 160.

Feb. 22 — Second-degree burglary, all other thefts, information only, criminal mischief, Fairfield Drive.

Feb. 22 — Warrant arrest, Eagle Drive.

Feb. 25 — Harassment by phone or computer, East Sunbeam Court.

Town of Pagosa Springs Police Department

Calls for service for two weeks: 225.

Feb. 3 — Animal complaint, North Pagosa Boulevard/U.S. 160.

Feb. 3 — Burglary second degree, Pagosa Street.

Feb. 3 — Restraining order violation, 15th Street.

Feb. 3 — Restraining order violation, Pagosa Street.

Feb. 3 — Suspicious activity/vehicle, Aspen Village Drive.

Feb. 3 — Restraining order violation, San Juan Street.

Feb. 4 — DUI, careless driving, Hot Springs Boulevard.

Feb. 5 — Trespass warning, Country Center Drive.

Feb. 5 — Animal complaint, 14th Street.

Feb. 5 — Suspicious activity/vehicle, Country Center Drive.

Feb. 5 — Harassment, Country Center Drive.

Feb. 6 — Criminal mischief, East Pagosa Street.

Feb. 6 — Shoplifting, Pagosa Street.

Feb. 6 — Found property, Hot Springs Boulevard.

Feb. 7 — Suspicious activity/vehicle, South 8th Street.

Feb. 7 — DUI, Pagosa Street.

Feb. 7 — Trespass, Talisman Drive.

Feb. 7 — Animal complaint, Pagosa Street.

Feb. 7 — Harassment, Pagosa Street.

Feb. 8 — Suspicious activity/vehicle, Pagosa Street.

Feb. 8 — Suspicious activity/vehicle, South 9th Street.

Feb. 9 — Suspicious activity/vehicle, San Juan Street/Park Street.

Feb. 9 — Theft, Hot Springs Boulevard.

Feb. 9 — Theft, Aspen Village Drive.

Feb. 9 — Animal complaint, U.S.

160/Harman Park Drive.

Feb. 10 — Trespass, San Juan Street.

Feb. 10 — Shoplifting, Hot Springs Boulevard.

Feb. 10 — Trespass, Pagosa Street.

Feb. 11 — Threats, South 9th Street.

Feb. 11 — Assault third degree, domestic violence, information only, South 9th Street.

Feb. 11 — Careless driving, hit and run, Country Center Drive.

Feb. 11 — Suspended driver's license, expired plates, no location listed.

Feb. 12 — Animal complaint, Country Center Drive.

Feb. 12 — Animal complaint, North 8th Street/Florida Street.

Feb. 12 — Criminal mischief, San Juan Street.

Feb. 12 — Fraud, East Pagosa Street.

Feb. 13 — Narcotic violations, South 8th Street.

Feb. 13 — Harassment, South 9th Street.

Feb. 13 — Criminal mischief, Hot Springs Boulevard.

Feb. 13 — Harassment, Eaton Drive.

Feb. 14 — Trespass, Majestic Drive.

Feb. 14 — Harassment, Eagle Drive.

Feb. 14 — Trespass, Trinity Lane.

Feb. 14 — Disturbance, Vista Boulevard/Bonanza Avenue.

Feb. 14 — Suspicious activity/vehicle, Hot Springs Boulevard.

Feb. 15 — Suspicious activity/vehicle, San Juan Street.

Feb. 15 — Suspicious activity/vehicle, Hot Springs Boulevard.

Feb. 15 — Restraining order violation, South 10th Street.

Feb. 15 — Suspicious activity/vehicle, Aspen Village Drive.

Pagosa Springs Municipal Court: Judge Anthony D. Edwards

Feb. 12 — David Tafoya, following too closely, four points off, fine, surcharge and costs — \$146.

Feb. 12 — Donald Moeder, exceeded safe speed for conditions, three points off, fine, surcharge and costs — \$156.

Feb. 12 — Samantha Adams, reckless driving, failed to drive in a single lane, criminal mischief, eight points off, three points off, 180 days probation, fines, surcharge and costs — \$446.

Feb. 12 — Keagan Kirk, theft, fine and costs — \$135.

Feb. 13 — Michael Shugart, menacing, fine and costs — \$335.

Feb. 13 — Jesus Rodriguez, false reporting to authorities, fine and costs — \$335.

Feb. 13 — Andrew Hohl, depositing snow in streets, fine and costs — \$60.

Feb. 13 — Suzanna McCauley, careless driving, four points off, fine, surcharge and costs — \$202.

Feb. 13 — Edgar Salisbury, parking during inclement weather, fine — \$50.

Feb. 13 — Michael McDonald, following too closely, four points off, fine, surcharge and costs — \$146.

Archuleta County Court: Judge Justin P. Fay

Feb. 5 — Adrian Rodriguez, speeding 10-19 over, fines and costs — \$190.

Feb. 5 — William Villalobos, speeding 20-24 over, fines and costs

— \$255.

Feb. 7 — Steven Z. Auzenne, improper mountain driving, fines and costs — \$172.50.

Feb. 7 — Antonio Juan Herrera, driving under restraint, obstructed view-windshield, fines and costs — \$233.50.

Feb. 7 — Christopher Allen Lahaye, speeding 10-19 over, fines and costs — \$225.

Feb. 7 — Paige Nicole Lloyd, speeding 5-9 over, fines and costs — \$160.

Feb. 7 — Rene Ruiz-Regalado, speeding 10-19 over, fines and costs — \$190.

Feb. 7 — Collin P. Stagner, speeding 20-24 over, fines and costs — \$255.

Feb. 7 — Ildar Tursunkulov, speeding 5-9 over, fines and costs — \$160.

Feb. 7 — Nahun E. Vasquez Gusman, driver's license-driving without, fines and costs — \$107.50.

Feb. 7 — Zachary R. Talamante, careless driving, fines and costs — \$238.50.

Feb. 8 — Helena Jim, driving while ability impaired, driving under the influence per se, 365 days jail suspended imposition, 62 hours community service, three years probation updated sentence, 10 days electronic surveillance, three years probation, fines and costs — \$2,643.50.

Feb. 8 — Brook L. Johnson, violation p/o-civil, 12 months probation, fines and costs — \$872.50.

Feb. 12 — Collin J. Lovejoy, driver's license-not in possession, headlamps-excess number, obstructed view-windshield, fines and costs — \$116.50.

6th Judicial District Court: Judge Justin P. Fay

No report.

6th Judicial District Court: Judge Jeffrey R. Wilson

No report.



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Understanding Medicare Part D prescription drug plan coverage phases

By Caryn Hill
San Juan Basin Area Agency on Aging

There are four coverage phases, and your drug prescription costs can vary in each phase.

The cost of your Medicare Part D-covered drugs may change throughout the year. If you notice that your drug prices have changed, it may be because you are in a different phase of Part D coverage.

There are four different phases — or periods — of Part D coverage: the deductible period, the initial coverage period, the coverage gap and catastrophic coverage.

As you spend money on your covered drugs, you progress through these coverage periods until the new calendar year starts. Your Part D plan should track your coverage period for you, and this information should appear in your monthly statements.

Let's now discuss each coverage phase.

Know the details of each coverage phase

Until you meet your Part D deductible, you are in the deductible period. During this time, you will pay the full negotiated price for your covered prescription drugs. While deductibles can vary from plan to plan, no plan's deductible can be

higher than \$545 in 2024. Some plans have no deductible, and some plans don't apply a deductible for certain drugs — usually generics.

After you meet your deductible, your plan will help pay for your covered prescription drugs. This is your initial coverage period. Your plan will pay some of the cost, and you will pay a copayment or coinsurance.

You enter the coverage gap when your total drug costs — including what you and your plan have paid for your drugs — reaches a certain limit. In 2024, that limit is \$5,030. While in the coverage gap, you are responsible for 25 percent of the cost of your drugs. The coverage gap is also sometimes called the donut hole.

In all Part D plans in 2024, you enter catastrophic coverage after you reach \$8,000 in out-of-pocket costs for covered drugs. This amount is made up of costs you pay and some costs that others pay. As of 2024, during this period, you owe no copays or coinsurance for your covered drugs for the remainder of the year. Not all costs count toward reaching this cap, though. Costs that do not help you reach catastrophic coverage include monthly premiums, what your plan pays toward drug costs, the cost of non-covered drugs, and the cost of covered drugs from pharmacies outside your plan's network.

2025 changes to Part D costs and coverage phases

Beginning in 2025, the structure of Medicare Part D will change. There will be only three coverage phases — the deductible, the initial coverage period, and a zero-cost phase after an out-of-pocket cap is reached. Additionally, your out-of-pocket costs for covered drugs will be limited to \$2,000 in deductibles, copays and coinsurance.

Also starting in 2025, you have the choice to spread out-of-pocket Part D costs over the year. This won't reduce the total amount owed over the year, but it can allow you to spread costs over 12 months. For example, you could pay your deductible over the course of the year, rather than all at once at the beginning of the year.

Whether this type of payment plan will be beneficial will depend on your circumstances and preferences. Remember that these changes are not in effect until 2025.

The San Juan Basin Area Agency on Aging offers no-cost, objective Medicare counseling for those living in Archuleta, Montezuma, Dolores, and San Juan counties. To speak with a SHIP (State Health Insurance Assistance Program) counselor, please call (970) 264-0501, ext. 2.

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ARTS & LIFE

Healthy Archuleta Food Drive

11 a.m. to 3 p.m. • Saturday, March 2 • City Market



Food drive set for March 2

Healthy Archuleta

There is an upcoming community food share opportunity for supporting all the food pantries in Archuleta County.

Healthy Archuleta is partnering to host a food drive on Saturday, March 2, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at City Market.

Community food-sharing opportunities allow us to gather together to support our community as a whole.

Those who are able to are encouraged to share what they can to help the Food Distribution Center better support the Archuleta County Food Pantry Network with foods that our neighbors can use.

Join Healthy Archuleta in supporting the food security of our local community. A collection table will be set up at the store with a list of food items that our neighbors can use this spring and volunteers ready to collect dona-

tions. These items will help stock the shelves of the Food Distribution Center, which supports the food pantries in Archuleta County.

Come participate in a community food sharing opportunity.

This event will support the seven Archuleta County food pantries: Amazing Grace Community Church, Community United Methodist Church, Our Community Eats, Pope John Paul II Catholic Church, TARA Community Center, Socorro Senior Housing and St. Patrick's Episcopal Church.

If you would like to make donations to the food drive outside of the hours, there is a collection bin at the UPS Office near City Market located at the front of the store.

For more information on the Healthy Archuleta food drive, visit <https://www.foodcoalition4archuleta.org/food-drive.html>.

Stargazers to answer questions about April 8 eclipse at March 7 meeting

San Juan Stargazers

The San Juan Stargazers will hold their next monthly meeting on Thursday, March 7, to answer questions about the April 8 eclipse and see a video and discuss "Exploring Mars, from Space and the Ground."

The Stargazers will meet on Thursday, March 7, at the Community United Methodist Church at 434 Lewis St. You can use the parking lot and enter at the side door right off the parking

area. You enter through the kitchen and go to the large meeting room. (We leave the front doors locked.)

We have new members at almost every meeting, so this might be a good night to join us.

There will be a social hour starting at 6 p.m. with coffee/tea and treats. You can bring something to share if you would like.

We have copies of the Sky & Telescope issue called "Showtime for North America's Grand Eclipse" with

much good information.

We have two different topics for the educational part of the meeting, the first one being the important eclipse this year on April 8. It will cross North America, passing over Mexico, the U.S. and Canada. In the U.S. it will be visible from Texas to Maine. The next total solar eclipse that will be visible over North America will not happen until 2045.

The eclipse will be visible in **See Stargazers on next page**

Live Performers



Friday

The Springs Resort lodge atrium: Bob Hemenger, 5 p.m.

Saturday

The Springs Resort lodge atrium: Maxwell Miller, 5 p.m.

Tuesday

The Springs Resort lodge atrium: Jackson Mountain Ramblers, 5 p.m.

Wednesday

Alley House Grille lounge: Bob Hemenger, 5:30 p.m.
The Den: Karaoke, 8 p.m.

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Stargazers

■ continued from previous page

Pagosa as an approximate 64 percent partial eclipse, which should still be exciting, and will require special glasses for you to safely view.

Club members who are remaining in Pagosa will gather for the eclipse with community members who want to join them in Centennial Park at the Geothermal Greenhouse Partnership amphitheater on the Riverwalk.

Look for our members to answer your questions and document anything special that happens in Pagosa. Please feel welcome to join in this rare event of the moon passing between the sun and the earth.

Of course, you can view it anywhere by yourself using special solar glasses, but we will be there to share this unusual astronomical event with our community.

There will not be a regular monthly meeting in April, except to gather to watch the eclipse.

If anyone, from the community or any club members, has questions about the eclipse, be at our meeting at 7 p.m. and we will take time to find your answers. Since this is an important eclipse, we feel our club has the responsibility for making sure that everyone in our community has the correct information to decide where they want to be and how they want to see it. We are here to help you.

The second topic for the night will be "Mars, Exploring from Space and the Ground" from a Great Courses lesson.

We will have a summary to read and discuss written by Ann Marie Kemp and then have a video presentation by our favorite female astronomer, Dr. Sabine Stanley. It should be fascinating. She always does a great job. Last month we all were in shock over the unbelievable information

we learned about Mercury that we hadn't heard before.

We are starting to gear up for a summer of great astronomy activity. We will have members-only star parties, eight to 10 night sky programs at Chimney Rock National Monument and some public events, plus regular meetings.

If you want to learn how to use your telescope or one of our club telescopes, it is time to get started at the beginning of the season.

If you would like to join the San Juan

Stargazers, you will also receive Reflector Magazine, which is the publication of the National Astronomical League of which you automatically become a member. To join both groups and get an excellent astronomy magazine, annual membership is only \$25 per family. You can join the club at any of our events or you can join using PayPal on our website, sanjuanstargazers.org. Check out our continuously changing website with new information and fabulous photos.



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Man 2 Man Prostate Cancer Support Group to meet March 5

By Dion Hollenbeck
Man 2 Man Prostate Cancer Support Group

The Man 2 Man Prostate Cancer Support Group will meet at 6:30 p.m. on March 5 in Durango Public Library Room 1.

Our group consists of survivors of prostate cancer and men who have been diagnosed with prostate issues, including BPH and cancer. We discuss experiences with resources, diagnosis and treatments for the disease.

Anyone is welcome.

For more information and a Zoom invite, please contact prostategrup-dro@gmail.com.



Ruby Sisson Library Foundation and Friends

Attendees of Night at the Library craft while enjoying food, drinks and company. The Ruby Sisson Library Foundation and Friends announced a third round of the crafting event for March 9.

Night at the Library craft event set for March 9

By Cindi Galabota

Ruby Sisson Library Foundation and Friends

And, here we go again: We are throwing yet another crafting party.

Join your friends for round three of Night at the Library.

The doors will open at 4:30 p.m. at your Ruby Sisson Library. During the evening you will make and take home a one-of-a-kind pearl and beaded bracelet and painted or collaged canvas masterpiece. This event is lovingly sponsored by Debby Donovan

and Renee Vanover.

Your \$50 ticket to Night at the Library provides you with all of your crafting supplies along with a delicious dinner and drinks.

Proceeds will support our Mountains of Opportunity building campaign. The addition and renovations to the library will offer community meeting space, dedicated room for children's literacy programs, a room exclusively for teens and tweens, private study rooms, an intergenerational hands-on learning space, easy access to self-checkout and drop-off, and a

beautiful outdoor reading garden.

This is a 21-and-over event. A limited number of tickets are being sold to this event. Buy your ticket today.

Tickets may be purchased online with credit card at pagosalibrary.org or in person at your Ruby Sisson Library with cash or check.

To learn more about Night at the Library Round Three or about our campaign, please contact Cindi Galabota at (970) 264-2209 or cindi@pagosalibrary.org.

We hope to see you on March 9 at your Ruby Sisson Library.

Trinity Anglican Church



invites you to join us this Sunday as we celebrate Holy Communion on the third Sunday in Lent.

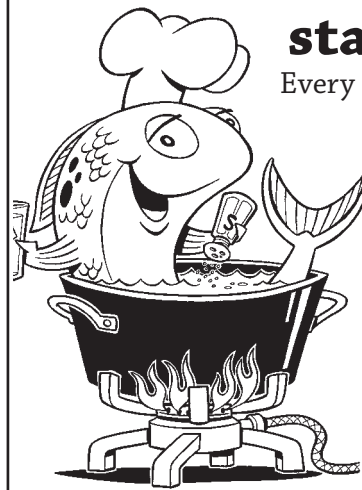
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County's public health clinic announces some evening and weekend hours

By Ashley Wilson
Archuleta County Public Health Department

The Archuleta County Public Health is offering services every Thursday 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and one Saturday a month.

The services that you can access at the clinic are: sexually transmitted infection testing and treatment, pregnancy testing, HIV testing, as well as child and adult immunizations.

The clinic is open for walk-ins, or you can make an appointment by calling (970) 264-2409 and dialing zero.

We are hoping that by offering some evening and weekend hours we can better serve the community in these areas.

There are other services available at the health department Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. such as WIC — the Women, Infants, and Children Supplemental Nutrition Program — for qualifying families with a child under 5; SafeCare, an in-home parenting support program; birth and death records; retail food licensing and inspection;

and health insurance assistance and navigation.

Karen, our health insurance assistor, can support you with Medicaid/CHP applications or health insurance through Connect for Health Colorado. The open enrollment period ended Jan. 15; however, there are some other options to meet your insurance needs.

Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program) and CHP+ for children and pregnant woman are income-based and you may apply anytime.

When you file your state taxes before the tax filing deadline, there is a section on form DR 0104 that will ask if you would like to see if you qualify for free or low-cost health insurance. You may check the box, giving your permission to have your information shared with Connect for Health Colorado to see if you qualify for free or low-cost health insurance. You will then receive a letter or email regarding this special enrollment period.

If you are a member of a federally recognized tribe, you may enroll in health insurance year-round.

Other qualifying life events may open up a special enrollment period

of 60 days, such as other health insurance coverage ending, having a baby or getting married.

If you have any questions on what you might qualify for, please feel free to reach out to the Archuleta County Public Health Department at (970) 264-2409.

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Holy Week and Easter Services

Following are the Lent, Holy Week and Easter services that were submitted to The PREVIEW. Events may be submitted to editor@pagosasun.com.

Friday, March 1
Stations of the Cross. 7 p.m., John Paul II Catholic Church.

Sunday, March 3
Holy Communion. 10 a.m., Trinity Anglican Church, 246 Harman Park Drive.

Wednesday, March 6
Rosary/Stations of the Cross. 4 p.m., Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church.

Friday, March 8
Stations of the Cross. 7 p.m., John Paul II Catholic Church.

Sunday, March 10
Service of Morning Prayer. 10 a.m., Trinity Anglican Church, 246 Harman Park Drive.

Wednesday, March 13
Rosary/Stations of the Cross. 4 p.m., Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church.

Friday, March 15
Stations of the Cross. 7 p.m., John Paul II Catholic Church.

Sunday, March 17
Service of Morning Prayer. 10 a.m., Trinity Anglican Church, 246 Harman Park Drive.

Wednesday, March 20
Rosary/Stations of the Cross. 4 p.m., Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church.

Friday, March 22
Stations of the Cross. 7 p.m., John Paul II Catholic Church.

Wednesday, March 27
Rosary/Stations of the Cross. 4 p.m., Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church.

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The Pagosa Springs **SUN**

'Tiny Beautiful Things' entering final weekend

By Laura Moore

Pagosa Springs Center for the Arts

As the curtains draw to a close on the 2023-2024 fall/winter season at Pagosa Springs Center for the Arts, theater enthusiasts and those seeking an introspective experience are urged to seize the opportunity and catch the final performances of "Tiny Beautiful Things."

This heartfelt and resonant production, in its closing weekend, promises an emotional and unforgettable experience.

Artistic Director Tim Moore reflected on what has been an exceptional season of theater, stating, "This season has been the strongest and most impactful to date. We've explored the depths of human emotion, challenged perspectives and celebrated the power of storytell-

ing. Each production has garnered unparalleled praise, and we are immensely proud of the artistic journey we've embarked upon."

"Tiny Beautiful Things," adapted for the stage by Nia Vardalos from the best-selling book by Cheryl Strayed (portrayed by Karissa Bruin), has been a standout in this stellar season.

The play, a collection of Strayed's advice columns, transcends the traditional boundaries of theater, offering a poignant exploration of life's complexities, joys and sorrows. Its message, delivered with authenticity and compassion, has resonated profoundly with audiences.

As the final performances approach, attendees can expect an emotional rollercoaster that will leave them reflecting on life's tiny, beautiful moments long after the play's conclusion.

Moore extended his gratitude to the community for its unwavering support throughout the season, stating, "Our audience is the heartbeat of this theater, and we are grateful for the shared experiences and connections made through the power of live performance. As we bid farewell to the fall/winter season, we look forward with great excitement to the upcoming summer season."

In a sneak peek into what lies ahead, Moore shared, "We are thrilled to announce our summer season, commencing on May 31. The lineup promises to be a captivating journey filled with diversity, innovation, and entertainment. Stay tuned for the official announcement, as we can't wait to share the magic that awaits."

For more information or tickets, visit pagosacenter.org or call (970) 731-SHOW (7469).



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'Ithuriel: Fractal Shallows, Infinite Depths' on display at Pagosa Springs Center for the Arts

By Laura Moore

Pagosa Springs Center for the Arts

The Pagosa Springs Center for the Arts is pleased to present Dan Dempster's "Ithuriel: Fractal Shallows, Infinite Depths" now on view through April.

This large-scale exhibition of graphite paintings explores the power of noticing the spectacular detail that surrounds and pervades our lives.

Inspired by the fractal patterns of movement of water and light in tide pool and river shallows, and satellite views of snow-capped mountain ranges and fjords, these paintings are both stimulating and contemplative.

At first, these paintings delight through association: ideas float to the surface, are noticed and dissolve, imag-

es fluidly morphing into other images.

Gradually, as we let go of ideation, we relax into enjoying the painting for itself. We find ourselves focusing deeper, noticing with astonishment the detail within detail nested and unfolding within even the smallest detail. We become aware of the beauty of vastness in one thing, in everything.

These paintings are teachers, helping us to see the magic of our surroundings as children do: a world filled with wonder, delight, and awe. They bring us great peace of mind and teach us how to find it.

The paintings are accompanied by a single large, exquisitely detailed drawing and two stainless steel cloth sculptures showing from different points of view the artist's appreciation of the movement of water and light.

Dempster's exhibition opened on Feb. 16 to accompany the opening of "Tiny, Beautiful Things" led by Karissa Bruin. It continues through April during the center's regular shows and activities, and by appointment. Arrive early to enjoy the art and meet the artist pre-show. To arrange a private viewing, please text (424) 350-8186.

Follow Dempster on Instagram at [Dan.Dempster.Contemporary](https://www.instagram.com/Dan.Dempster.Contemporary) and browse his website at <http://www.DempsterContemporary.Art>.

Healthy Archuleta sets date for food summit

Healthy Archuleta

Healthy Archuleta is making plans for its first biannual food summit in the county scheduled for May 11.

The first food summit was held April 9, 2022, and based on a number of factors, including a healthy attendance of approximately 110 folks and the unanimous declaration by those who completed the evaluation form that the event should be repeated, organizers declared the event a success.

What we are planning for 2024 is to once again to center the presentations around the community-based food system as a way to advance food equity.

The food system includes different elements, from growing and producing through processing for storage, to marketing and distribution, to eating and waste reduction. Plans are underway to use this food system model to provide structure, with participant stories illustrating how we are all involved in the food system in our own

unique and creative manner.

Additionally, we are planning to have the food system stories followed by facilitated breakout sessions based on areas of interest to participants.

And, what would a local food summit be without a meal that includes ingredients that are grown and produced by our community? To round out the morning, we are planning a facilitated networking lunch motivated by questions that have arisen during the previous proceedings. Throughout the morning participants will have frequent opportunities to develop, evaluate and/or become involved in community food system projects.

Healthy Archuleta invites any and all members of our community who have interest in the food system to help plan the food summit by contacting us at fssearchuleta@gmail.com.

To learn more about the efforts of Healthy Archuleta, please visit our website, www.foodcoalition4archuleta.org.



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High school to present 'Mean Girls the Musical' in March

By Dale Scrivener
Pagosa Springs High School

We are excited to announce this year's high school musical is "Mean Girls, the High School Edition."

It is my privilege to bring this show to life here in Pagosa Springs. This show has a lot of controversy around it due to the themes of this show. As an educator, I feel it is important to bring to life shows that have messages and themes that are relevant to the times in which we live, as well as lessons that will help prepare our students for the real world.

This show has many themes that are important to address to our young members of our community.

In a world that has been taken over by social media, I feel that it is important to talk to students about how to use social media properly instead of using as a way to spread negative energy to their peers.

"Mean Girls the Musical" has a very good way of addressing how our words and actions can have an effect on everyone around us. The issue of bullying is very present in schools across the country, including our school.

Bullying can look a lot different than it did in years past. With the rise in social media platforms, exposure of different cultures and a higher awareness of those that may live differently than what our society presents as normal, it is very important to bring about a way of communication and inclusion that builds a society of mutual respect.

We have a responsibility to help this next generation to not only be well-educated, but prepared for the adult world of adapting to change. We are living in a world that is currently divisive, where we have trouble getting along with people who have different views.

This show helps bridge that gap. "Mean Girls" is a great story that allows us to discuss difficult topics that can help this next generation heal the divide in our country. We do not need to agree with everyone on politics, religion, lifestyle and culture. However; we do need to have a respect for those that think, live, worship and work differently. There are so many ways we can agree to disagree and appreciate each other for who we are without making each other feel inferior. There are ways for us to process traumas that we may have experienced without it needing to make others suffer just because we did.

We are working in the schools to help students be aware that the use of words is very important. Words can be just as harmful as actions, and the platform doesn't matter. Whether it is social media,



Photo courtesy Pagosa Springs High School

Students and staff are hard at work preparing to present "Mean Girls the Musical" over five performances in March.

email, text, verbal communication, etc., words can be a powerful tool for good, but also for bad. We are working to teach our students how to use social media and other forms of communication as a positive tool to build each other up.

I hope this show will not only inspire the next generation of our community to be more open-minded and inclusive, but also the past generations to be more understanding that words and actions matter. We have control over what we say to those around us. We have control to stop rumors, preventing the spread of hateful gossip.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this show with our community.

This show is rated PG-13 for some sensitive topics and minor language.

The show will run March 20-23, with five performances: March 20, 21, 22 and 23 at 7 p.m., and a matinee on Saturday, March 23, at 2 p.m.

We have two very talented casts for this show. Seniors will be honored during bows of our closing performance on March 23 at 7 p.m.

Tickets are \$15 in advance for all students and adults, and \$20 at the door. Tickets can be purchased in advance at <https://our.show/mean-girlspshs>.

Please come out and support your local high school students as they mount this very large production to share with our community.

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New online AARP aging program and Internet safety for teens offered

By Carole Howard
PREVIEW Columnist, and the library staff

Seniors aged 60 and over are invited to participate in a new free live online Senior Planet program on the first and third Fridays of the month starting March 1 at your library from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Judy will connect the group via the video conferencing platform Zoom so that you can join other seniors across the country in discussing aging issues such as loneliness, isolation, making new friends and learning new hobbies.

This Senior Planet program was created by AARP. In addition to the aging discussions at the library, Judy will show you how to use Zoom from your home to participate in topics like finance, wellness, fitness, computers and technology on other times and dates if you are interested.

Internet safety

Teens and tweens are invited to a free session with Rise Above Violence about how to be safe on the Internet tomorrow, March 1, from 2 to 3 p.m.

Curbside service available

As we progress further into the winter germ season, we wanted to be sure you know that we continue to offer curbside service for those of you who prefer to have us bring your items outside to you to help limit your exposure to — or sharing of — potential germs. Or, you may have concerns about walking on snow or ice.

To take advantage of this service, simply phone us at (970) 264-2209 when you're outside in the parking lot and we will be happy to bring your items to you.

Virtual author talks

Our highly popular free online

Library News

author talks continue with more opportunities for you to interact with New York Times bestselling authors and ask questions in March.

For details and to register, go to <https://library.org/pagosalibrary/upcoming>.

Wednesday, March 6, at 2 p.m. will feature "The Power of Friendships" with NPR's Nita Totenberg.

Thursday, March 14, at 2 p.m. will showcase Christopher Paolini discussing "20 Years of Dragon Riding" in young adult fantasy.

On Thursday, March 21, at 5 p.m. we'll interact with Madeline Miller discussing "On Retelling Greek Classics: An Exploration of Modern Epics."

Online New York Times

We have purchased an online subscription to The New York Times that allows you 24/7 free access to the online version of the newspaper from your home or any personal device.

Go to the library website at <https://pagosalibrary.org>. Click on Online Resources on the gray top line on the home page. Scroll down to the Ns for New York Times and click on that icon. Your access code will automatically be generated, good for 24 hours each time you sign on. You then will be asked for your email address to log in or to create an account.

All-ages gaming tomorrow

Join us tomorrow, Friday, March 1, from 3 to 5 p.m. for a free all-ages

gaming on the library's Xbox 360.

LEGO Club Saturday

Kids aged 6-11 are invited to the free LEGO Club on Saturday, March 2, from 11 a.m. to noon. Bring your own LEGOs or use ours to free build.

Knitting and crochet lessons

Learn to knit or crochet on Mondays, March 4 and 18, at our free gathering from 2 to 3:15 p.m. for ages 8 and up. Supplies provided.

Teen/tween art camp

Each month we explore a different style or medium at this free event. In March, it's hand quilting with guest artist Mary Kurt-Mason. Join us Mondays, March 4, 11 and 18, from 4 to 5 p.m. Preregistration required.

Music fun Monday

Pagosa Unplugged is free from 4 to 6 p.m. on Monday, March 4, for amateur musicians of all ages to jam and sing with others. For details, contact Susan at (970) 946-3396.

Spanish conversation

Adults are invited to practice your Spanish in a free group setting on Tuesday, March 5, from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. No minimum skill level needed. This group now meets twice a month, on the first and third Tuesdays.

Elementary tutoring sessions

Children ages 6-11 are welcome at these free sessions on Wednesdays from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. where they will build essential skills in core subjects. Preregistration is required.

Family storytimes

Wednesdays from 10 to 11 a.m., join a free educational hour of read-

■ See Library on next page

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Kindergarten Round-Up

at Our Savior Lutheran School

Tuesday, March 5 • 6 PM • 56 Meadows Drive

Please plan on arriving around 5:45 PM and signing in. Kindergarten teacher, Ms. Susan Beard, will describe a day in Kindergarten and lead her students in various recitations highlighting what they have learned this year. She will then take questions and meet with parents. Registration forms for the 2024-2025 academic year will be available at that time. Please plan on joining us!

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Library

■ continued from previous page
ing, singing and free play to build early literacy skills.

Dungeons and Dragons

Thursday, March 7, from 4 to 5:30 p.m., join our Dungeons and Dragons game free for teens and young adults. Preregistration is required because space is limited. Contact Josie@pagosalibrary.org to join.

Writers' guild

Thursdays from 9 to 11 a.m., Ruby's Writers Guild welcomes writers looking for opportunities, support, resources and camaraderie with other writers at this free gathering.

ESL classes

Free in-person evening classes take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays, with 4 to 5 p.m. reserved for beginners, 5 to 6 p.m. for intermediate and 6 to 7 p.m. for advanced students. Please help us share the word about these classes.

Tech Time

Free in-person slots are available from 10 a.m. to noon Tuesdays and 2 to 4 p.m. Thursdays. Judy helps you with basic questions relating to computers, smartphones and tablets, and also provides assistance in accessing the library's online resources.

No appointment is needed for these drop-in sessions, but please bring your device's charger and passwords with you.

Pagosa Adult Learning Services (PALS)

Join Mark or Sally for free PALS sessions Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5:30 to 8 p.m. to help with high school equivalency, GED, college prep, financial aid, tutoring and more.

Activities calendars

Pick up monthly events calendars at the library so you don't miss any of the free activities available to you and your family.

Downloadable books

CloudLibrary has a wide variety of downloadable e-books and audiobooks for all ages. To access this free digital collection, download the cloudLibrary app, answer a few simple questions, select AspenCat Union Catalog for the name of your library, then enter your library card number and four-digit PIN. Library staff are happy to help you set up your device if you need assistance.

Spanish-language thriller

"La Sombra de la Rosa" ("The Shadow of the Rose") by Angela Banzas is a thriller that begins with the discovery of a young girl's body on an island in 1910.

Nonfiction

"Be a Revolution" by Ijeoma Oluo is a look at the current state of the antiracism movement in the U.S. "Healthy Aging" is a Mayo Clinic

guide to a healthy body, mind and spirit. "Fight Right" by Julie Schwartz Gottman and John Gottman details five secrets to using conflict to build healthy relationships. "Alphabetical Diaries" by Sheila Heti re-sorts entries in a decade's worth of journals.

Large print

"Everyone Who Can Forgive Me is Dead" by Jenny Hollander features a successful editor whose career is threatened. "Always Remember" by Mary Balogh is a Ravenswood romance. "The Atlas Complex: The Power is Taken" by Olivie Blake is a fantasy about six extraordinary magicians. "Random in Death" by J.D. Robb is an Eve Dallas mystery. "Family Family" by Laurie Frankel is a story about adoption.

Mysteries, suspense and thrillers

"Ghost Orchid" by Jonathan Kellerman is an Alex Delaware thriller. "Crosshairs" by James Patterson and James O. Born is a Michael Bennett thriller. "Camp Zero" by Michelle Min Sterling tells of climate researchers in a near-future northern settlement in Canada. "Karma of the Sun" by Brandon Ying Kit Boey follows a young Tibetan searching for his missing father. "Age of Vice" by Deepti Kapoor begins with a horrific car accident in India. "Hero" by Thomas Perry finds a female private security agent being stalked by a killer.

Books on CD

"The Fox Wife" by Yangsze Choo begins with a courtesan's 1908 death in Manchuria. "Chasing Endless Summer" by V.C. Andrews showcases a young woman who hopes for a normal life when her estranged father reappears. "The Fury" by Alex Michaelides tells of a reclusive ex-movie star hosting a getaway holiday. "The Women" by Kristin Hannah features a nurse returning to a changed U.S. after the Vietnam War. "A Plague on Both Your Houses" by Robert Littell tells of Mafia power in Russia after 1991.

Donation guidelines

When we are open, material donations are accepted for the Friends of the Library at the front desk — not down the outside returns slot at the library or the drop box at City Market, please.

Here are the Friends' new guidelines for donations: Yes to popular fiction books published in 2014 or later, nonfiction books published 2019 or later, and children's and

young adult books — all in excellent condition, please. No to CDs, DVDs, Blu-ray, VHS or cassette tapes; textbooks, outdated travel books or reference books because they do not sell. No more than two boxes at a time because of space constraints.

Quotable quote

Asked if he consulted with the public when developing his Model T, Henry Ford replied that if he had surveyed others about what they wanted they would have answered, "faster horses."

Website

For more information on library books, services and programs — and to reserve books, e-books, books on CD and DVDs from the comfort of your home — please visit our website at <https://pagosalibrary.org>.

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The Pagosa Springs SUN
264-2100

22nd annual Spanish Fiesta to feature youth royalty contest

By **Rose Chavez**
PREVIEW Columnists

Save the date for the 22nd annual Spanish Fiesta at the Archuleta County Fairgrounds on July, 27.

Archuleta Seniors Inc.'s (ASI's) Spanish Fiesta community committee has been working hard to secure a venue and is delighted to report that we will remain in the same location as last year's event thanks to the Archuleta County Fair Board's generous support and advocacy.

While the committee is still deliberating on entertainment and schedule of activities, we are excited to again bring together family, friends and neighbors to gather while remembering traditions of the past and embracing the present.

Returning to tradition doesn't mean returning to the past. It means reconnecting to the wisdom of our ancestors and bringing it forward with us. May the rhythm of the music move the people to dance and may the shadows reflect the spirit of our loved ones dancing beside us.

This year's fiesta celebrates "la cultura cura" — a transformative health and healing philosophy that recognizes the importance of cultural values, traditions and Indigenous practices on the path to healthy development, restoration and lifelong well-being.

The 22nd Annual Spanish Fiesta will be an event the whole family can enjoy. Celebrate Archuleta County's Hispanic/Latino heritage and culture with vendors (artisan and food), dancing and music.

In the spirit of past fiestas and new this year is the youth Spanish Fiesta Royalty Competition and benefit dance featuring Los Mitotitos to be held April 13.

Applications are open and being accepted from youth in grades one through 12 to compete for the role of king, queen, prince, princess, junior prince and junior princess.

The royalty experience will provide youth service learning and leadership opportunities. Come help represent and promote the 22nd Annual Spanish Fiesta in Archuleta County.

Applications can be picked up and returned at 451 Hot Springs Blvd. in the Pagosa Senior Center; at Pagosa Nails at 301 N. Pagosa Blvd., B5; or Basin Coop at 1040 E. U.S. 160.

Apply today by filling out the form at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfqPaozhAkwbGK2DEe-wjeNBNfNVxPMTV1mD8SOrVF-h9XZ2TQ/viewform?usp=pp_url and by picking up an application from one of the three locations.

All applications are due by March 14.

For more information, contact us at (970) 264-2167 or email rosa@psseniors.org

Senior News

psseniors.org.

Senior Discount Card

The Senior Center is continuing its annual tradition of providing a local discount card for those ages 60 and better.

The discount card encourages seniors to support local recreational, restaurant, medical and retail services by obtaining a senior discount card for a small fee that serves as a fundraiser for ASI.

These local businesses provide a discount ranging from 5 percent to 20 percent off services.

For more information, visit <http://www.psseniors.org/discount-club.html> or stop by our offices at 451 Hot Springs Blvd. to pick up your card. For more information, contact us at (970) 264-2167.

Grant available for adult learners

Are you a BIPOC (Black, Indigenous or person of color) adult age 55 or better living in Archuleta County eager to pursue further education? Here's your chance.

ASI, in coordination with the Spanish Fiesta Committee, is delighted to announce a \$1,000 educational grant available exclusively for these

adult learners in our community.

The grant aims to support individuals seeking to enhance their skills, pursue new career paths or simply satisfy their thirst for knowledge. Whether you aspire to enroll in a vocational program, attend workshops or pursue a degree, this grant can provide the financial boost you need to turn your educational dreams into reality.

ASI and members of our local Spanish Fiesta Committee believe that education is a lifelong journey and it's never too late to invest in oneself. This grant is designed to remove financial barriers and empower adults in our community to pursue their educational goals.

To be eligible for the grant, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Reside in Archuleta County.
- Be 55 years of age or older.
- Be Black, Indigenous or a person of color.
- Demonstrate a commitment to furthering their education.
- Submit a compelling application outlining their educational goals and how the grant will be utilized.

Applications are now open and will be accepted until March 20. A scholarship selection committee composed of community leaders will review all applications and select the most deserving candidates.

ASI encourages all motivated BIPOC, 55-and-older adults in Archuleta County to take advantage of this opportunity. Whether you're looking

■ See Senior on next page

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Senior

■ **continued from previous page**
to advance your career, explore new interests or simply expand your horizons, this grant can be the catalyst for your educational journey.

Don't let financial constraints hold you back from pursuing your dreams. Apply for the \$1,000 educational grant today and take a significant step toward a brighter future.

For more information and to access the application form, contact the ASI office at (970) 264-2167 or stop by the office.

Healthy aging yoga therapy class series

This winter, a healthy aging yoga series will be offered as a hybrid class at the Senior Center on Mondays from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Classes will be structured by therapeutic yoga tools and techniques with chair movement, standing stretches, gentle postures, breathing practices and reflective meditative moments.

Monthly themes for the series will include topics such as sustainable strength for healthy aging individuals, brain health, heart and cardiovascular health, mental and emotional well-being, community connections, and stress management, to name a few.

Classes will be educational for participants to utilize practices in daily life and are meant for all levels of experience with yoga.

The class is hosted by local yoga therapist AJ Connors, with a hybrid focus for the winter months, blending in-person, online and, occasionally, recorded classes. Zoom sessions will be streamed at the Senior Center to provide the community experience to practice together or can be accessed at home if weather is a factor.

Mats and chairs will be provided at the Senior Center; some blocks and Therabands are available, too. The addition of yoga props is always welcomed.

We are requesting that individuals who are new to joining the series arrive early for intake inquiries and to please communicate with AJ directly by emailing ajconnorslove@gmail.com.

Bingo

The Senior Center will be hosting bingo twice a month on Friday afternoons from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.

Bingo will be on March 8, March 15, April 5 and April 19.

The price to participate is free and we ask you bring yourself and a friend for joyful fellowship. We will provide prizes from local businesses for all winners, and snacks will also be provided.

No RSVP is required; just show up. All ages are welcome, but we ask those 18 and younger to come with an adult chaperone.

For more information, contact us at (970) 264-2167.

T'ai Chi Chih

The Senior Center will be offering T'ai Chi Chih with accredited instructor Patti Popovich each Thursday from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. in the dining hall to support older adults who want to discover purpose and fulfillment in this transitional phase of life.

T'ai Chi Chih is not a martial art, but rather a tool for self-healing. Softness, flow and effortlessness are the guiding principles in this practice.

All classes will be free for older adults (age 60 and better) and will last approximately one hour in the dining hall.

No special clothing or equipment is required.

For more information, call (970) 264-2167.

Senior Conversations

Join us Mondays at 1:15 p.m. for a series of "Senior Conversations" with local Bill Salmansohn.

He will lead the group through mindfulness exercises and discussion of various topics pertaining to aging in Archuleta County. Explore and discover for yourself answers to your questions and concerns.

The meeting will be held in the Senior Center in the dining hall. Snacks will be provided.

Pagosa Springs Scrapbooking Club

The Pagosa Springs Scrapbooking Club holds monthly meetings the second Saturday of each month at the Senior Center.

It meets each month from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. to be creative, share ideas, connect with friends, learn new techniques, share supplies and indulge in a potluck lunch together.

Bring your scrapbooking projects — or any crafting project that you may want to work on with the group. If you would like to be added to the mailing list to receive notifications each month of the upcoming meeting along with handy tips and tricks for scrapbooking, please send your request to copenhavercreative@gmail.com.

Share lunch Monday through Friday

Join us at the Silver Fox's Den, aka the Community Cafe, in person for daily hot/cold meals Mondays through Thursdays at the Community Center between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. It is open to all. Pickup is available all week, including Fridays.

Our dining hall is open to all ages and welcomes you all with kindness and warmth. We provide hot/cold meals for anyone in the community interested in a nutritious and delicious meal. For those 60 or older we request a suggested donation of \$10, but no one will be turned away. There is a \$10.50 charge for guests under the age of 60.

Meals include a main course, side dish, fruit/dessert, garden salad plus beverage. Some popular menu items include Frito chili pie, pork tenderloin with harvest chutney,

Singaporean pork ribs, vegetarian lasagna, Hawaiian shrimp with coconut rice and always a beautiful green salad. Many of our items are locally sourced and organic.

Our chef works with a team of local food professionals to hand-prepare your meal for dine-in service in our cozy dining room (with an amazing view of the San Juans) or for takeout (via our convenient drive-through). Our menu changes daily.

To reserve your meal for the day, please make your reservation via text or phone call to (970) 264-2167 by 9 a.m. weekdays.

Community Cafe menu

Thursday, Feb. 29 — Salmon cakes with jasmine rice, roasted bok choy, garden salad, pumpkin muffin, fruit and milk.

Friday, March 1 — Pasta primavera with Alfredo sauce, garlic bread, spinach saute, garden salad, dessert, fruit and milk.

Monday, March 4 — Lentil chile with sauteed zucchini, cornbread, garden salad, dessert, fruit and milk.

Tuesday, March 5 — Beef stroganoff with egg noodles, sauteed mushrooms, carrots and peas, garden salad, dessert, fruit and milk.

Wednesday, March 6 — Chicken vegetable soup with focaccia, wild rice, garden salad, dessert, fruit and milk.

Thursday, March 7 — Pork tenderloin with apricot glaze, pearly couscous, buttered turnips, garden salad, dessert, fruit and milk.

Friday, March 8 — Red curry cod with jasmine rice, green beans with peppers, garden salad, dessert, fruit and milk.

Grab-N-Go meals

Dine-in and Grab-N-Go meal reservations and cancellations are required. Please call or text by 9 a.m. the morning of the day you want to pick up a meal. A suggested donation of \$10 helps to sustain our program. For ages 59 and younger, the cost is \$10.50. No one will be turned away for their inability to donate. Please call or text us at (970) 264-2167 to make a reservation.

Meals on Wheels

We deliver fresh Meals on Wheels five days a week (and provide frozen Meals on Wheels for weekends) to homebound Archuleta County residents. Call or text us at (970) 264-2167.

Mobile food pantry service discontinued

The Mobile Food Pantry Service has been discontinued due to funding shortages. Older adults needing a ride to a local food pantry should contact the MET to schedule a ride with its paratransit service. For more information, contact Lavonne at (970) 264-2250.

Text reservations

■ See Senior on page 13

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Photo courtesy Pam Ard

The Pagosa Harmony barbershop singers raised \$700 for the Humane Society of Pagosa Springs singing custom valentine orders for clients all day on Feb. 14. They sang at private homes, dental offices, Town Hall, the Ross Aragon Community Center, a retirement home, three restaurants, a hotel and a school, with all proceeds going to the Humane Society. The local singing talent is Doug Roberts, Perry Schjolin, and Rick Ard.

New Thought Center to meet Sunday

By Shayla McClure
New Thought Center for Inspirational Living

The Sunday service on March 3 at 11 a.m. will be with Stephanie Morrow on "Reflections of Forgiveness for Self and Others."

"Forgiveness does not change the past, but it does enlarge the future." — Paul Boose.

Upcoming events

SpiritHeart Band practice is Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. We welcome musicians and singers to join the SpiritHeart band. Please text/call Shelly at (937) 657-5972 for band information.

March 10, 11 a.m.: Daylight Saving Time Sunday service with Morrow.

March 17, 11 a.m.: Sunday service

with Julie Loar, author of several award-winning books.

About us

The New Thought Center is a 501(c)(3) and promotes philosophies similar to Centers for Spiritual Living and Agape Centers. We honor all lifestyles, cultures and religious paths to the divine.

The SpiritHeart Band provides live music every Sunday. We welcome local talents to share gifts, aptitudes and knowledge. Participate, learn or contribute your insights, beliefs, knowledge and skills.

New Thought events are held at 3505 W. U.S. 160, on the second floor of the Pagosa Lodge (elevator available).

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9		1						
		5	4	6				1
	4		7	8				9
			1					7
6				4			3	

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Level: Advanced

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

6	8	7	9	4	5	1	3	2
5	9	2	1	3	6	8	4	7
1	4	3	7	8	2	5	6	9
7	2	5	4	6	9	3	8	1
9	6	1	3	7	8	4	2	5
8	3	4	5	2	1	7	9	6
3	1	9	2	5	4	6	7	8
2	7	8	6	1	3	9	5	4
4	5	6	8	9	7	2	1	3

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Senior

■ continued from page 11

Don't forget that we offer a convenient texting service for you to communicate with us. Text us at (970) 264-2167. When texting, please include your name, phone number and the days you want a meal. If you are canceling a reservation, please include your name, phone number and the days you want to cancel.

Texting services are available for dine-in meal reservations, Grab-n-Go meals and Meals on Wheels recipients.

COVID-19 test kits available

Stop by the Senior Center to pick up a pack of six free COVID-19 tests kits for your personal use. These kits are available to anyone in the public who needs affordable access for health promotion and disease prevention.

Mahjong

Mahjong is a 19th century Chinese tile-based game that is commonly played with four players. Each player receives 13 tiles with a goal to make matching sets and pairs (like poker). To win, a player must form four sets and one pair.

Come to the Senior Center to learn or play every Tuesday at 1:15 p.m.

Medicare call by appointment

For anyone who needs help enrolling and navigating Medicare plans, the San Juan Basin Area Agency on Aging helps with parts A, B and D. They can also help you with fraud concerns and troubleshooting any billing issues you may be having. By appointment only. Please call the

Medicare line at (970) 264-0501, ext 2.

Mindful drawing

Mindful drawing is an easy-to-learn, relaxing and fun way to create beautiful images by drawing structured patterns. Join our friendly instructor, Roberta Strickland.

Classes are every Wednesday at 1:15 p.m. in the Senior Center. This activity is open to all ages. Help us create an intergenerational community. For those under 18 and/or with disabilities, you are welcome to join us, but we kindly ask you to please bring an adult chaperone with you.

Bridge

The longest-played bridge game in Archuleta County takes place on Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 1:15 p.m.

Bridge is a four-player card game with partners sitting opposite each other around a table. It is a trick-taking card game using a standard 52-card deck. Come alone or bring a partner.

Hand and foot card game

Whether you are new to hand and foot or interested in learning, please join us most Tuesdays at 1:15 at the Senior Center.

This card game involves four rounds of playing until the final round is reached — some two to three hours later. Plan to stay and meet some new friends or catch up with those you have missed over the last couple of years.

No experience is necessary, so come willing to learn.

Supporting ASI

Please support our ongoing operations and programming that provide critical services to some of the most vulnerable in Archuleta County.

You may mail your donation to P.O. Box 3444, Pagosa Springs, CO 81147 or please visit our website, <http://www.psseniors.org/> (donation button). Donation checks can be written to: Archuleta Seniors Inc. We are located at 451 Hot Springs Blvd. For more information about Archuleta Seniors Inc., please visit <http://www.psseniors.org/>.

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THE CASE FOR LEGUMES (Part 3)

While many of us are aware of the benefits of eating more fruits, veggies, and whole grains, the humble legume often gets overlooked, so lets continue with our discussion about them!

BUYING AND COOKING LEGUMES

The way you cook and prepare legumes depends on how you buy them.

Canned: One of the easiest and most cost-effective ways to enjoy legumes is by buying them canned so you have them on hand and ready to go whenever you need them. Simply drain, give them a quick rinse, and they are ready to go! Add some organic brown or wild rice and organic vegetables for a complete and healthy meal.

Frozen: You can buy some varieties of legumes frozen and ready to cook, such as peas and edamame.

Dried: Dried black beans, chickpeas, kidney beans, navy beans and pinto beans are among those that you will need to soak before you cook them. It helps them cook faster and more evenly and helps our bodies digest them. Try soaking them overnight, then rinse thoroughly before cooking them. However, not all dried legumes need to be soaked in advance. For instance, split peas and lentils do fine without soaking.

Ready-made: You can buy a variety of tasty, ready-made legume dishes in your local supermarket, including hummus, baked beans, tofu, and ready-made veggie burgers (check the ingredients to make sure the main ingredient is a legume).

So, begin to incorporate the many different varieties and types of legumes into your diet today!

"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." 2 Peter 3:9

Fun Bible Facts: As many as 40 authors wrote the Bible over a period of more than 1,500 years and differed widely in their culture and education, and with personality and intellectual perception, and yet the books of the Bible they wrote DO NOT contradict one another!

A public service from your Adventist friends & neighbors at Pagosa Springs Seventh Day Adventist Church.

Disclaimer: This and all our Nature's Remedies are for health information purposes only. The Seventh Day Adventist Church is not responsible for results.



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204 Bastille Dr. (N. Pagosa Blvd, Left at Bastille Dr.)

Bird of the Week



Photo courtesy Charles Martinez

This week's Bird of the Week, compliments of the Weminuche Audubon Society and Audubon Rockies, is the northern pintail.

Cornell Lab's "All About Birds" website calls these birds the "eager breeders," a play on words which describes their early arrival on northern breeding grounds. As soon as the winter ice breaks, they can be found in the prairie pothole regions of the Great Plains, in Canada and in Alaska to claim nest sites.

These ducks are at home both on land and in water. They breed in a variety of habitats including wetlands, grasslands, wet meadows and agricultural fields. They often nest further away from water than other waterfowl and place their nests in harm's way when they build them in cultivated fields. Long summer daylight hours in the far north, which allow young birds to feed at all hours, may allow them to develop faster than more southern breeders.

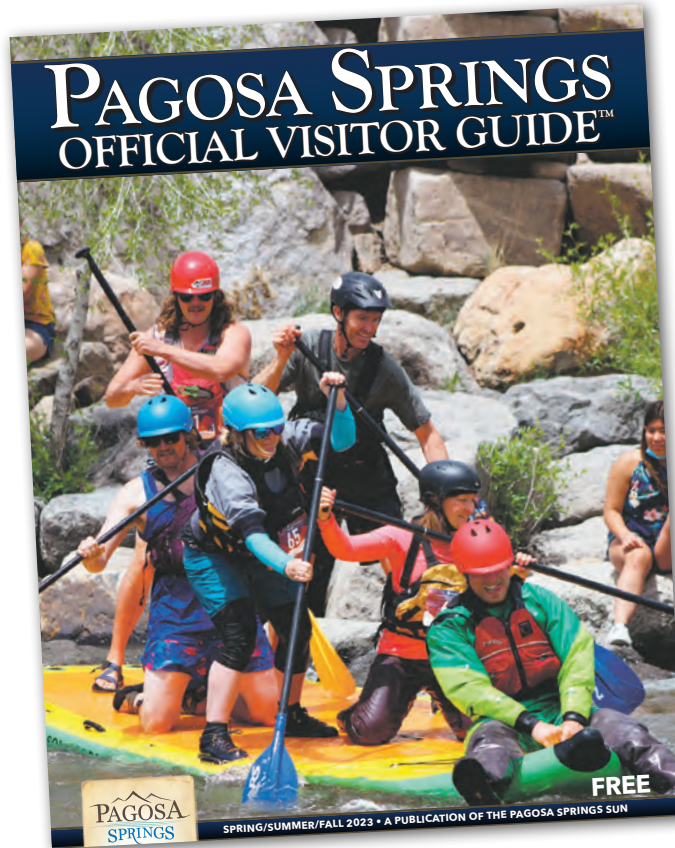
Northern pintails feed both on land and in the water, eating a diverse array of foods including seeds, worms, snails, crustaceans, aquatic insects and grains. In the water they are dabblers whose long necks allow them to feed deeper than others.

These long-necked, elegant ducks are named for their long central tail feathers, most prominent in a male. In breeding plumage, the male appears silvery with intricate feather patterns and a bright white breast and neck. His chocolate brown head has a white line down the sides and his black bill is edged in blue. Females are tawny-colored in browns and white.

Their fast flight with long, narrow wings and slender profile have given them the nickname "greyhounds of the air." Outside of breeding season, northern pintails are generally social and often seen in the company of other ducks. Look for them in shallow pond waters, area lakes and on the river.

For information on events, visit www.weminuchaudubon.org and www.facebook.com/weminuchaudubon/.

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Pagosa Springs Official Visitor Guide™ Advertising Deadline: March 8, 2024

30,000 copies of the award-winning **Pagosa Springs Official Visitor Guide™** will be printed and distributed at Walmart, The Springs Resort, Wyndham, Pagosa Springs Area Visitor Center, The Choke Cherry Tree, many other area establishments, and welcome centers throughout Colorado. The guide

will be mailed in one edition of The Pagosa Springs SUN to subscribers. A digitally enhanced version of the guide will be online at **PagosaSUN.com** and **ExplorePagosa.com**. The Pagosa Area Tourism Board will provide a link to this guide on visitpagosasprings.com.

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Preview Calendar

All events listed in The PREVIEW Calendar are free of charge unless otherwise noted.

Thursday, Feb. 29

Ruby's Writers Guild. 9-11 a.m., Sisson Library. Ruby's Writers Guild will welcome writers who are looking for opportunities, support and camaraderie with other writers. Members will provide support, resources and guidance for each other.

T'ai Chi Chih. 1:30-2:30, Senior Center. Free for those 60 and better.

Tech Time. 2-4 p.m., Sisson Library. Basic questions related to computers, smartphones, tablets, etc. Bring your device charger. We provide assistance with accessing any of the library's online resources. Call (970) 264-2209 for more information.

English as a Second Language. 4-7 p.m., Sisson Library. Your library offers English as a second language classes. These classes are free. Call (970) 264-2209 or email for more information. Beginning students are encouraged to attend from 4-5 p.m., intermediate students from 5-6 p.m. and advanced students from 6-7 p.m.

PALS Adult Education. 5:30-8 p.m., Sisson Library. Pagosa Adult Learning Services, or PALS, can help you with high school equivalency, GED, college prep, financial aid, tutoring and more. Mark can help you develop a plan to achieve your education goals. Call (970) 264-2209 for more information.

Friday, March 1

Pickleball. 8-11:30 a.m., Community Center. Loaner paddles are available.

Internet Safety. 2-3 p.m., Sisson Library. Join Rise Above Violence for a discussion about how to be safe on the Internet.

All-Ages Gaming. 3-5 p.m., Sisson Library. Come play on the library's Xbox 360.

Knights of Columbus Fish Fry. 4:30-6:30 p.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church, 353 S. Pagosa Blvd. Carry-out meals are available for \$15.

Thingamajig Theatre Company Presents 'Tiny Beautiful Things.' 7 p.m., Pagosa Springs Center for the Arts, 2313 Eagle Drive. For tickets and more information, visit pagosacenter.org or call (970) 731-SHOW (7469).

Saturday, March 2

GriefShare. 10-11:30 a.m., Centerpoint Church, 2750 Cornerstone Drive. GriefShare is a 13-week program providing support and encouragement after the death of a family member or friend. Contact Marie Rascoe at marierascoe67@gmail.com or call the church office at (970) 731-2205. There is no cost

for this program, and you may start at any time.

LEGO Club. 11 a.m.-noon, Sisson Library. For kids 6-11 years old. We have the LEGO bricks, all you need to bring is your imagination. Contact the library at (970) 264-2209 for further information.

Community Food Drive. 11a.m.-3 p.m., City Market. Join Healthy Archuleta in supporting the food security of our local community. Share what you can to help the Food Distribution Center better support the Archuleta County Food Pantry Network.

DivorceCare. 4-5:30 p.m., Centerpoint Church, 2750 Cornerstone Drive. DivorceCare is a program that provides a safe environment for persons who have gone through, are going through or are considering going through a divorce. You may begin classes at any time throughout the session. For more information, please contact Lorena Medina at loremedina0817@gmail.com or the church at admin@centerpointpagosa.com. You can also register online at www.divorccare.org. Click on "find a group" and follow the prompts or register at any of the meetings. There is a \$20 fee for the cost of your workbook. Scholarships are available.

Thingamajig Theatre Company Presents 'Tiny Beautiful Things.' 7 p.m., Pagosa Springs Center for the Arts, 2313 Eagle Drive. For tickets and more information, visit pagosacenter.org or call (970) 731-SHOW (7469).

Sunday, March 3

Sunday Night Unplugged. 5 p.m., St. Patrick's Episcopal Church, 225 South Pagosa Blvd. Concert of sacred music featuring local artists Catrinka Randall, Andy Hockman and Kimberly Hensen.

Bingo. 5:45 p.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church, 353 S. Pagosa Blvd. Doors open at 5 p.m., early-bird bingo at 5:45 p.m., bingo from 6-8 p.m. Concessions and cash prizes. No outside food or drink.

Monday, March 4

Pickleball. 8-11:30 a.m., Community Center. Loaner paddles are available.

Wolf Creek Christian Writers Network-Critique Groups. 9-11 a.m., Grace in Pagosa Community Room, 1044 Park Ave. A meeting to fellowship, inspire, encourage, critique and study the practice of writing.

Women's Fellowship. 9-11 a.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church classrooms.

Line Dancing. 9:30-11:30 a.m., PLPOA Clubhouse, 230 Port Ave. Beginners at 9:30 and advance group at 10:30. If you have not attended before, call Beverly at (970) 264-2064 for more information.

Senior Conversations. 1:15 p.m.,

Senior Center.

Learn to Knit or Crochet. 2-3:15 p.m., Sisson Library. Come learn to knit or crochet. For ages 8 and up.

Healthy Aging and Yoga Therapy Class. 2:30-3:30 p.m., Senior Center.

Tween/Teen Art Camp. 4-5 p.m., Sisson Library. Registration required. Art classes for tween and teens. Each month will explore a different style or medium.

Pagosa Unplugged. 4-6 p.m., Sisson Library. Musicians of all abilities are invited to jam and sing with others. Call Susan at (970) 946-3396 for details.

Boy Scout Meeting. 4 p.m., Community United Methodist Church, 434 Lewis St. Boys aged 11-17 are invited to attend meetings. Scouts learn outdoor and leadership skills, teamwork, support our community and, above all, have fun. Contact Jennifer Walterscheid at (970) 986-0387 or scoutmaster807@gmail.com for more details.

Deepening the Faith Classes. 6-8 p.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church classrooms.

■ See Calendar on next page

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Preview Calendar

■ continued from previous page

Tuesday, March 5

Pagosa Springs Stitchers. 10 a.m.-noon, Community United Methodist Church, 434 Lewis St. Bring your current stitching project and a snack/drink if you wish, and enjoy the fellowship of other stitchers. All are welcome.

Tech Time. 10 a.m.- noon, Sisson Library. Basic questions related to computers, smartphones, tablets, etc. Bring your device charger. We provide assistance with accessing any of the library's online resources. Call (970) 264-2209 for more information.

Bridge. 1:15 p.m., Senior Center.

Hand and Foot Card Game. 1:15 p.m., Senior Center. No experience is necessary, so come willing to learn.

Mahjong. 1:15 p.m., Senior Center.

English as a Second Language. 4-7 p.m., Sisson Library. Your library offers English as a second language classes. These classes are free. Call (970) 264-2209 or email for more information. Beginning students are encouraged to attend from 4-5 p.m., intermediate students from 5-6 p.m. and advanced students from 6-7 p.m.

Conversational Spanish. 4:30-5:30 p.m., Sisson Library. Practice your Spanish conversation skills in a group setting. No minimum skill level required.

PALS Adult Education. 5:30-8 p.m., Sisson Library. Pagosa Adult Learning Services, or PALS, can help you with high school equivalency, GED, college prep, financial aid, tutoring and more. Mark can help you develop a plan to achieve your education goals. Call (970) 264-2209 for more information.

Elementary Tutoring. 3:30-4:30 p.m., Sisson Library. Build essential skills in core subjects. Registration required. Call (970) 264-2209 for more information.

Wednesday, March 6

Pickleball. 8-11:30 a.m., Community

Center. Loaner paddles are available.

Pickleball Beginner Lessons. 8:30-10:30 a.m., Community Center. Loaner paddles are available. Reservations are required and can be made at pagosapickleball.org under the "Play" tab.

Pagosa Catholic Quilters. 9 a.m.-2 p.m., John Paul II Catholic Church classrooms. For more information, contact Maxine Everaert at quilters@ihmjp2.org.

Becoming Catholic: Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults. 10-11 a.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church, 353 S. Pagosa Blvd. For those interested in becoming Catholic.

Family Storytime. 10-11 a.m., Sisson Library. Join us for an educational hour of reading, singing and free play while building early literacy skills together. For all ages. Call (970) 264-2209 for more information.

New Basic Quilting Class. 1-3 p.m., Sisson Library. Registration is required.

Mindful Drawing. 1:15 p.m., Senior Center.

Bridge. 1:15 p.m., Senior Center.

Virtual Author Talk: Nina Totenberg. 2 p.m., virtual. Listen live or recorded. Featuring "The Power of Friendships" with NPR Legal Affairs Correspondent Nina Totenberg. For details and to register, go to <https://library.org/pagosalibrary/upcoming>.

ABLAZE High School Youth Group. 6-8 p.m., John Paul II Catholic Church. Dinner provided.

■ See Calendar on next page

The Weekly Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

- 1 Whole bunch
- 5 Nitpicks
- 10 Lollipop sampling
- 14 Somewhat, in music
- 15 Voodoo relative
- 16 Old world buffalo
- 17 Parrot
- 18 Sedative
- 20 Made sour
- 22 Kravitz of music
- 23 Hazardous
- 24 Leather producer
- 26 The Little Corporal
- 28 Hailed wheels
- 31 Learned type
- 34 Bureaucratic stuff
- 36 Responsible (for)
- 37 Less verbose
- 38 Crew member
- 40 Most breezy
- 41 Great weight
- 42 Articulates
- 44 Wiping clean
- 46 Go around
- 50 German steel city
- 52 Leisurely walker
- 54 Unattractive
- 56 Like much lingerie
- 57 Hidden valley
- 58 Earthenware pots
- 59 LAX listings
- 60 Cutlass maker, briefly
- 61 Fort ____, Fla.
- 62 Aug. follower

- 3 Partner of pains
- 4 Openers of a sort
- 5 Last part
- 6 Getaway driver, e.g.
- 7 Annul, as a law
- 8 Cowpoke's pal
- 9 "Steady as ___ goes"
- 10 Surgery tool
- 11 "Be that as it may ..."
- 12 Mass. Neighbor
- 13 "Firework" singer Perry
- 19 Most thin
- 21 "Absolutely!"
- 25 Of the intellect
- 27 Hymns of praise
- 29 Big galoots
- 30 Muppet with a unibrow
- 31 Opening for a coin
- 32 Parting word

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Answers to Previous Crossword:

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Preview Calendar

■ continued from previous page

Thursday, March 7

Ruby's Writers Guild. 9-11 a.m., Sisson Library. Ruby's Writers Guild will welcome writers who are looking for opportunities, support and camaraderie with other writers. Members will provide support, resources and guidance for each other.

T'ai Chi Chih. 1:30-2:30, Senior Center. Free for those 60 and better.

Tech Time. 2-4 p.m., Sisson Library. Basic questions related to computers, smartphones, tablets, etc. Bring your device charger. We provide assistance with accessing any of the library's online resources. Call (970) 264-2209 for more information.

Dungeons and Dragons. 4-5:30 p.m., Sisson Library. Join the adventure. Preregistration is required because space is limited. Contact Josie@pagosalibrary.org to join.

English as a Second Language. 4-7 p.m., Sisson Library. Your library offers English as a second language classes. These classes are free. Call (970) 264-2209 or email for more information. Beginning students are encouraged to attend from 4-5 p.m., intermediate students from 5-6 p.m. and advanced students from 6-7 p.m.

PALS Adult Education. 5:30-8 p.m., Sisson Library. Pagosa Adult Learning Services, or PALS, can help you with high school equivalency, GED, college prep, financial aid, tutoring and more. Mark can help you develop a plan to achieve your education goals. Call (970) 264-2209 for more information.

San Juan Outdoor Club. 6-8 p.m., PLPOA Clubhouse, 230 Port Ave. Missy Lee, native of Alaska, will tell her unique life story growing up in rural Alaska. She grew up in a family of explorers and had a dream of scaling the highest peak in North America. She will discuss the details of her 23-day adventure and hopes to inspire people to pursue their own dreams and life purposes. The meeting starts with a social half hour at 6 p.m. with light refreshments. The meeting will start at 6:30 p.m. For more information, email sanjuanoutdoorclub@gmail.com.

San Juan Stargazers. 7 p.m., Methodist Church, 434 Lewis St. There will be a social hour with coffee/tea and treats beginning at 6 p.m. The 7 p.m. meeting will cover the April 8 eclipse and "Mars, Exploring from Space and the Ground."

Friday, March 8

Pickleball. 8-11:30 a.m., Community Center. Loaner paddles are available.

Preschool Playdough. 10-11 a.m., Sisson Library. Come play with playdough. Use various stencils

to make your animals and other creations.

Bingo. 1:30-2:30 p.m., Senior Center. Free. Those under 18 must have an adult chaperone. For more information, contact (970) 264-2167.

Friday Flix. 2-4 p.m., Sisson Library. Join us to watch a PG movie. Popcorn will be provided.

Knights of Columbus Fish Fry. 4:30-6:30 p.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church, 353 S. Pagosa Blvd. Carry-out meals are available for \$15.

Saturday, March 9

Chess Club. 9:30-11:30 a.m., Sisson Library. Learn how to play chess with quick lessons and game time or practice your skills. All ages and abilities are welcome.

Pagosa Springs Scrapbooking Club. 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Senior Center dining room. Bring your scrapbooking projects or any crafting project you may want to work on with the group.

GriefShare. 10-11:30 a.m., Centerpoint Church, 2750 Cornerstone Drive. GriefShare is a 13-week program providing support and encouragement after the death of a family member or friend. Contact Marie Rascoe at marierascoe67@gmail.com or call the church office at (970) 731-2205. There is no cost for this program, and you may start at any time.

Knitters Circle. 1-3 p.m., Sisson Library. Join new or experienced knitters to get help with your project, or sit and knit.

DivorceCare. 4-5:30 p.m., Centerpoint Church, 2750 Cornerstone Drive. DivorceCare is a program that provides a safe environment for persons who have gone through, are going through or are considering going through a divorce. You may begin classes at any time throughout the session. For more information, please contact Lorena Medina at loremedina0817@gmail.com or the church at admin@centerpointpagosa.com. You can also register online at www.divorcecare.org. Click on "find a group" and follow the prompts or register at any of the meetings. There is a \$20 fee for the cost of your workbook. Scholarships are available.

Late Night at the Library. 4:30 p.m., Sisson Library. This time we will be making beaded bracelets, painting and creating other book crafts.

Your \$50 ticket includes all of your crafting supplies, plus dinner and drinks. Proceeds will support our Mountains of Opportunity building campaign. Limited tickets are available.

Sunday, March 10

Shower of Peace. 1 p.m. A group "shower of peace" to send peace to all those involved with war.

HUD Publisher's Notice



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All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Fair Housing act which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin, or an intention, to make such preference, limitation or discrimination." Familial status includes children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women and people securing custody of children under 18.

This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination call HUD toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. The toll-free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.



Archuleta County Courts



Have you experienced problems with courts and/or judges? Have you been denied attorney fees as the prevailing party? I have.

In August, 2023 I had a hearing with Judge Justin Fay to defend against frivolous TPO's (temporary protection orders) obtained by neighbors who used false accusations to do so (as contained in cases 2023C75/76). Reluctantly ruling in my favor, Fay also questioned my honesty, made unnecessary personal comments about me, and denied motion for legal fees – actions which call into question his competence and suitability.

More about the judge, court, and my case: archuletacountycourts.com.

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Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

WORDS

- BANK
- BASKETBALL
- CENTER
- COURT
- DEFENSE
- DRIBBLE
- FORWARD
- FOUL
- FREE THROW
- GUARD
- HOOPS
- LAYUP
- LINEUP
- NET
- OFFENSE
- OPEN
- OVERHEAD
- PALMING
- PASS
- REBOUND
- SHOOTER
- SIDELINES
- TRAVELING
- WALKING

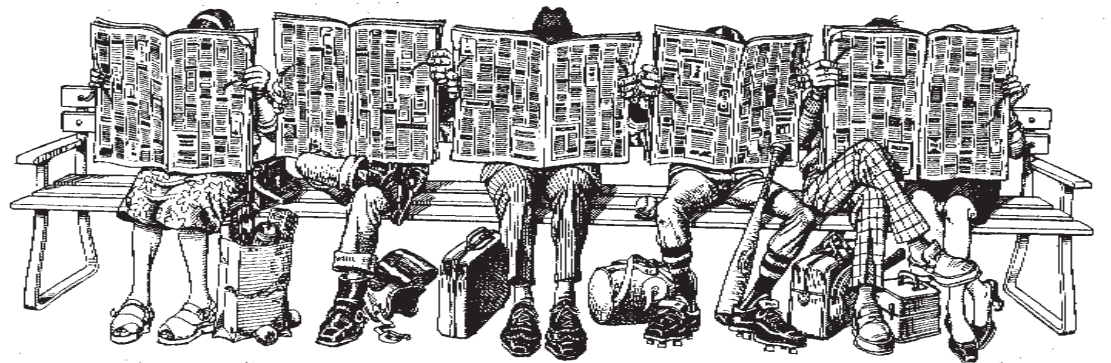
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You're not the boss in wilderness

By John Clayton
PREVIEW Columnist

When my friends and I encountered the fresh grizzly bear scat, we were deep in Wyoming's Teton Wilderness, 20 miles from a trailhead. I'd seen grizzlies before — from the car. But this experience was on a whole other level. I felt vulnerable, nervous. I also felt fully alive.

That feeling owes much to the Wilderness Act, which became law 60 years ago, in 1964. When President Lyndon B. Johnson created a nationwide system of wild landscapes "untrammelled by man," it gave physical expression to an unusual attitude toward land.

The attitude could be summarized as: In the wildest parts of America, humans come second. What comes first is the land, its water and its wildlife. If the grizzly that left those droppings had confronted us, and I'm glad it never did, we lacked the resources of civilization to protect us.

If I'd fallen off a cliff, there was no cell service to call 911. If a freak snowstorm made us cold, wet and miserable, all we could do was suffer. In wilderness, Mother Nature won't kiss a boo-boo to make it better.

There's something elemental about being on your own, exposed. You've made a choice based on your values about the outdoors. As a result, you feel the power of larger forces — and sometimes, if you're

Opinion: Writers on the Range

But the Wilderness Act acknowledged that, in some places, the land should be left as unexploited as possible.

lucky, even the power of yourself.

Before the act became law, American culture prioritized pulling all the resources we could out of the land by drilling, mining, dam building, logging, overgrazing. We barged through habitat, flattened forests and plowed

prairies. We replaced old growth with board feet of timber, canyons with cubic meters of water and grasslands with barrels per day of oil. We're still doing that on 95 percent of public land.

But the Wilderness Act acknowledged that, in some places, the land should be left as unexploited as possible. It defined wilderness as being "in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape."

Preserving wildness calls for restraint. It calls for motorized users, e-bikers, mountain bikers, pilots, snowmobilers, technical climbers with hardware and drone flyers to recreate somewhere else. Yet hiking, hunting, boating, fishing and horseback riding are all allowed in wilderness, as well as grazing if grandfathered in.

The act's primary author, Howard Zahniser, loved hiking in wild places and he was determined: In eight years of lobbying the Congress for The Wilderness Society, he helped rewrite the bill 65 times. By the time the act overwhelmingly passed — 73-12 in the Senate and 374-1 in the House — Zahniser had died of heart disease at the young age of 58.

The act is often discussed in terms of the acreage it protects, now comprising 806 wilderness areas and 112 million acres, roughly half of that in Alaska. Yet it's really about nature being the boss.

In wilderness, we recognize that always getting our way can devalue ecosystems. It can harm wildlife, clean water, fresh air and other widely shared resources. It can cause us to scorn Indigenous people's connections to the land when we should be honoring them.

Wilderness is not the only place we embrace not getting our way, just as the U.S. Capitol building is not the only place we embrace democracy, and Civil War battlefields are not the only places we honor fallen soldiers. With wilderness as reminders, we can also consider not being the boss in a city park or backyard, while watching birds or growing native plants.

Threats to keeping wilderness wild, however, have never subsided. Sixty years have brought us innumerable technologies to help us get our way while recreating in nature. And as we've realized that making nature more accessible might make it more inclusive and its fans more diverse, some of us are tempted to relax rec-

reational restrictions in wilderness.

That would miss the point.

"We must remember always that the essential quality of the wilderness is its 'wildness,'" Zahniser said. "We must not only protect the wilderness from commercial exploitation. We must also see that we don't ourselves destroy its wilderness character in our own management programs."

Honoring wilderness ideals is especially important today because it represents the same lesson that we should be learning from climate change: People can't control nature. Thanks to the Wilderness Act, we can celebrate that some places remain free of our habit of changing everything — just because we can.

John Clayton is a contributor to Writers on the Range, writer-sontherange.org, an independent nonprofit that promotes lively dialog about the West. He lives in Montana and writes the newsletter "Natural Stories." Views expressed do not necessarily represent those of The SUN.



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ON SUNDAY, MARCH 3, 2024 there will be a "Must Go" Progressive Bingo game with a pot of \$2,500. You must purchase a regular Bingo packet in order to play the progressive game. Doors open at 5p.m., regular games start at 6p.m. No holding of seats will be allowed. Location is John Paul II Catholic Church Narthex, 353 S. Pagosa St., Pagosa Springs, CO.

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: Facilities Master Plan. The Archuleta School District #50 JT has issued Request for Proposals for the development of a Facilities Master Plan, due by March 28, 2024. More details can be found on the District's website, www.mypagosaschools.com under the "District" section, Bids/ RFPs/ RFQs.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

PAGOSA AA: M-W-F 5:30P.M.; Sunday 10a.m, Tuesday and Thursday at noon, Saturday at 10a.m.. Zoom Sunday 10a.m., ID 858 319 763, password 754 234, 315 N. 2nd St., County Road 200 (.2 miles off 160). Information, call Kathi (970)946-1482, or Central Office (888)333-9649.

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THERE IS A SOLUTION GROUP of Alcoholics Anonymous meets Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays 5:30-6:30p.m., Restoration Fellowship Church, 264 Village Drive. Questions? Contact Richard at (970)903-1456 or Diamond at (970)264-1073. More resources at www.aa.org, www.aa-westerncolorado.com, (970)245-9649, or (888)333-9649 (24 hours).

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