



PAGOSA SPRINGS, ARCHULETA COUNTY, COLORADO 81147

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PLPOA holds information meeting on proposed gym

By Garrett Fevinger
Staff Writer

The Pagosa Lakes Property Owners Association (PLPOA) volleyed questions from its membership for nearly three hours during an informational meeting held Jan. 8 about a proposed new gymnasium project set to go before a vote of the association's property owners later this month.

Addressing an audience that was by turns challenging, sympathetic, and questioning, the PLPOA leadership sought to dispel concerns over a range of issues about the \$2.1 million project, which, if passed, would levy a

onetime \$255 special assessment fee across the association's more than 6,400 members.

"The [phrase] 'special assessment' is always a nasty one," PLPOA board president Lars Schneider said near the top of the meeting. "It typically is associated with poor decisions, poor financial responsibility, lack of planning, lack of reserves, lack of capital — everything. PLPOA doesn't have that issue."

According to Schneider, the proposed special assessment is the first in the association's history dating back to the early 1970s.

■ See PLPOA A9

Inauguration ceremony



SUN photos/Clayton Chaney, photo courtesy La Plata County

Top: Commissioners Warren Brown, left, and John Ranson take their oath of office during an inauguration ceremony Monday morning at the Archuleta County Justice Facility. Bottom: Archuleta County Coroner Brad Hunt is sworn in during Monday morning's ceremony. Right, 6th Judicial District Attorney Sean Murray is sworn in by Judge Jeffrey Wilson in Durango on Jan. 14.

Commissioners discuss chair position, working together

By Clayton Chaney
Staff Writer

The Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) will be voting on its commission chair position during its next regular scheduled meeting on Jan. 21, but discussion on the topic has already begun.

During a work session on Tuesday, Jan. 14, Commissioner Warren Brown initiated the discussion, reiterating the same message he put forward during the official swearing in ceremony held the day before.

"One of the things I said is, I want to try to help us work together better, and I think sometimes that we remove some obstacles that allow for that, and promote that," he said, noting one of those obstacles is the chair position.

Brown mentioned that the chair position has "historically" been a voted position and at times is "very political, and I'm not sure that's the benefit for our continuity."

Brown then suggested that the BoCC might want to consider making the chair position a rotating position, "so all the board members have the responsibility and the privilege of being in that [role] during their term."

Brown suggested that it being a rotating position would help relieve some of the pressures to have one member over the other in that position.

Commissioner John Ranson explained that he was able to meet with his two fellow commissioners individually before he was sworn into office on Jan. 13.

"I'm really excited about the diversity of this board," Ranson said, noting the different levels of experiences in different fields.

■ See Commissioners A17



Photo courtesy Emma Ridley

A structure fire burns off of Indian Land Road on Jan. 13. The Pagosa Fire Protection District contained the fire, which left the two-story house uninhabitable. The cause is under investigation.

Home burned in Jan. 13 fire

By Randi Pierce
Staff Writer

An Aspen Springs residence was rendered uninhabitable Monday, Jan. 13, after it caught fire.

The cause and origin of the fire are under investigation.

According to a press release from the Pagosa Fire Protection District (PFPD), the structure fire, located on the 700 block of Indian Land Road was reported to the Archuleta County Combined Dispatch Center via 911, with the PFPD responding at approximately 6 p.m.

"Upon arrival, firefighters observed visible flames coming from the rear of a two-story home," the press release states. "The fire was quickly contained, and firefighters were able to suppress the flames without further incident."

It adds all occupants of the home were safely evacuated

and confirmed to be unharmed, with firefighters also ensuring the safety of all animals on the property.

"Although no injuries were reported, the fire and smoke damage rendered the home uninhabitable," the release explains. "Due to the building's construction, firefighters remained on scene for an extended period to complete a thorough overhaul and ensure the fire was fully extinguished."

According to the press release, the PFPD "responded with eight apparatus, including four engines and three tenders, alongside eight paid staff and nine volunteer firefighters. Archuleta County Road and Bridge provided one water tender for support, and a Pagosa Springs Medical Center ambulance was staged on site in case medical assistance was needed."

randi@pagosasun.com



Photos courtesy Paula Jo Miller

Top: Paula Jo Miller approaches the finish line of the 70.3 Ironman World Championships on Dec. 14 in Taupo, New Zealand. Right: Miller and her husband Lowell Wiles celebrated their 20th wedding anniversary while in New Zealand, and enjoyed trekking around the island after the race.

Celebrating life's milestones, one 'yes' at a time

By Garrett Fevinger
Staff Writer

Half a world away from the snow-dusted peaks she calls home, Pagosa Springs' Paula Jo Miller woke one recent December morning on the brink of summertime in the South Pacific, readying herself for the final day of an epic journey that began four years earlier.

■ See Celebrating A8



How unusual is a bare-ground winter in Pagosa Springs?

By Josh Kurz
Special to The SUN

As our bare-ground winter has persisted in Pagosa Springs, several snow-loving people have asked me when was the last time we had a "winter" like this one. The lack of snow has become the talk of the town, especially with upcoming Winterfest activities.

Recently, I read an article titled, "Elon Musk says AI has already gobbled up all human-produced data to train itself..." The article explained that AI has already read everything on the internet.

So, I decided to test the author's claim by asking AI, "When was the last time Pagosa Springs, Colorado was snow-free in January?"

AI instantly replied, "... exact dates with zero snow cover on the ground in January are not readily available and would require detailed historical weather analysis."

I'm relieved to know that AI hasn't replaced me yet. So, below you'll find the detailed historical weather analysis that many have asked for.

Honestly, AI's excuse is valid. Detailed, long-term snow data is scarce for the low-elevation regions surrounding Pagosa Springs. As a substitute, I will use historical data from the Upper San Juan SNOTEL site (located at 10,200 feet on Wolf

■ See Winter A8

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Opinion

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OUR VIEW

It's wildfire season

The wildfires in the Los Angeles area have been absolutely devastating, with scenes that look like they should be from the next apocalyptic blockbuster movie, not from real life in January. Homes, schools and businesses have burnt to the ground. Lives have been lost, others remain missing, there are widespread power outages, new fires continue to pop up and the weather continues to be extreme. We continue to hear heartbreaking stories of families who lost homes that have been in their families for generations, who lost loved ones and some who returned to where there home once stood to find that all that's left is the fireplace they gathered around for holidays last month.

Associated Press Photographer Mark J. Terrill, who has covered Los Angeles and fires for decades, shared photos on Jan. 9 and wrote, "I did a little bit of fire coverage in and above Pacific Palisades and Malibu and the devastation is just beyond belief. There are areas that look just like a nuclear bomb went off. Homes burned to the ground as far as the eye can see. In 42 years of covering fires, I have never seen anything like this."

While Los Angeles and Pagosa Country seemingly have little in common, we do have fire danger in common, as does much of the West, and the fires on the West Coast

have spurred valuable conversations locally. They've also served as a terrifying reminder that so much can be lost so fast, and we need to stay ready year-round.

It's been noted for years that wildfire season is getting longer, but, as Pagosa Fire Protection District (PFPD) Chief Robert Bertram notes in an email to The SUN, while we used to have a defined fire season, "In recent years fire season is all year long."

Bertram points toward the Dec. 30, 2021, Marshall Fire in Boulder County. That fire quickly became one of the most destructive fires in state history, destroying around 1,000 structures — after starting as a grass fire.

Bertram points out the fire moved quickly through dry vegetation assisted by gusty winds.

Pagosa Country has also seen fires last later into the fall.

"Looking back to 2023 we had active fires around us in the forest past Thanksgiving," Bertram adds.

He also informed us during a recent conversation that we've seen multiple grass fires locally this winter, both on Dec. 12, 2024: a quarter-acre fire and, later that evening, a fire contained to an area 20 feet by 30 feet, but with flames that were 4 feet tall when PFPD units arrived.

Further, the PFPD responded to a fire at a residence on Monday. While tragic for the

residents, we are thankful it was tended to quickly and did not spread out of control.

And, with the lack of snow, concerns over fires locally continue, despite the cold temperatures.

"The lack of moisture is our concern," Bertram wrote. "The dry vegetation coupled with gusty winds can cause [a] small fire to grow into a significant wildland fire despite the cold temperatures."

It's imperative that we all take the danger seriously and do our part to minimize any part of it we can.

"I encourage everyone to be as careful in the winter as they are in the middle of summer," Bertram wrote. "Ensure all fires are completely extinguished and ashes cold before leaving. This is important [whether] it is a small recreation fire, controlled burn, or disposing of fire place ashes. Ashes that may seem cool may have hot embers hidden in the pile. All it takes is a small breeze to cause the embers to heat up and start a fire."

Numerous wildfire preparedness resources exist, but those looking for a starting point can visit the Red Cross website at <https://bit.ly/4ahvjz0> for preparedness tips and steps to take.

We've certainly had a lot of small breezes this winter; let's not provide any embers.
Randi Pierce

LEGACIES

By Shari Pierce

100 years ago

Taken from SUN files of
January 16, 1925

The January thaw seems to have hit us, for only 36 degrees below zero has been registered the past week — on Monday morning.

The hot water from the well was turned into the new school building Tuesday, but a few days will be required for adjustments before its effectiveness can be fully determined.

Parents can help by not permitting their children to use sleds on the hills at noon. So many little people have been endangered that the problem has become serious.

In this issue will be found the detailed report of the condition of the First National Bank of Pagosa Springs on Dec. 31st. Since its foundation seven years ago this institution has made a steady, appreciable growth, and despite the adverse business conditions of the country during the past two years, the showing made by the First National Bank is an example of the results that can be realized from conservative, business methods.

75 years ago

Taken from SUN files of
January 13, 1950

Postmaster Tommy Chambers reports this week that 1949 was a record year for the local post office with \$9,625.16 being collected for postage and box rent. This does not include receipts for registry, special delivery or money order fees. Postmaster Chambers also reports that the local post office sold \$99,075.73 worth of money orders. Much of the amount for money orders, no doubt, went to mail order houses. If that amount had been spent in Pagosa Springs and necessitated the local merchants carrying that much more stock for tax purposes, it would have increased the tax receipts of the town about one-sixth. This would have been a large enough increase that it would have been unnecessary for the raise in the town mill levy.

Work on the new high school gym is progressing nicely with work now being done on putting in the floor joists and sub-flooring. The local district is temporarily short of funds and for that reason would welcome volunteer labor in laying the floor. Anyone desiring to help on this project should report to Elmo Lowell at the building and he guarantees he can keep them busy.

50 years ago

Taken from SUN files of
January 16, 1975

It was winter on Wolf Creek Pass last week with 52 inches of new snow falling in a five day period. Heaviest snowfall day was the eighth of January when 27 inches fell. Part of this fell the night of the 8th, with 27 inches recorded from 8 a.m. the 8th until 8 a.m. on the 9th.

Six of the thirteen snowslide areas on the pass let go and the highway was blocked to traffic from 7:30 p.m. on the 8th until it was reopened at 11:30 a.m. on the 9th. Highway crews battled snow depths up to eight feet in clearing the slides.

The slides running last week were all on this side of the Pass. The ones that let go were Palisades 1, 2, and 3; the Coyotes, Snowflake, and the Pit Slide. The Coyotes covered the highway to a depth of six to seven feet for a distance of 50 feet. Snowflake covered the road to a depth of 8 feet for a distance of 40 feet.

The Pit slide was the longest, 200 feet, and the snow depth there was 3 feet. The three Palisades slides ran about 6 feet deep across the highway and the total distance covered by the three slides was 50 feet.

25 years ago

Taken from SUN files of
January 13, 2000

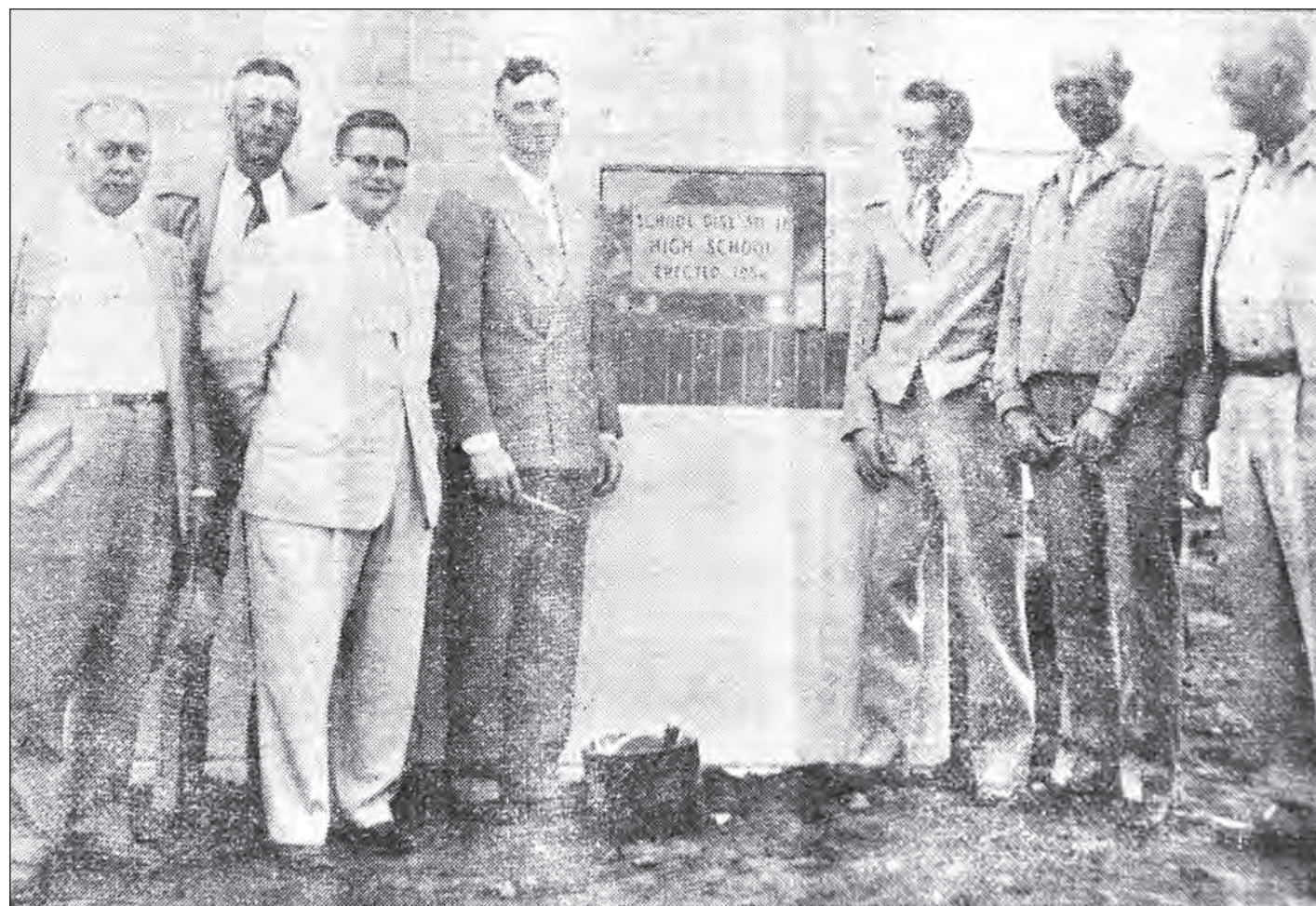
How about lighting up Golden Peaks Stadium? How about some nighttime football?

If Pagosa Springs High School athletic director Kahle Charles and a group of local parents and business people have their way, the Black and Gold may be popping pads under the lights as early as next season.

After hearing a presentation from Charles and receiving input from members of the audience Tuesday night, the School District 50 Joint board of directors agreed to decide by their February monthly meeting whether or not to put the job of lighting Golden Peaks out for bids.

"If the district could swing the money for materials, we could get enough community support to pay the labor," Charles told the board. "The lights could be purchased for probably somewhere between \$41,000 and \$46,000." To have someone come in and install them, he said, would be "at least double that cost."

Tim Sanford, addressing the board as "a parent and a fan," said he believed "we could get the majority of the labor for free." Other parents in attendance agreed and committed to raising funds to help defray other costs.



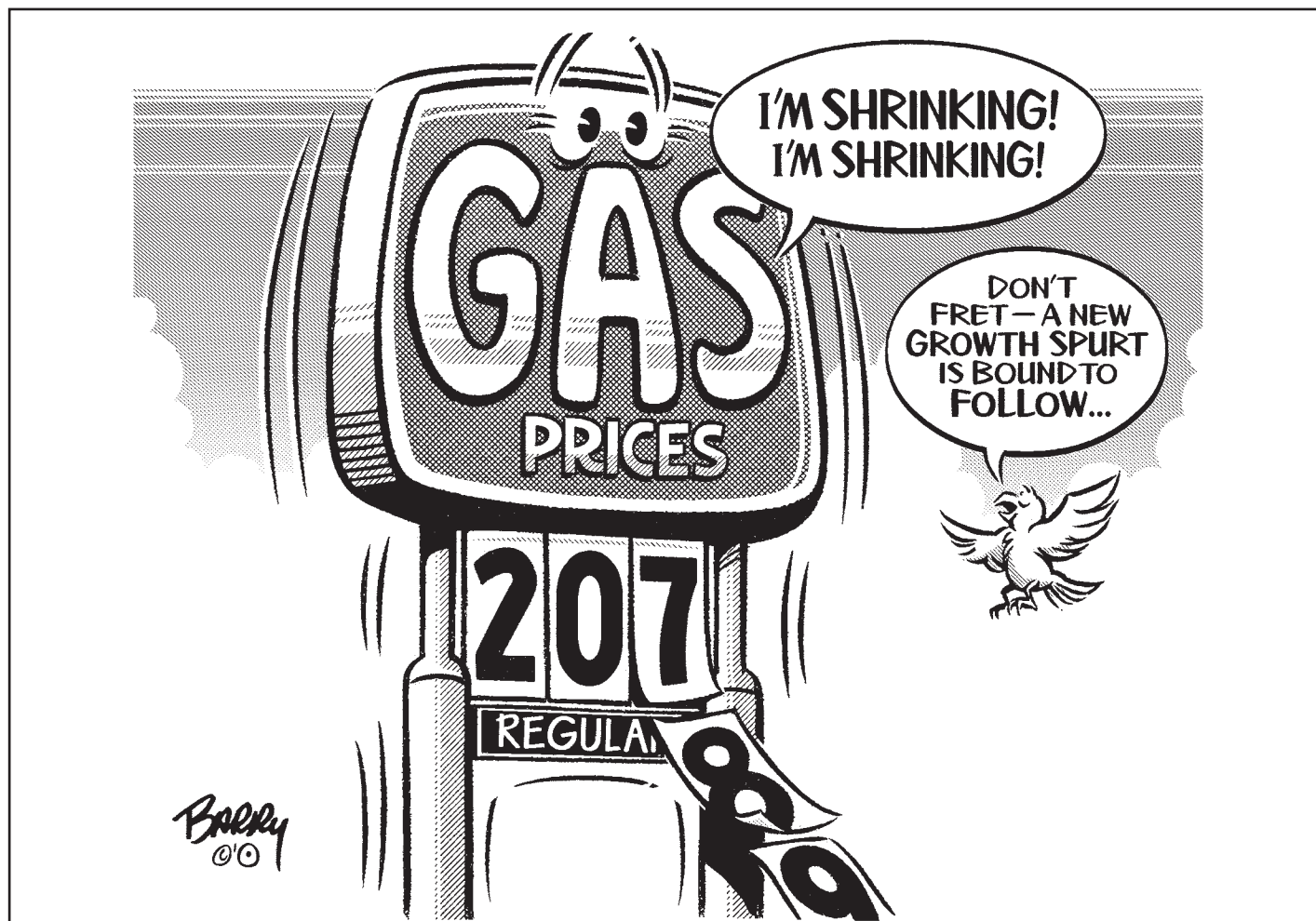
From the Nov. 19, 1954, Pagosa SUN — Officials at the new High School cornerstone laying last Thursday are pictured after putting the stone in place. They are left to right: H.C. Flaugh, contractor, Stanley Belmear, A.D. Hahn, Wayne Farrow, Delbert Thayer, Mitchell Swanson, Wm. Andrus, architect. — Loren Snook Photo.

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Weather data

Date	High	Low	Precipitation	Depth	Type	Moisture
1/7	34	15	0.00	NA	NA	NA
1/8	39	6	0.00	NA	NA	NA
1/9	33	11	0.00	NA	NA	NA
1/10	35	0	T	S	NA	NA
1/11	36	7	T	S	NA	NA
1/12	31	2	0.00	NA	0.00	NA
1/13	30	7	T	S	NA	NA



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.

Fundraiser for LA fires

Dear Editor:

This is a call out to every member of our community to assist monetarily - or materially (worthwhile, transportable foodstuffs, toys, etc.) - with a grassroots effort from our county to LA. We will be departing on Thursday, January 23rd with everything we can bring on a truck and trailer to the first responders and victims of the fires in Los Angeles. *Emphasis is on monetary assistance.* The main thrust of our effort will be to purchase as many units as possible of ready-made sustainably sourced and packaged small batch meals from Farm to Summit (farmtosummit.com) of Durango. These are quality meals and they are not cheap even though the people at Farm to Summit are selling us product at reduced price.

Please contact Jonathan Dobson by phone (970-507-0754) or drop off donations at his business at 144 14th Street in Pagosa Springs with your donation. You could also send to P.O. Box 1871, 81147. You will receive a receipt for your donation. A GoFundMe page will also be set up for this effort. Please respond as quickly as possible as we have a lot to organize in order to meet our deadline for departure with a full load. Upon return, a report will be made on what we accomplished together, shared with the community through this publication.

Everything we raise will be brought physically to the Pacific Palisades area and given out, with a sign erected that it is from us to them, until all

donations are delivered in full.

This is the 3rd major grassroots effort to mobilize assistance for disaster zones undertaken by Jonathan and Jonah Dobson of Archuleta County. Mention is made of this to let you know that you are dealing with people you can trust. The first was the delivery and installation of a full-scale back-up photovoltaic and battery power station to the San Miguel de Los Porres Assisted Living Center in Utuado, Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria in 2017, along with community member Doug Large "Grande". We worked with the local Pagosa Mountain Morning Rotary Club of Pagosa Springs in accomplishing this. The second was the successful delivery in 2021 of a massive haul of donations to Mayfield and Dixon Hills, Kentucky, after the F-5 tornado that devastated the area that Christmas. This was undertaken in partnership with the local chapter of Cub Scouts Troop 807. Both of these efforts were carried out with great success. The present undertaking is a citizen's effort only. All expenses for the trip itself will be covered by Dobson - your donation will go directly to the first responders and communities victimized by the fires. Please entrust us with your donation and help make Pagosa proud! We do this in part because you never know, one day it could be us in need of this kind of help. Please watch the opening monologue of the Jimmy Kimmel Show from the night of January 13th "We [heart] L.A." to understand the spirit with which we are carrying out this endeavor. Thank you!

Jonathan Dobson

PLPOA gymnasium

Dear Editor:

I attended the PLPOA meeting specific to the proposed gymnasium project on January 8th. I listened to some of the speakers from the board, etc. I feel that they are not transparent regarding valuable decision-making information. Information such as:

Only 23% of our PLPOA members are families with children. Over 50% of the residents are over 55. Only 44% are full-time residents (May 2023

board meeting survey results).

The PLPOA Board is calling this The Gymnasium Project when in reality, according to the November 2024 Board Meeting minutes, page 43, there is a Recreation Master Plan that involves a Sports Complex totaling \$5,377,509.00. It includes the new parking lot for 300,500.00, the gymnasium for 2,000,000.00, a multi-purpose athletic field and restrooms for 1,200,000.00, an outdoor hot tub for 80,000.00, and a lap pool for 1,798,509.00.

I have read that the board stated they will not need to ask the members' permission to build the rest of this complex, yet it is our money they are spending on a vision, not in tune with the general PLPOA population. That is why everyone needs to see the last two survey results from 2023 and 2024. And, shouldn't we be voting on the entire project, not just the gymnasium?

Board President Schneider called last night's meeting "PLPOA vs. social media" on the social media app called Next Door and stated we could "voice our concerns". He did not want to hear members' opinions or concerns at all! During the meeting last night, he stated we could only ask questions. One member stood up and asked, you mean we cannot share our thoughts on this? He stated, "No." The member then stated, "No wonder no one comes to the meetings."

No wonder we resort to social media.

Yes, they had so many more members show up because this is important and has to do with our quality of life, what the PLPOA represents, the way our money is being spent, and what we feel is important for the future of the PLPOA. There were 100 available seats on Zoom for the meeting and it reached its limit. Members could not attend and were upset about that as well. This is a heads-up.

Many members who attended this meeting went away frustrated and angry because they felt they had the right to bring their concerns, opinions, and different points of view to the meetings. Perhaps the board might consider having another meeting where this can happen. This is only the beginning of the anger and frustration if they do not address our concerns and listen instead of giving pat answers.

Laurah Brock Young

County grants variance for Our Community Eats

By Clayton Chaney
Staff Writer

Our Community Eats (OCE), a local nonprofit food pantry, relocated into a new building located on Navajo Trail Drive in September 2024. With that, the organization expressed concerns to the Archuleta County Planning Commission that it would not be able to afford the required improvements as determined by the county's land use development code.

During a planning commission meeting held on Sept. 26, 2024, the commission voted unanimously to grant OCE a conditional use permit (CUP) in order to operate as a food pantry.

The approval of the CUP came with county staff's recommendation to include three conditions: paving the parking area, landscaping improvements, and obtaining a drainage and grading study of property.

OCE president Kathrine Solbert explained during that September 2024 meeting that a new investor allowed them to purchase the property located at 197 Navajo Trail Drive, noting the organization is run completely by volunteers and it would likely not have the funds to cover the cost to pave the parking lot, add landscaping and have a drainage study performed.

County Development Director Pamela Flowers explained during that meeting that the planning commission would need to approve the CUP with the proposed conditions, but that the BoCC, as the board of adjustment (BOA), has the ability to waive the conditions.

The BOA then unanimously voted to approve the general variance request during the board's Dec. 17, 2024, meeting.

On Jan. 7, the BOA unanimously approved its consent agenda, which included Resolution 2024-01 BOA.

Planning Manager Owen O'Dell explained the resolution is for the variance request that was initially approved on Dec. 17, 2024, for parking improvements, a grading and

drainage report and landscaping requirements.

"You gave them a variance on two of the three items, so that resolution has the remaining conditions for the grading and drainage report," O'Dell said.

The resolution notes that two of the three specific variance requests were approved: the paving and landscaping requirements.

O'Dell noted that the remaining condition of obtaining a grading and drainage report is outlined in the resolution.

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Letters

The SUN welcomes letters from readers.

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.

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- be received by The SUN by noon on Tuesday (deadline may move up due to a holiday)

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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.

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Commissioners approve agreement for second phase of Risk Mapping Assessment and Planning project

By Clayton Chaney
Staff Writer

On Tuesday, Jan. 7, the Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) unanimously approved a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB), in partnership with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and its contractor, AECOM, to complete phase two of the county's Risk Mapping Assessment and Planning (MAP) project.

The board approved the agreement as part of the meeting's consent agenda.

Planning Manager Owen O'Dell briefed the BoCC on the matter earlier in the day during a work session, where he indicated that the purpose of this phase of the MAP project is "for a remapping of our flood plain in the area."

O'Dell explained that he was presenting the MOA to the BoCC as chair Commissioner Veronica Medina's signature, along with his own, is needed for the project to move forward.

He went on to explain that "this is gonna keep us in compliance with the NFIP [National Flood Insurance Program]," which allows homeowners with federally backed mortgages to get flood insurance.

Phase one of the project included discovery and a two-dimensional base-level engineering analysis throughout the county, O'Dell explained, noting that was completed before his tenure with the county began.

He explained that if the county is

not in compliance, the county could be "suspended" from that program, adding that there are only a few counties in the state that are suspended.

"So most communities stay in compliance," he said, mentioning that the county staying in compliance helps constituents maintain insurance on properties located within a flood plain.

O'Dell explained that a lot of the flood zones are outdated, meaning they were last mapped between 2009 and 2014, making them more than 10 years old.

He also noted that some of the zones are not mapped to the "same amount of detail."

According to agenda documentation, "The regulatory update (through the Preliminary and Post Preliminary Phases 3 and 4) will be funded with FEMA's Fiscal Years 2020-2024."

O'Dell clarified that there is no cost to the county for the project.

He added that the purpose of the MOA is to formally document the selected scope of work and choice modeling methodology, and inform all study partners of expectations while working together.

O'Dell further explained that phase two of the project involves creating a new flood hazard analysis, along with newly updated flood risk data sets. The project will also identify and generate special flood hazards while restudying streams that are currently not considered as "valid."

Homes located within a flood plain will be required to get flood insurance, O'Dell mentioned.

"In order for our community to effectively receive flood insurance, we as a county must be in compli-

ance with FEMA's regulations and practices," O'Dell stated.

He noted that rivers and streams change over time, highlighting the need to restudy certain areas.

According to agenda documentation, the focus of phase two of the MAP project is to produce a detailed "Zone AE" as well as a refined approximate mapping, Zone A, for all currently effective, out-of-date reaches.

The documentation also notes that there are currently 233.4 miles of outdated streams in the county that need to be updated.

Then-commissioner Ronnie Maez asked how FEMA determines what is a flood zone and what's not.

O'Dell explained that FEMA currently uses an aerial overlay map of the area, noting that much of Zone A does not have "boots on the ground."

He indicated that he has requested for FEMA and its partners and contractors to perform mapping and studying of the streams with "boots on the ground."

"There's a lot of areas that in my lifetime I've never seen flood," Maez said.

O'Dell replied, "exactly," explaining that the official map will contain more detail and feature a refined flood plain zone.

He went on to explain that with the way it is now, a property might be in a flood plain based on the overlay map and would have to get a flood plain development permit. However, once a surveyor goes out to the property, they could find that it is actually not located in a flood plain zone.

Maez commented that he has experienced that situation in the

past, "so this will make that a lot more clearer."

O'Dell explained that property owners can still potentially build in a flood plain zone and that the MAP project will give a base flood elevation.

"You can build in a flood plain; you just need to have the first floor above a half foot of the base flood elevation," O'Dell said.

He then mentioned that much of Zone A currently does not have a base flood evaluation depicted, which will be mapped in phase two, noting that areas along Mill Creek and the Lower Blanco will be getting remapped.

"We've seen a lot of development in the Lower Blanco and had to issue a lot of flood plain development permits ... so, that'll help these properties," O'Dell said.

He mentioned that initially there was not going to be any "boots on the ground" work, but when performing aerial mapping, bridges can be inaccurately shown as a "blockage" of a stream, "which would disrupt the affected flood zone, so we're having surveyors go on the ground and actually map those areas."

Maez described that approach as a "more common sense view."

O'Dell noted that the remaining phases of the MAP project are expected to wrap up by 2028, giving the county a more detailed map and allowing homeowners with federally backed mortgages to obtain flood insurance.

"Otherwise, if we're not in compliance as a community, we lose that ability, which as we know can cost people a lot of money," he said.

clayton@pagosahun.com

Town council decides on criteria for early child care and education funding

By Derek Kutzer
Staff Writer

On Jan. 7, the Pagosa Springs Town Council considered the criteria by which it will fund its initiative for early child care and education in 2025.

A total of \$88,000 was budgeted in the town's 2025 budget for supporting early childhood education, which is also one of the council's top priorities.

"This figure," an agenda document states, "includes funding for daycare centers, in-home daycares and other needs related to this goal."

Town Manager David Harris told the council that town staff would "like some direction from y'all," adding that March 18 would be the deadline for requests for funding.

He explained that, as of the meeting, the council's priorities for funding included the creation of new child care slots, retention of existing slots, aid of families in the local workforce, exhibition of self-sufficiency in funding models and increasing accessibility to a variety of demographics in the local community.

Mayor Shari Pierce asked the rest of the council if they were "good with these priorities" for awarding the funding.

Council member Brooks Lindner replied that it was not clear "how we assess this criteria," adding that he'd like to see "more of a rubric-style assessment."

"How can we work towards making this more objective?" he asked.

Council member Gary Williams

suggested that maybe "we are overthinking this," saying, "We should support those who are offering services."

He added, "If they are not adding more slots, then don't give them the money."

Council member Leonard Martinez explained that he wanted more criteria added that would ensure providers are making services available to the "underserved" in the community.

Martinez added that he knows of "people that don't even apply" for child care services because "they don't think it's even possible," referring to the costs and wait lists for service.

"I think it's important to try to bridge that gap a little bit," he said.

Pierce suggested adding another question in the application for funding that would ask, "How are you seeking to reach underserved communities?"

It was suggested by Lindner to change the language of one of the questions in the application to ask how the applicant is serving underserved and low-income members of the community.

"Why don't we just state it, instead of saying 'variety of demographics?'" he asked.

■ See Funding A5

Obituary

Patrick Manners Sullivan

Feb. 27, 1947-Dec. 11, 2024

With heavy hearts, we announce the passing of Patrick Manners Sullivan, a beloved father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother and friend who left us on Dec. 11, 2024, at 77.



Patrick was born in Seattle but raised in La Canada Flintridge. He spent much of his life in California, Hawaii and Colorado. He was one of 10 siblings, and his life was defined by his deep love for the ocean, the outdoors and traveling to new places. He was a dedicated father, raising three children mostly on his own. As a passionate surfer, he spent countless hours riding waves, with memorable surf trips to the Channel Islands and Bali alongside his oldest son, Isra. He sailed the Mediterranean with Dali and explored Mexico with his youngest

daughter, Sierra. Whether camping trips to Mount Shasta, the Oregon coast, Mexico and Lake Powell, or wakeboarding and fishing in the ocean and lakes, or road trips with his granddaughters, Patrick shared his zest for life with his family and friends, teaching them the importance of hard work, play and being present in the moment.

Patrick was also a skilled golfer, achieving a remarkable hole in one at Turtle Bay on Oahu, and could even play the flute, which he would use to playfully wake his children with the bugle call reveille, I can't get them up this morning. His talents didn't stop there — Patrick was extremely handy and could design and build almost anything. He made his living as a contractor, building and remodeling everywhere he went. Whether crafting a new project or offering advice, his practical wisdom and ability to make things with his hands were legendary.

A man of deep principles, Patrick believed his purpose on earth was to help others. He was granted an honorable discharge from the Navy as a conscientious objector during Vietnam due to his belief in "what is right for (his) own spiritual understanding

as well as for the eventual peace and brotherhood of mankind." As a single dad, he worked hard to raise his two daughters and son, ensuring they learned how to care for themselves, eat healthy, help others and be kind. He always loved to bring people together for a good meal, and his taco nights were something we always looked forward to. He extended his dedication to self-care and wellness to his family by sponsoring visits to the Optimum Health Institute with him, a testament to his belief in alternative perspectives.

Patrick's love for life, adventure, family and friends will always be remembered. He is survived by his two daughters, four granddaughters, one great-granddaughter, eight siblings and many more loved ones scattered across the globe who will carry his legacy forward in their hearts. He will be deeply missed, but his spirit will live on in the waves he surfed, the trails he blazed and the love he shared.

Two celebrations of life will be held to honor Patrick's memory: one in Pagosa Springs, Colo., on Feb. 1, and another in Santa Barbara, Calif., on March 15. For more details, please contact Dali Pyzel or Sierra Oshita.

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2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

2024 was an interesting year in Pagosa Country. There was no want for good news, bad news, controversial issues, and no lack of interesting news to keep SUN readers focused on local events, situations and personalities.

The SUN is taking a look back at some of those events, selected by SUN staff writers. This week, we look back at July, August and September.

July

• Heavy rains moved through the area as July began, with the heaviest amounts falling on July 1.

According to Shawn Prochazka from Pagosa Weather, reports from the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow (CoCoRaHS) for July 1 noted that some areas in the county received more than 2 inches of rain within 24 hours for the first time since May 2014.

According to CoCoRaHS, downtown Pagosa Springs saw the most rainfall on July 1 with reports of 2.24 inches and 2.25 inches. Areas around uptown Pagosa Springs reported figures ranging from .66 inches to 2.02 inches, while Aspen Springs reported 1.61 and 1.71 inches.

• On July 2, the Archuleta County Sheriff's Office (ACSO) announced that an investigation was underway into the apparent homicide of Chrystal Snow, 39, of Pagosa Springs.

According to the press release, the ACSO was dispatched to a 911 open line in the 1000 block of County Road 700 at approximately 2:20 a.m. on July 2.

• The Fourth of July Parade featured Lisa and Bob Scott as its 2024 grand marshals. The parade also featured a new route that did not include U.S. 160.

Pagosa Springs was host for numerous events over several days for the Fourth of July, among them the parade, Red Ryder Roundup Rodeo, Freedom Float and a fireworks display.

• On July 5, Archuleta County Clerk and Recorder Kristy Archuleta approved a recall petition regarding Commissioner Veronica Medina, allowing for the petition to be circulated to collect signatures.

The petition alleged potential conflicts of interest concerning her votes on purchasing property for a county administration building and on the Archuleta County Land Use Regulations.

• Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) and the ACSO began investigating a boating collision the afternoon of July 6 near Windsurf Beach at Navajo State Park that left one person dead and another in critical condition.

"Initial reports are that a vessel collided with an inflatable tube carrying three passengers being towed behind another vessel," according to a CPW press release

One person, 25-year-old Mikayla Wright, of Durango, was pronounced dead at the scene and another was airlifted to a local hospital. A third passenger was uninjured.

• Pagosa Fire Protection District (PFPD) personnel responded to a structure fire early in the morning of July 6 after an explosion was heard

Funding

Continued from A4

Pierce added, "So, we want to say low-income and underserved?"

It was decided to give town staff the direction to add the more specific language into the criteria included in the application for funding.

Harris noted that staff would amend the application language.

Question six in the application will add the more specific language of "increasing accessibility of early child-care and education to low-income and underserved members of our community," he suggested.

And then a new question would ask, "What efforts are you taking to encourage applications from underserved members of our community?" he said.

Pierce asked the council, "Is everybody good with that?"

The council members responded in the affirmative.

It was then decided that council members Lindner and Martinez would look at the application criteria again after staff amends it before it goes out to the public.

According to the council's goals and objectives for 2024-24, under "Early Childhood Care and Education," the goal includes:

• Watch for opportunities to make it more affordable for those without access.

• Encourage the expansion of additional slots and creation of new early child care and education centers. derek@pagosahun.com

in the area of Beaver Circle and Lake Forest Circle round 3:30 a.m.

No injuries were reported and the occupants were out of the house prior to the PFPD's arrival.

• Archuleta County Mountain Express Transit (MET) was informed on July 9 that it received a \$418,359 Bus and Bus Facilities Grant from the Federal Transit Administration for the construction of a park-and-ride facility in Aspen Springs.

According to the county, the park-and-ride location will support a new bus route between Aspen Springs and Pagosa Springs.

• In July, the Wolf Creek Gun and Bow Association (WCGBA) received notification of conditional approval in funding for the development of an archery range.

The letter from CPW states that \$63,140 has been allotted to WCGBA, following review by a grant program review panel.

The WCGBA previously entered into a 15-plus-year lease agreement with the Pagosa Lakes Property Owners Association to develop an archery range in the area of Trails Boulevard just north of U.S. 160.

• In mid-July, reports revealed the

2024 Fourth of July celebrations drew in big crowds, with more than 63,300 people visiting Archuleta County from July 3-7, according to a Placer report provided by Tourism Director Jennifer Green.

According to Green, "It was an increase over 2022 and 2023, but not quite to the crazy visitor pandemic levels of 2021, which had 68,600 visitors over the same time frame."

• Two Pagosa Springs athletes — Abigail Nehring and Creede Dozier — earned the right to compete in the USA Track and Field Junior Olympics July 22-28 in College Station, Texas.

Both earned the right to compete at Texas A&M's EB Cushing Stadium after placing in the top three at the Region 10 event earlier in the month.

• According to the U.S. Drought Monitor (USDM), as of July 9, there were no portions of Archuleta County in any drought stage.

According to USDM records, prior to July 9, the last time Archuleta County was completely drought free was on July 11, 2023, coming out of a heavy snowfall season that saw Wolf Creek Ski Area receive 490 inches of snow throughout the 2022-2023 season.

Before that, there was a four-year period during which none of Archuleta County was free of drought going back to July 16, 2019, according to the USDM, and Archuleta County reached extreme and exceptional drought conditions in 2020.

• At its July 15 meeting, the San Juan Water Conservancy District (SJWCD) Board of Directors voted to move forward with a request for proposals for a reservoir manager for the organization's reservoir project at Running Iron Ranch.

• At its July 16 meeting, the Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) approved

two change orders for construction work on the county transit center project totaling \$227,735.78.

At a BoCC work session earlier in the day, Public Works Director Mike Torres explained the first change order was a previously discussed change adding bay heaters for the bus bays at a cost of \$76,903.32 and the second change order is for additional blasting and rock excavation occurring in conjunction with two previous change orders for blasting and excavation.

The additional work will cost \$150,832.46 on top of the previous change orders, Torres explained, adding that the construction company had to blast and do additional rock excavation on the foundation, the retention pond and the utility lines for the project.

• Archuleta County Assessor Johanna Tully-Elliott provided a report on the 2024 valuation of property in the county to the BoCC at its July 16 meeting.

She explained that the real property valuation for the county is \$611,920,160, while the personal property valuation for the property is \$24,428,310 for a total of \$636,348,470 in assessed value.

• In July, the Pagosa Springs Police Department (PSPD) asked people to be sure to lock their vehicles and not leave valuable items in them following a series of unlocked cars being "rummaged through."

According to Police Chief Bill Rockensock, between July 5 and 16, six vehicles were "rummaged through" in the middle of the night downtown.

• On July 18, the Pagosa Springs Town Council voted unanimously to reject a plan to construct new parking spaces in a corner of the Town Park

See Review A6



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Review

Continued from A5
athletic field.

At the meeting, the council considered two options. Option 1 would have provided 65 additional parking spaces. Option 2 would have provided 35 additional spaces.

Tucker Jacobson and Colt Lewis earned belt buckles at the Colorado State High School Rodeo before moving on to compete at the largest rodeo in the world, the National High School Finals Rodeo, in Rock Springs, Wyo., July 14-20.

Jacobson qualified in the bareback riding after finishing second in the state. Lewis qualified in saddle bronc riding after finishing third in the state.

On July 23, the BoCC announced that it selected Jack M. Harper II (then the county's interim manager) and Richard Bellis as finalists for the county manager position.

The Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation District (PAWSD) Board of Directors voted to accept the resignation of Paul Hansen from the board and to initiate a search for another director at its July 25 meeting.

PAWSD board chair Jim Smith stated Hansen had communicated to him that he wished to resign immediately.

Events associated with the 22nd annual Spanish Fiesta kicked off in the morning on July 27 with the unveiling of a new bronze shepherd statue dedicated to the long history of sheepherding across multiple cultures in the region. Festivities continued later in the day at the county fairgrounds and included performances by the Ballet Folklorico de Durango.

Archuleta announced on July 30 that two candidates collected enough approved signatures to successfully petition to run as unaffiliated candidates for Archuleta County commissioner for District 1, with the clerk and recorder explaining that Kenneth Bowles and Wayne Hooper both collected enough signatures.

The ACSO, PFPD and U.S. Forest Service responded to and contained a fire on County Road 500 near Coal Mine Road in late July.

The fire, called the Coal Mine Fire, was kept at 11 acres, according to the ACSO.

According to a July 31 press release, the Pagosa Springs Community Development Corporation was awarded \$20,000 from the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority's (CHFA's) Direct Effect Awards.

The press release explains that award recipients included public housing authorities, cities, counties and local municipalities "whose missions align with CHFA's work to strengthen Colorado by investing in affordable housing and community development."

According to CHFA, the grant award "will help to build internal capacity by hiring staff to assist with grant execution and compliance."

August

A vehicle-versus-pedestrian collision on Aug. 1 left one in serious condition, according to a press release from the PSPD.

According to a press release from the PSPD, at approximately 10:53 a.m. on Aug. 1, the Archuleta Combined Dispatch Center received a call of a vehicle-versus-pedestrian collision in the 200 block of Pagosa Street.

The 73rd annual Archuleta County Fair, held Aug. 1-4, provided days of fun for all ages, with competition, live music, fun and games, food, rodeos and more.

At an Aug. 6 meeting, the BoCC selected Harper as the new county manager in a 2-1 vote.

Harper had been serving as the interim county manager since May.

The BoCC heard several public comments urging them to delay the selection of a county manager or seek new applicants due to concerns about the transparency of the hiring process and other issues.

Commissioner Ronnie Maez and Medina voted in support of Harper, while Commissioner Warren Brown voted against the motion.

Following an executive session, the BoCC voted at its Aug. 6 meeting to table decisions on a letter of intent and a purchase and sale agreement with Arenalabs LLC for the purchase of property for a county administration building.

The BoCC had previously voted to move forward with drafting a letter of intent to purchase the property, an approximately five-acre portion of a larger planned development adjacent to U.S. 160 and South Pagosa Boulevard, at its June 5 meeting.

Also at its Aug. 6 meeting, the BoCC voted to select ECONorthwest as the consultant to perform a housing needs assessment for the county.

The PFPD Board of Directors voted to implement fees for responses outside the PFPD at its Aug. 6 meeting.

The Pagosa Springs High School (PSHS) Pirate golf team teed off for

the first time for the 2024 season on Aug. 8 in Cortez, with Pirate junior Johnathon Smith finishing first after logging a 72 on the par-72 course.

It was the first of several first-place finishes for Smith on the season.

On Aug. 12, Brown, along with other commissioners representing Colorado Counties Inc. (CCI), presented to the state's Cell Phone Connectivity Interim Study Committee.

The Colorado General Assembly committee was, according to the state, studying "cell phone connectivity in the state with a focus on identifying gaps in cell phone coverage."

Brown presented alongside Fremont County Commissioner Debbie Bell, La Plata County Commissioner Matt Salka and Routt County Commissioner Tim Redmond.

The CCI panel was one of several presentations the committee heard on the day.

A motorcyclist from Durango died following a crash Sunday afternoon, Aug. 18, according to the PSPD.

According to a PSPD press release, at approximately 2:36 p.m. on Aug. 18, a motorcycle driving westbound on U.S. 160 collided with a vehicle that was making a U-turn on U.S. 160 from Talisman Drive.

Despite the immediate response from emergency medical personnel, the motorcyclist, identified as a 55-year-old male from Durango, Colorado, was pronounced deceased at the scene, the press release states.

The SJWCD Board of Directors discussed amendments to its request for proposals or a general project manager for the district's reservoir project at its Aug. 19 meeting.

The board ultimately tabled the issue to allow it to receive legal advice on potential revisions to the structure and scope of the request for proposals at its September meeting.

The BoCC unanimously approved the employment agreement with Harper on Aug. 20.

On Aug. 20, Gov. Jared Polis, CPW and Great Outdoors Colorado announced grant recipients for the Outdoor Regional Partnerships Initiative establishing two new partnerships in southwestern and southeastern Colorado.

With the new partnerships, there are now 20 outdoor regional partnerships covering about 75 percent of the state. First launched in 2021, the initiative funds regional coalitions that bring broad interests together to ensure that Colorado's lands, waters and wildlife thrive while also providing for equitable and quality outdoor recreation experiences.

Grant recipients included six established coalitions spanning the Western Slope and central mountains, and two emerging coalitions in the southeastern grasslands and Archuleta County.

In Archuleta County, the Pagosa Area Recreation Coalition was granted \$125,000.

The Knights of Columbus hosted the 21st annual Duck Race downtown on Aug. 24, with a picnic preceding the annual race, which saw hundreds of plastic ducks take to the San Juan River. The race was more swift than usual, with the river running at about 260 cubic feet per second at the time.

The Special Olympics Pagosa Springs softball team brought home the gold medal at the Special Olym-

pics New Mexico Four Corners Invitational softball tournament in Farmington, N.M., on Aug. 24, beating their opponents from Albuquerque and Pecos Valley.

The PSHS Lady Pirate volleyball went 3-2 in its first week of the season.

The PSHS Pirate cross-country teams opened the season in Silverton in August.

The meet, coach Rachael Christiansen explained, was "low key," with the coaches responsible for timing their own athletes and all runners competing at the same time.

In a pair of votes over the course of a week, the Archuleta School District Board of Education appointed David Iverson to fill the board's vacancy.

Iverson replaced Dana Guinn, who resigned due to moving, as the director of District 4.

The first of the votes came after the board interviewed the two applicants for the position — Iverson and Angie Ranson — but was done via secret ballot, which is prohibited by state law and district policy.

Then, on Aug. 27, the board held a special meeting to rescind action taken to appoint Iverson on Aug. 20 and to formally make the appointment again.

The PSHS Pirate golf team finished second at the Pagosa Springs Invitational on Aug. 28, with Smith shooting five under par to win the event.

The PAWSD board discussed funding mechanisms for the district's regulatorily required upgrades to the Vista wastewater treatment plant at its Aug. 29 meeting.

Following a discussion, the board directed staff to move forward with seeking funding through a revenue bond publicly issued by the district to finance upgrades to the Vista plant required by Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CD-PHE) Water Quality Control Commission Regulation 85, in addition to other collection system improvements mandated by the CDPHE.

The PSHS Pirate boys' soccer team began its season near the end of August with a 1-1 draw in its opener against Central Grand Junction.

A crash on the afternoon of Aug. 30 involved three vehicles, left four with serious injuries and closed U.S. 160 for several hours.

According to the Colorado State Patrol, the crash took place at about 4:25 p.m. on Aug. 30 on U.S. 160 near the intersection with Trails Boulevard when a Ford F350 truck with a trailer was driving eastbound on U.S. 160 slowed and a Ford F150, also pulling a trailer, collided with the F350's trailer.

The F150 then went airborne and into the westbound lane, where it collided with a Chevrolet 2500 head-on.

The F150 rotated and came to rest in the middle of the westbound lane, and the Chevrolet went off the right side of the roadway and rolled. The F350 was able to stop on the shoulder.

The crash involved three vehicles and six total occupants. Four people were transported with serious bodily injury — both occupants in the F150 and both occupants in the Chevrolet. The two occupants of the F350 were uninjured.

The PSHS Pirate football team opened its season on Aug. 30 with a 42-27 win over the Kirtland Central Broncos.

September

Late August and early September brought the annual seasonal uptick of bear activity, with bears appearing in driveways, in trees, on a roof and in the laundry room of a local care facility.

The majority of Archuleta County students returned to school for the 2024-2025 school year on Sept. 3.

On Sept. 3, it was revealed during an exchange at a BoCC meeting that the recall election on Medina would not be moving forward.

At its meeting on Sept. 3, the BoCC tabled its decision to move forward with a letter of intent, as well as a purchase and sale agreement, for the purchase of five acres of property to construct a new county administration building.

With the same motion, the BoCC also tabled a decision on moving forward with a letter of intent with Pagosa Partners I for the purchase of approximately 5.5 acres of land. That property is located in the Aspen Village development at 2901 Cornerstone Drive.

On Sept. 3, the town council approved a motion for town staff to enter into negotiations for the purchase of about four acres of property adjacent to the San Juan River near the junction of U.S. 160 and U.S. 84, hoping to expand river access in the community.

On Sept. 3, the board of the Pagosa Springs Sanitation General Improvement District (PSSGID) voted to move \$500,000 from town

See Review A7

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.68 acre, 1440 square foot commercial building. There is enough property to build another building or make a large wrap around parking lot. There is a 3000 BTU gas heater and a 40 gallon hot water heater. The doors and walls have a 90 minute fireproof rating. Walls are removable so the floor plan could be opened up. There is a kitchen sink, stove and dishwasher, half bath and the overhead door is 8' x 10'.

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SUN photo/Shari Pierce

Emergency personnel attend to the scene of a crash on Tuesday, Jan. 14, just west of Pagosa Springs on U.S. 160. According to the Colorado State Patrol, the crash was called in at 10:08 a.m. after the box truck drifted off the right shoulder, then off the road. The driver, a 28-year-old male out of Indiana, rolled the truck onto its passenger side while trying to drive back onto the roadway. The truck was empty at the time and no injuries were reported. The driver was cited for careless driving. The crash caused a brief closure of U.S. 160 to allow for the recovery of the vehicle.

Review

Continued from A6

funds to kick-start critical repairs on its sewer system, pushing off a bigger decision on financing for a larger overhaul of the system.

Public Works Director Karl Johnson said that he feared a “catastrophic event” could be in the cards if the district didn’t do something then to shore up the system.

• Christopher Ross Maez, 56, was found guilty of murder in the first degree with intent with a finding of domestic violence on Sept. 6 for the 2019 homicide of Millie Mestas.

He was subsequently sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole by Sixth Judicial District Chief Judge Jeffrey Wilson.

• The Sept. 7 Joe I. Vigil XC Invitational in Alamosa showcased progress across the Pirate cross-country teams, and featured a number of personal records.

• Schools in Archuleta County made broad improvements in standardized testing scores from the year prior, demonstrating growth across subjects but falling short of state averages, according to results released by the Colorado Department of Education that were discussed by Archuleta School District in September.

• The Pagosa Pickleball Club announced there were 198 registered participants with players ranging in age from 9 to 75+ in its annual tournament. A total of 419 matches were played Sept. 13-15.

• The PSHS Pirate cross-country teams finished first and third at the Sept. 14 Bayfield XC Invitational.

The Lady Pirates took first out of five teams and the Pirates took third out of nine teams.

The Lady Pirates were led on the day by Sienna Rose, who finished first with a time of 23 minutes, 46.74 seconds.

• Community members gathered for Veterans of Archuleta County’s pancake breakfast and Young Eagle rides Sept. 14 and 15. The event provided free flights for kids 8-18, with 165 kids flying over the two days, including more than 100 who were first-time flyers.

• The SJWCD, with a grant from the Colorado Water Conservation Board, released the first of three short educational films regarding the watershed and the future of the water supply in Archuleta County in September.

The video, “The Value of Snow,” was shown in multiple venues in the county and can also be viewed online at sjwcd.org.

• A plane crash-landed around noon in the area of Colo. 151 and Forest Service Road 613 on Sept. 17.

According to a press release from the ACSO, the Archuleta County Combined Dispatch Center received a 911 call at approximately 12:03 p.m. reporting that a light aircraft had crashed.

Upon arrival, it was determined the pilot and passenger “had safely evacuated the wreckage and walked to a nearby residence and called for assistance.”

The plane had two occupants, one of who was transported for medical assistance.

• Results of the 2024 La Plata Electric Association (LPEA) election were announced at the cooperative’s annual meeting on Sept. 18.

Representing District 1 (Archuleta

County), candidate Kirsten Skeehan won with 990 votes. Candidate Dusty Mars received 466 votes.

• LPEA also announced on Sept. 18 that it had entered into a strategic agreement with Mercuria Energy America LLC to help LPEA build a new energy portfolio following the transition from its incumbent provider on April 1, 2026.

• On Sept. 19, the town council adopted new rates for the geothermal water that the town sends to The Springs Resort.

The new rates are based on what the council deemed as the “fair market” values of the heat and mineral content of the water.

The council decided that a fair market rate for the heat/energy of the water should reflect the same percentage of rate increases that general customers have experienced.

The council’s calculations deem that if The Springs Resort also paid these rate increases for the geothermal energy, its rate would be \$2,084 per month or \$25,007 annually, and this rate would be the fair market value for the heat/energy component of the water.

On the mineral component, the council decided that the fair market value would be determined by the daily entry fee that The Springs charges its nonresident visitors, resulting in a fee of \$1,675 per month or \$21,100 annually.

• On Sept. 19, the town council approved a resolution to authorize the professional services of a financial advisor to guide the town through the difficulties of financing large capital projects, such as the town’s needed sewer system improvements.

The council approved a professional services agreement with McLiney and Company to serve as the town’s financial advisor.

• A PSPD investigation determined no crime was committed and there was no nefarious intent when a maintenance person at 449 San Juan St. accessed the counting room of the Archuleta County Election’s Office on Sept. 20.

According to Rockensock, a maintenance employee for the building owner was working on a water leak at the facility on Sept. 20 and entered the election room “in the course of their duties.”

Rockensock and Archuleta both reported that the individual was in the room for a few seconds and left without touching anything, with both citing surveillance video.

• The Pirate football team hosted Monte Vista on Sept. 20 for the team’s first home game of the year.

The Pirates defeated Monte Vista 28-6, improving their record to 2-1 on the season.

• Students and staff at PSHS celebrated homecoming in the week leading up to the football game. Sophia Sottek was named queen, with Seth Zeigler named king. Honesty Sweet, Christopher Young-Martinez, Edgar Ortiz, Cadence Kerns, Kaila Limebrook, Tommaso Nigro, Duke Ketchum, Madison DeClark, Molly Washburn and Gage Sams rounded out the homecoming court.

• The annual ColorFest festivities brought color to town Sept. 21 and 22 with two mass hot air balloon ascensions, the Passport to Pagosa Wine and Food Festival, and Bands and Brews Festival.

• The PSPD reported a fatal bicycle accident that occurred on Sept. 21 at U.S. 160 at 8th Street.

The PSPD, PFPD and Pagosa Springs Medical Center EMS were dispatched to a vehicle and bicycle crash with injuries near the intersection of San Juan (U.S. 160) at 8th Street.

Upon officers’ arrival, lifesaving efforts were being administered by citizens on the scene.

The 64-year-old bicyclist, Conrad Steffens, from Seattle, Wash., was transported to Pagosa Springs Medical Center, where he was pronounced deceased.

The investigation determined the vehicle was driving westbound on San Juan making a left turn onto South 8th Street. The bicycle was riding east on San Juan. The bicycle collided with the passenger-side door of the truck.

• The major lunar standstill was observed in September and was featured in a number of events in Pagosa Springs and at Chimney Rock National Monument.

Every 18.6 years, the moon’s titled orbit aligns with the Earth’s axis, bringing the moon to its farthest northern or southern rising positions.

During the event, the moon rose between the two rock pinnacles, Chimney Rock and Companion Rock.

• In September, the PSPD reported that the pedestrian involved in an Aug. 1 collision passed away while hospitalized.

Rockensock identified the pedestrian as 68-year-old Brian Ambrosich.

• At a regular meeting on Sept. 26, the Archuleta County Planning Commission voted unanimously to table its recommendation in regard to an outdoor shooting range development at the Keyah Grande property.

In an interview, County Development Director Pamela Flowers explained that the range was developed in cooperation with the county to provide local law enforcement agencies with a place to train.

• At its Sept. 12 special meeting, the PAWSD board voted unanimously to direct staff to notify and consult

with the SJWCD and the Colorado Water Conservation Board on a potential sale of Running Iron Ranch.

The board continued discussion of the sale at a Sept. 27 special meeting.

• Smith and fellow Pirate Tyler Dimond earned the chance to compete at the 3A state golf championship in Pueblo while competing at regionals in Cortez on Sept. 30.

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Photo courtesy Josh Kurz

A photo depicting the snow depth in the Hatcher Lake area on Feb. 23, 2019.



Photo courtesy Josh Kurz

A snow gauge stands ready for snow on Jan. 10.

Winter

Continued from front

Creek Pass) to infer the snow conditions at lower elevations. First-of-the-month snow data (January through June) has been collected at the site since 1936. Daily snow data collection began in 1979.

Although bare ground is common in December, we can usually count on a white Christmas and a big New Year's storm. The 1991-2020 median shows a jump in snowpack during this window of time, which usually blankets the ground with snow at least through January.

However, "winters" with less snow than 2025 have occurred five times since 1979. In fact, last year's winter snowpack started similarly at the low elevations.

However, last year I was able to skate ski the West Fork Nordic Trail with my family on Jan. 1. Sadly, the only places to Nordic ski this year are Fall Creek and Wolf Creek Ski

Area, both of which require longer commutes to the high-elevation, lung-busting terrain. Last year, the bare ground came to an end with a big storm on Jan. 6.

Surprisingly, 2019 had a similar start to 2025, but an endless stream of snow storms made up for lost time in February and March, causing the 2019 winter to finish with an above-average snowpack. At one point we had 53 inches in our yard.

Unfortunately for snow lovers, years like 2019 are the exception. December storms, particularly Christmas through New Year's, usually contribute around 20 percent of our annual snowpack. If our snowpack is below average on Jan. 1, we will usually end below average.

The winters of 1990, 1996, 2000, 2006 and 2018 all began with less snow than we currently have. As for these top five procrastinators, snow finally started piling up in February

and March, but, sadly, all five finished well below average.

The worst year on record and the type of winter (and summer) we should all fear occurred in 2002, which surprisingly started better than 2025 and the five procrastinators. If you think the snow is bad this year, you would have regretted buying a season pass at Wolf Creek in 2002. There was virtually no new snow from Dec. 15 through early March.

And there weren't many summer boating, tubing or fishing opportunities on the San Juan River because the river peaked at 296 cubic feet per second (cfs) on April 15 (instead of 2,500 cfs at the end of May). Without our normal pulse of melting snow, the rafting and tubing seasons did not exist in 2002. Sadly, the San Juan River through town hovered around 10 cfs August through September. And, our region's first large wildfire also occurred in 2002, when Mis-

sionary Ridge burned 73,000 acres and 46 homes between Durango and Vallecito Reservoir.

Now that I've informed you about past winters, here's what the historical data predicts for the rest of the snow season. Based on our snowpack on Jan. 1, the trendline predicts around 23 inches of snow water equivalent (SWE) at the Upper San Juan site by April 1. But there has been a huge range of outcomes for the years that had similar starts to 2025.

Although I'm getting concerned, hopefully, a weather pattern shift will deliver much-needed snow. History shows that this winter can make up for lost time in February and March. In the meantime, we can all hope for a year like 1980, the ultimate snow procrastinator, and pray that we don't have another year like 2002. I hope you can enjoy our meager snowpack on Wolf Creek Pass.

The snow has been worse.

Celebrating

Continued from front

From an idea that sprang to mind while the U.S. was still firmly in the grip of COVID-19 and she herself was nursing a torn ACL, here was Miller in the 3 a.m. dawn of Taupo, New Zealand, visualizing the gauntlet awaiting her, when she heard a familiar voice.

It was her husband, Lowell Wiles, singing "Happy Birthday."

And as the couple made the hour's drive to the site of the Ironman Triathlon 70.3 World Championships, "He held my hand," Miller recalled.

The gesture was a fitting one for the couple, who, in addition to Miller's participation in the championships, had arrived in New Zealand to celebrate another achievement, albeit one still requiring endurance: their 20th wedding anniversary.

"Lowell is and has always been my greatest supporter — no matter what crazy things I decide to do," Miller wrote in an email to The SUN. "This race was no exception."

Miller would rely on that support as she inched closer to the banks of Great Lake Taupo, where she prepared herself to join some of the most elite triathletes in the world.

'Just surreal'

More than 6,000 entrants converged on the island country for the invitation-only championships, held Dec. 14-15, 2024, after qualifying at races held during the 12 months prior.

Miller, who turned 60 on her race day, qualified for the championships in May 2024 and was one of 151 women racing in her age group and among more than 2,400 female athletes in attendance.

"It was just surreal," Miller said. "I kept saying, even if I take last place, I'm still at the world championships. So, I just made up my mind to soak it all in ... I just wanted to make the most of every single minute I was in that race."

Over the course of seven hours, 10 minutes and 42 seconds, Miller swam 1.2 miles over the crystalline volcanic lake — the coldest waters she'd ever faced — biked 56 miles across punchy New Zealand farmlands — windy and hilly — and crossed the finish line after a half-marathon run — her favorite — along Tapuaeoharuru Bay.

"I spent the day laughing, crying, and swearing at the wind and hills," Miller wrote.

Among her competitors, Miller found four other women celebrating

their birthdays, too, and described the camaraderie within an age division whose entrants recognized in each other much of the same dedication, pain and good fortune that had carried them all the way to New Zealand.

"In the younger age groups, they want to win," Miller said. "I think at my age we're all just like, 'Oh my God, look at where we are. How lucky are we to be healthy and be able to do something we love?' I just felt so much gratitude."

Like any odyssey, Miller's journey to the world championships was not without its darker turns. Throughout her years of training and preparatory races, she faced inner demons, injury and in Taupo even a missing bike (it arrived from customs less than three hours before the registration deadline).

"Being there, competing with these amazing and kind women from around the world, was beyond any goal I ever imagined setting," she wrote.

Miller's 106th-place division finish came little more than three months after she completed her first full Ironman in Madison, Wis. After four weeks spent recovering from the mental, physical and emotional upheaval of that race, she immediately began preparing for the world championships.

By the time she arrived in New Zealand, Miller described feeling a familiar mixture of nerves, doubt and giddy anticipation, but also burnout: By her count, she'd completed 29 triathlons since 2021.

Once home, she was ready for a change of pace.

Saying 'yes'

Sitting inside a coffee shop back home in Pagosa Springs, reflecting on years of arduous training and competitive racing, Miller suggested 2025 will look a little different than other years in recent memory — when the single-minded focus of a triathlete dominated her life.

"I'm still recovering," she said.

"I'm still tired."

This year, she's taking a break from the triathlon circuit to focus on other loves — painting, trail running, community-building, to name a few — and restore her own sense of equilibrium.

"I feel really out of balance right now, because I kind of ignored that relaxing, creative side for the last few years," she said. "It just [felt] very one-sided, when you're just focused on beating up your body constantly. I've already started painting and I can just feel things kind of melting a little bit."

To beat the post-race blues — a malaise experienced by many athletes after the big event ends — Miller will be keeping busy running local trails, going on adventures with friends and trying to bring some of that Ironman camaraderie back home.

This Saturday, Miller is co-leading a March for Equality through downtown Pagosa Springs, where she and fellow organizers hope community members can come together to peacefully express what's on their hearts and minds heading into the new year.

"We want parents to bring their kids, to show them what a peaceful march is, and the importance of expressing what's important to you," Miller said.

The procession is scheduled to begin at 11 a.m. from Town Park, where Miller's crew will have supplies available for anyone who wants to make a sign to carry while marching.

"It's just going to be peaceful, very peaceful and friendly," Miller said. "Maybe for people who feel like they're not being heard, it's a chance to be heard and find others in the community."

In addition to Saturday's march, Miller is working with others to build a network of local women who regularly come together for mutual support and connection.

Those efforts, as well as plans to hike the rim of the Grand Canyon and through the Alps, are all part of what keeps life moving forward for

the newly minted 60-year-old.

For others hoping to capture some of that same momentum in their own lives, Miller had some simple, yet seasoned wisdom.

"Follow your dreams," she said. "Just keep moving forward. That's what I always believe. Follow the opportunities and say 'yes' to as many things as you can. And if some don't work out, that's OK. But still keep saying, 'yes! Try things that scare you.'" garrett@pagosusun.com

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SUN photos/Clayton Chaney

Archuleta County hosts an inauguration ceremony for its newly elected and re-elected officials on Monday, Jan. 13. The event featured the swearing in of the officials, post of the colors by the American Legion, addresses by dignitaries and more.

PLPOA

Continued from front

In the case of the gymnasium, with a price tag exceeding 15 percent of the association's equity, it's a requirement.

"Because of that, it has to go to majority vote," Schneider said. "This is not something the board can push through."

Voting for PLPOA owners is scheduled to begin Jan. 27 and extend through March 1.

Speaking to a crowded meeting room with 100 more watching online, Schneider traced the project's evolution and made a case for the gym's place within a growing PLPOA community.

"So, every project we do is always kind of specific to one area, and helping one demographic, one neighborhood, one subdivision," said Schneider, who pointed to mailbox locations and subdivision trails as examples.

The gymnasium, he continued, is "actually going to help a bigger majority of the community."

"Now, whether that's a majority of the community as a whole, not sure, but it helps a heck of a lot more than just 80 mailbox locations, a fence, a trail ... It's for the greater good of the community and a healthy overall community, and that's what the PLPOA is all about."

The vision

If approved, plans shared at the Jan. 8 meeting call for a multiuse, 9,600 square-foot structure with an enclosed breezeway connecting it to the existing recreation center on Eagle's Loft Circle.

According to the PLPOA, cost considerations prompted designers to forego exterior windows and opt for pre-painted Sport Court flooring rather than traditional hardwood.

Other specs outlined call for additional restroom facilities, a scoreboard, and enough floor space for basketball, volleyball and pickleball courts, as well as room for indoor soccer play.

Flexible partitions would allow staff to divide the space into smaller areas to accommodate multiple activities and programs all at once, and access would continue to flow through the main entrance in the recreation center.

In a mock schedule, organizers allowed time and space for pickleball play, adult recreation leagues, youth open gym time, prep sport practices and more.

"The idea is to meet everybody's needs," said Ryan Graham, manager of the association's Recreation and Amenities Department. "The idea is to program for everybody within the community of the PLPOA."

Dollars and cents

The PLPOA estimates its proposed \$255 assessment would raise roughly \$1.64 million to help construct the gymnasium.

That total, in addition to \$520,000 already earmarked for the project, would be enough to fund the project, board members report, with a 20 percent cushion allowed for construction overages.

"We wanted to make sure that if we were coming to the association with this that we had our numbers straight," PLPOA finance advisory committee chair Adam Blocki said.

According to the committee's

research, if approved, the project would also add about \$2,500 in property value for a typical \$500,000 home in the association — a figure later attributed to a national, rather than local, model.

The decision to move forward with a vote comes in response to community feedback and with an eye cast toward rising construction costs in the area, Blocki reported.

"The community expressed a level of interest in this," he said.

Summarizing a question board members faced when determining whether or not to bring the vote to its members, he asked, "Will the potential costs of taking on a project like this grow faster than we're able to save for it?"

Blocki further emphasized the assessment fees, if approved, would go "strictly" toward the gym's construction — not ongoing maintenance or repairs at the existing recreation center.

"The goal for both [the recreation center and gym] would be for them to be self-sustaining through after-school programs or membership fees," he said. "We don't want, necessarily, increases in gym membership fees to pay for any of this."

If the gym is to be financially self-sustaining, as the PLPOA hopes, attracting new members will be part of the equation, according to the financial projections released by the association, as will new after-school programs and adult recreation leagues.

"[The gymnasium] is being built with some of those youth and after-school programs in mind, having specific youth memberships available," Blocki said. "That would offset some of the costs."

"[We're] counting on some amount of adult memberships that don't already have memberships to the rec center. That would be one source of potential revenue," he continued. "The youth programs, various recreational sports leagues — all are different sources of potential income that we would bank on offsetting some of those costs."

Lingering questions

With voting set to begin Jan. 27, members arrived at the meeting with questions about far-reaching aspects of the proposed project, including insurance liability, conflicts of interest and the project's financial solvency, among others.

For the PLPOA leadership, answers to some of those questions were easier than others.

While Schneider could assure one attendee that no member of the PLPOA board or their family members would stand to financially benefit from the project, he was more circumspect when asked about what additional risks property owners may be assuming by voting yes.

"I'm personally aware of a \$20 million verdict for a personal injury case in Colorado this past year," one questioner began. "Is there anything in place to limit our exposure as owners if there were some kind of a team sport accident that went above the limits of our insurance?"

Schneider cited a \$10 million umbrella policy currently held by the PLPOA, but acknowledged that the association may need to increase that threshold to allow for any added risks presented by the new gym.

"We will gladly look into upgrading the umbrella policy. Nobody likes to be underinsured," he said. "But, in the same sense, we can't be fear-based."

Other questions fielded by the board touched on the PLPOA's larger financial health, including if purported surpluses can't be used to help fund the gym's construction.

"Yes," Schneider replied, "all revenue streams and surpluses that were not accounted for will be put towards the project, and that's why we're able to keep the assessment so low, keeping things kind of tight but still safe."

He assured audience members that any money raised from the special assessment is required to go directly to the project. In the unlikely event there was any left over, that amount would be refunded to members.

Throughout the meeting, the PLPOA board took pains to distinguish the gymnasium project from others it has considered in recent years — including those outlined in the PLPOA master plan — asking members to think of it as a unique, individual project that stands to profit the association for years to come.

Looking beyond its construction, some in attendance wondered how the gym's long-range profits might compare against the costs to maintain and staff it.

"How are we going to sort of keep track of operating expenses and operating income ... so the income we're seeing matches what you guys have projected?" one attendee asked. "You can only guess what this projected income is going to be."

"Our operating costs and our expected revenue comes from years of the rec center operating," Schneider replied, adding that in 2024 the center counted an almost \$80,000 surplus.

That surplus, in addition to anticipated increases in membership and revenue from rental fees, have the board feeling confident in the gym's ability to remain afloat and reliably profitable.

"I'm suspecting that that first year or two, getting programs up and running, [revenue projections] might be off a touch," Schneider said, but added that the recreation center's profit margin was wide enough to make up for any early disparities.

"We have the ability to play with it and still cover and be OK with a hefty, healthy margin," he said.

Larger-scale questions surrounding the gym's use — by whom and for what purposes — prompted reflective answers from board members that spoke to how they see the project fitting into the greater community of not just the PLPOA, but Pagosa Springs.

"Being a kid who grew up here, it's a moral thing," Schneider said. "I do not have children ... but I care so deeply about kids having a place to practice, outlets and a place to go after school."

He added, "We're not talking about it being overrun by hundreds of kids. It's teams and some tournaments is what we're talking about." Discounted youth memberships for gym and pool use, as well as potential assistance for lower-income households, are all up for discussion, Schneider reported.

"Even though the PLPOA wants to make this a positive financial asset for the community, we're not here

to gouge families," he said. "It's hard enough living in this town."

He added of the benefits, "It helps us financially, pays for itself, helps the community — mentally, physically — and all it takes is a onetime special assessment," he said.

He also discussed the vote. "Keep in mind," he added, "the board could be completely wrong, and that's why the community gets to vote on it. So, we're coming to you saying, do you want this? Reflect your opinions in the vote."

For additional details about the gymnasium's proposed design, features and financial disclosures, as well as a recording of the Jan. 8 meeting, visit www.plpoa.com/gymnasium.

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Outdoors



Photo courtesy Kristin Hentschel

A group of birders pose at Lake Hatcher during the Christmas Bird Count on Dec. 14, 2024.



Photo courtesy Keith Bruno

Peyton Jackson and Connor Thomas spend the last hours of light logging birds for the Christmas Bird Count on Dec. 14, 2024.

79 species reported locally during 125th Christmas Bird Count

By Kevin Bruno
Audubon Rockies

Pagosa Springs citizens came together to conduct the 125th Christmas Bird Count (CBC) on Dec. 14, 2024.

As the nation's longest running community science project, the CBC has been instrumental in not only documenting winter resident birds annually in communities across the country, but also in elevating shifting trends in birds' behavior as a result of the database that has been generated. The clearest trend observed in this long-running dataset is a universal shift of birds wintering further north.

Locally, we only have 14 years of data, but even within that window of time, we have seen similar changes on our own regional landscape.

For example, CBC participants documented 452 American robins in our 15-mile diameter circle on Dec. 14, 2024, far exceeding our previous metric by several 100. Robins have long been thought to be a regional migrant, moving to points south to hack out the winters in places more reasonable. There have been numerous CBC counts with zero robins recorded. However, over the last few years, we've seen them in increasing numbers.

Does weather play a part in this question, you may ask? It certainly does, and considering that we've had little snowfall or resemblance of winter at our elevation, it's an absolute factor. But, to go from a welcomed "harbinger of spring" in March to documented in the hundreds on a mid-winter's day reflects a more substantial shift, yet again validating climate change's discernible patterns.

Likewise, in a similar trajectory,

we've seen red-winged blackbirds showing up in greater numbers in past years, with this year's 325 observed across our eight zones being an all-time high.

Driving this point home even further, this year marks the first year that we've documented western meadowlarks for the CBC, traditionally only a species found in our region during the warmer months.

To back up a little, the CBC is conducted each year between the dates of Dec. 14 and Jan. 5, isolating a consistent timeframe using repeatable methods to count birds. The effort is aimed at creating a snapshot of what birds and numbers of those birds can be documented in our same circle each year.

We've had a very consistent number of participants engaged in the count over the past eight years, this year tallying 78 total contributors (69 folks in the field and nine monitoring birds from their backyard feeders).

The group logged 6,125 total birds across 79 species on count day. That's the highest number of species we've ever reported for count day by 11 species. It's interesting to think about.

This year we logged low numbers of birds traditionally seen at bird feeders, including chickadee, nuthatch and woodpecker species. It is locally believed that the abundant ponderosa pine cone crop, paired with low snowfall, has allowed for these groups of birds to find food in nature more readily, reducing the need to visit feeders and thus allowing for less detection.

Notably, the Lewis's woodpecker numbers were low (21 detected) when compared to last year's 111, but that may be in part due to a low acorn production year from Gambel oak,



Photo courtesy Charles Martinez

A great blue heron seen on count day.



Photo courtesy Connor Thomas

A mallard navigates the icy waters of the San Juan River during the Dec. 14, 2024, Christmas Bird Count.

versus last year's mast year.

Some highlights this year include the first local CBC detection of a spotted sandpiper along the San Juan River, a lone snow goose intermixed with Canada geese in the northwest corner of our circle, a sandhill crane observed flying overhead on count day, bright flashes of both mountain and western bluebirds lingering due

to mild winter conditions, golden-crowned kinglets flitting about in the canopy on Reservoir Hill, a lone northern pygmy owl observed near the San Juan River south of town, two merlins detected in the southeast portion of our circle, three woodland hawk sightings (Cooper's and sharp-shinned), and unprecedented numbers of red crossbills likely as-



Photo courtesy Connor Thomas

A great blue heron lifts off the San Juan River during the on Dec. 14, 2024.



Photo courtesy Kay Kaylor

One of 41 red-tailed hawks detected during the 125th Christmas Bird Count looks on from a telephone pole.

Chimney Rock Interpretive Association Lecture Series to feature museum cultural educator

By Ana Murray
Chimney Rock Interpretive Association

The Chimney Rock Interpretive Association (CRIA) invites the public to a free lecture given by Jon Ghahate on Tuesday, Jan. 21.

The lecture will take place at 3 p.m. at the Ruby M. Sisson Memorial Library located at 811 San Juan St.

Join us as Ghahate discusses "Ancestral Puebloans to Contemporary SW Pueblos: Science, Community, Languages and Cultures."

The lecture is scheduled to begin at 3 p.m., with a Q-and-A period following the lecture.

Ghahate is a museum cultural educator at the Indian Pueblo Cul-

tural Center, of the Pueblos of Laguna and Zuni in New Mexico, Turkey and Badger clans.

CRIA's free lecture series offer the opportunity each year for the public and CRIA volunteers to enjoy a speaker whose topic typically relates to southwest archaeology, archaeo-astronomy and/or Chacoan culture. Donations will be accepted.

CRIA is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that offers interpretive programs at Chimney Rock National Monument in partnership with the USDA Forest Service and the San Juan National Forest.

For more information, see the CRIA website, www.chimneyrockco.org, or call (970) 731-7133.

Forest Carbon Inventory details trends over time in Colorado

By Kristy Burnett
Colorado State Forest Service

The Forest Carbon Inventory report, released Jan. 9, provides detailed estimates of the carbon captured, stored and released by Colorado's forests.

They hold a substantial amount of carbon, but in recent years, Colorado's forests have released more carbon each year than they have added. Forest carbon trends vary among types of forests and geographic areas across the state.

"Coloradans are adapting to the challenges associated with a warming climate and rapidly growing populations, and we need to ground our decisions in the best available information," said Matt McCombs, state forester and director of the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS). "This report provides a baseline for understanding how much carbon is stored in our forests and how these amounts change over time. The re-

sults will inform strategies for forest and carbon management, helping us understand our forests' potential to lessen the impacts of climate change, make our communities more resilient and meet Colorado's bold climate goals."

As part of HB22-1012, the Colorado General Assembly directed the CSFS to develop a statewide carbon accounting framework.

The resulting inventory shows that Colorado's forest carbon stocks are higher and emissions are lower than previously estimated. The study period for this inventory is from 2002-2019, and the study authors expect the magnitude of the carbon source to increase as data reflecting Colorado's 2020 wildfire season and subsequent disturbances become available.

"The 2020 Forest Action Plan identified the need for a detailed analysis of forest carbon to fully understand how Colorado's forested lands affect carbon sequestration,"

said Amanda West Fordham, Ph.D., associate director of science and data at the CSFS and co-author. "This inventory provides crucial data to inform future forest policy decisions in Colorado, and it also serves as a blueprint that other Rocky Mountain states can adopt to determine their forest carbon inventory."

A team of researchers from the CSFS and the Natural Resource Ecology Laboratory (NREL), both part of Colorado State University, calculated the amount of carbon stored in various parts of forests, including trees, roots and soil, as well as the carbon stored in harvested wood products, such as lumber.

"To complete this study, we adopted a carbon inventory framework developed by California, Oregon and Washington. We used mill surveys to estimate carbon stocks and changes in harvested wood products as well as data from Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA), a nationwide program run by the U.S. Forest Service,

to assess carbon dynamics in forests," said Ashley Prentice, co-author and forest carbon specialist at the CSFS. "The FIA program is staffed by CSFS field crews who measure plots in Colorado every 10 years. The consistent inventory cycle ensures the collection of high-quality data, providing the long-term information needed to track forest carbon over time and maintain the forest carbon inventory framework."

This framework can be repeated regularly to monitor how conditions shift as forests change. The resulting information can help inform policy at state or landscape levels, but the impacts of specific forest management projects on forest carbon is an area of active research.

Learn more about the Forest Carbon Inventory and explore supporting information, including a data dashboard, podcast, frequently asked questions and key definitions, at <https://csfs.colostate.edu/forest-carbon/>.

Commissioners hear results of business forum

By Clayton Chaney
Staff Writer

Pagosa Springs Community Development Corporation (PSCDC) Executive Director Emily Lashbrooke spoke at a work session held by the Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) on Jan. 7, sharing the results of a community business forum and briefing the board on the possibility of creating a new county development authority.

Lashbrooke explained that the PSCDC held a community business forum in October 2024, "and nothing was so pressing that it couldn't wait until today," mentioning the county was busy during the end of the year working out its budget.

"We have heard from all electeds that they'd like to hear more from our business community," Lashbrooke said.

She explained that she met with every elected official in the county and Town of Pagosa Springs, asking for their input in order to draft questions to ask the business owner community.

Lashbrooke indicated that every response was recorded in a spreadsheet, but that she would only be sharing the top three responses with the BoCC due to time constraints.

"There are some really good ideas and good thought processes," she said.

Commissioner Veronica Medina asked for clarification about where the questions asked came from.

"Every single one of these questions came from an elected official," Lashbrooke said.

One question put forward to the business owner community was, what does diversifying the local economy look like?

Lashbrooke explained that the job of the PSCDC is to support existing businesses, and that other possible industries for the local economy could include the timber industry.

"That is a big industry right now," she said, adding that other responses included adding outdoor recreation opportunities, specifically for the "shoulder seasons."

Another question put forward asked the business community how outdoor recreation could factor into the shoulder seasons.

Lashbrooke explained the main responses to that were expanding hiking and biking trails, promote fishing and market to hunters, stock rivers and hold recreation tournaments.

Medina addressed that part of the conversation that took place in the community business owner forum included diversifying the economy, but that the PSCDC is also responsible for supporting existing businesses.

"What is the [PSCDC] currently doing to support existing businesses? What is supporting the timber industry growth? And what are you doing for the recreation industry? Yes, you've talked about it, but what are you currently doing, or what has been done?" she asked.

Lashbrooke responded, "We do several things," explaining that the PSCDC will "jump in" and help struggling businesses when asked, giving the example of assisting a local shipping store last year in order for it to stay open.

She also mentioned that the PSCDC has assisted and supported grant applications for timber-related companies.

Medina questioned if the grants for timber-related business were for a local business.

"We absolutely have," Lashbrooke responded.

She went on to note that the PSCDC holds community forums, brings in training and staff for business, and makes local connections.

"And a lot of the support we have done is through the workforce development program because our businesses are screaming that they do not have enough staff, and that program alone has brought such a huge benefit to every single business that wanted to participate," Lashbrooke added.

She indicated again that, "these questions were asked by electeds for electeds to be informed."

Medina offered more comments about the PSCDC.

"I get this is from that meeting you had with the community, but I think it's important also to, one, recognize what the [PSCDC] is doing for the community and acknowledging that, but, two, where else? How else ... can the [PSCDC] really take charge?" Medina asked.

She then noted she felt the county missed an opportunity with the state's Proposition 123, which helps provide communities with funds dedicated toward affordable housing projects.

"I saw a really big missed opportunity and I was surprised because

we talked about Proposition 123 so much last year," Medina said, noting the community has done "lots of good work" with housing projects.

She explained that under Proposition 123 there is a program to provide a current home manufacturer in the county to build its infrastructure "so that they can build homes."

In a later interview, Medina explained that it is a program under the Colorado Housing and Financing Authority (CHFA), known as Innovative Housing and Modular Manufacturing Financing.

She mentioned that the program could provide funds for existing businesses in Archuleta County to expand its infrastructure into manufacturing to provide affordable housing, similar to modular-style homes.

During the meeting, Medina indicated she was unaware of this program and that a local business might have been able to benefit from it.

She noted that Region 9 assisted a company in Durango in getting that grant.

"I feel like, we, Archuleta County, we get left out in lots of different ways," Medina said, stating she has had similar conversations with representatives of Region 9.

Business owners also indicated that their staff are asking for assistance with housing, "overwhelmingly," Lashbrooke said, mentioning that assistance with child care, health care and higher wages were also being requested from employees.

"Its disappointing, but I think it's our responsibility to really ask those hard questions," Medina added, mentioning the BoCC relies on experts in the community, "and you're that expert, so I'm going to rely on you to make sure and to give us the information we need."

Lashbrooke explained it was a "competitive process," and that there was a potential builder looking to set up in the Cloman industrial park, but the builder chose to go to Mancos instead.

Medina asked Lashbrooke why there wasn't an effort to support an existing local business, instead of bringing in a business.

"If we have a business here that would like to manufacture homes, they have to be the applicant," Lashbrooke said, noting the PSCDC would be happy to support that.

Lashbrooke also mentioned that she is "at capacity," noting the housing project has taken the majority of her time.

Medina commented in the interview, "I appreciate all the work they [PSCDC] have done, but I think this would've been a real opportunity," adding that a local business could've benefited from the program if it was promoted to the community.

She noted that the program could have resulted in having a local manufacturer providing housing at a lower cost.

"Those opportunities seemed to have been passed by," Medina said.

During the work session, Lashbrooke commented, "I'm just trying to get this housing project over the finish line," adding that she was not prepared to give a full PSCDC update and that she is planning to return to the BoCC to provide a full review of the PSCDC work over the past year.

"I think the part that I struggle with is you knew about it but you didn't share it with us," Medina said, mentioning that the PSCDC's most recent meeting minutes are from January 2024.

"I just wonder, because we rely on

you as the [PSCDC] What do we need to do?" Medina asked.

In a follow up email to The SUN, Medina explains that a local company, Redstone Timber Frames, is a local federally recognized Native woman-owned business.

"The timber industry in my opinion is one mechanism to diversify our economy. This is a historic trade for our county," Medina writes.

In 2024, the U.S. Forest Service announced Redstone Timber Frames was awarded a \$280,500 grant from the U.S. Forest Service Wood Innovations Program Grants.

During the work session, Lashbrooke presented another question that was put forward to the business owner community that asked what the most important infrastructure needs are for the town and the county.

"They really are the same thing," she said, explaining that most responses were centered around improving roads, water access and schools.

Then-commissioner Ronnie Maez mentioned that converting the school's old buildings into workforce housing could be a viable opinion.

Medina noted that Archuleta School District has not decided what it is going to do yet in regard to refurbishing or building a new school building.

Lashbrooke went on to mention responses to the question of what the needs are in the Cloman industrial park, noting responses included tax break housing, repurposing buildings for housing and a data center.

Lashbrooke noted that gigabit fiber is available in the Cloman area, which could support a "small" data center operation.

Commissioner Warren Brown mentioned that the lack of three-phase power in the Cloman area is "holding back" the community in developing more in the area.

He also mentioned that La Plata Electric Association (LPEA) may also be at capacity.

Medina explained she has been in contact with LPEA and "If we need three-phase down there, which we need that, the county will have to put in the infrastructure, or the business that wants it."

Lashbrooke mentioned that House Bill 24-1172 may offer a way to acquire funds needed to put in the necessary infrastructure at Cloman.

Maez mentioned that the county could look into using Conservation Trust Fund monies to have the necessary infrastructure installed.

County Attorney Todd Weaver indicated that could be an option if the county can find a way to show the developments are tied to public park space.

Other questions put forward to the business owner community asked what the county could do to support existing businesses and what is the main concern over the next year is.

Responses for how the county can support local business included, "support, collaborate and listen," Lashbrooke indicated.

She noted that improving road access and parking needs were top responses, as well.

Maez noted that "most" of the businesses are located within town limits and that the county does not have control over those roads and access points.

Lashbrooke added that 30 responses for the top concern over the next year were in regard to the upcoming reconstruction project through downtown Pagosa Springs along U.S. 160, scheduled to begin this spring.

Business owners also indicated that their staff are asking for assistance with housing, "overwhelmingly," Lashbrooke said, mentioning that assistance with child care, health care and higher wages were also being requested from employees.

The last question Lashbrooke shared was, how should town funding be used for child care?

She indicated that business owner responses ranged from supporting currently operating centers to sup-

plementing tuition based on income.

"This was really just information for you to have," Lashbrooke said.

County revitalization authority

During the same work session, Lashbrooke briefed the BoCC on the option of establishing a county revitalization authority (CRA) under House Bill 24-1172, which was signed into law last June.

Lashbrooke explained that Adams County was the first county in the state to establish a CRA, which she described as "a new tool box for counties to improve unincorporated areas of the county," mentioning that it could help bring in "all kinds of assets," such as water lines, particularly in the Cloman Park area.

She went on to explain that CRAs are able to tackle these types of projects by using tax-increment financing options, adding that the purpose of establishing CRAs stems from the need for more housing.

She mentioned there are unincorporated areas in counties where developers would like to put workforce or affordable housing, but the infrastructure is not readily available in those areas.

She added a CRA could also assist in developing the Cloman industrial park.

Lashbrooke noted the bill started with bipartisan support in Adams County, which is now "in place and ready for any county to adopt."

Lashbrooke went on to explain that the CRA would be overseen by the BoCC.

"The BoCC really oversees this authority," she said, explaining the CRA would do the "legwork" and then present final plans to the BoCC for official approval.

She mentioned that the CRA board would be appointed by the BoCC, with special districts having the ability to opt in and would have a seat on the board. She also noted that school districts are not able to opt in.

Lashbrooke further explained that a CRA has the power to do contracts, apply to borrow money, acquire property and develop it, noting that a CRA does not have the ability to levy or assess any taxes.

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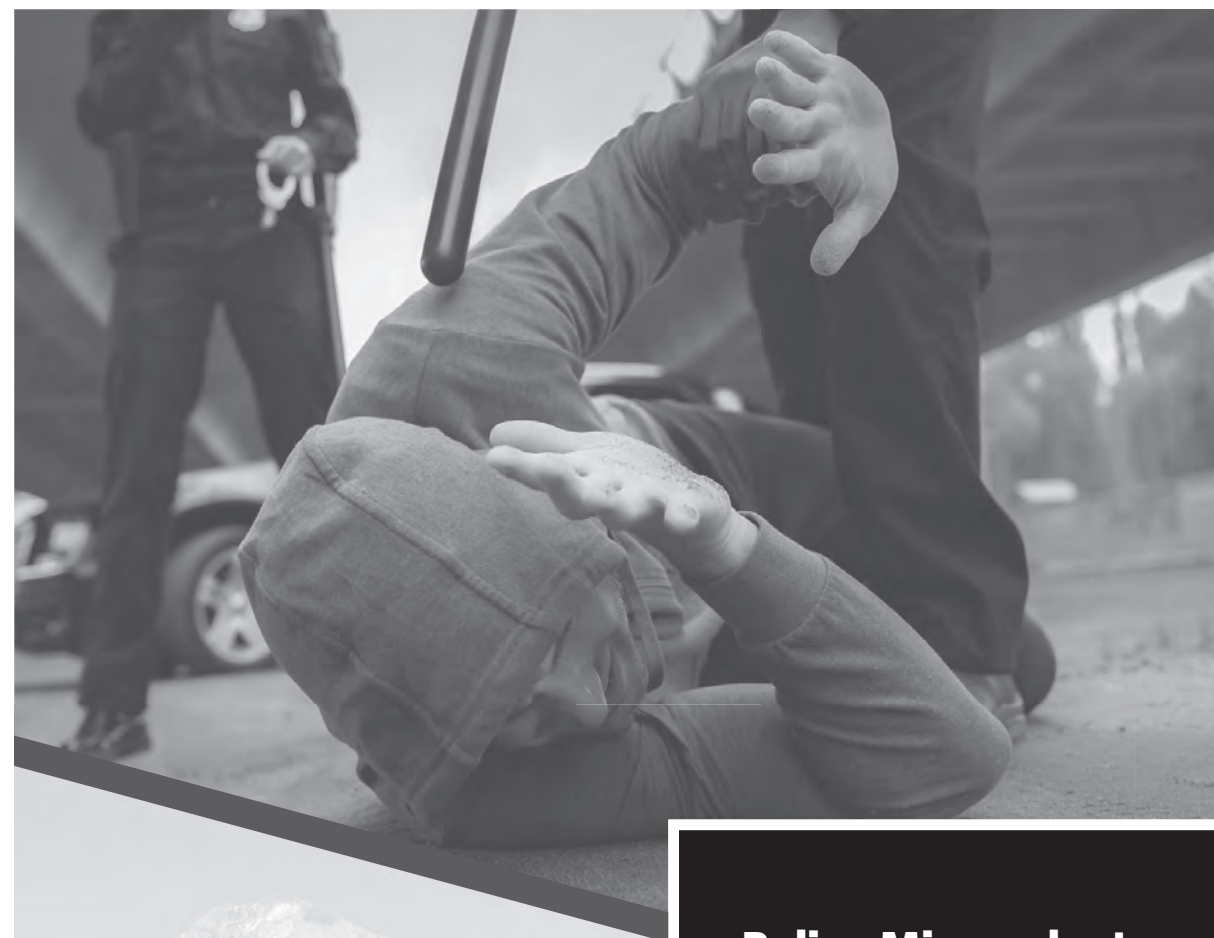
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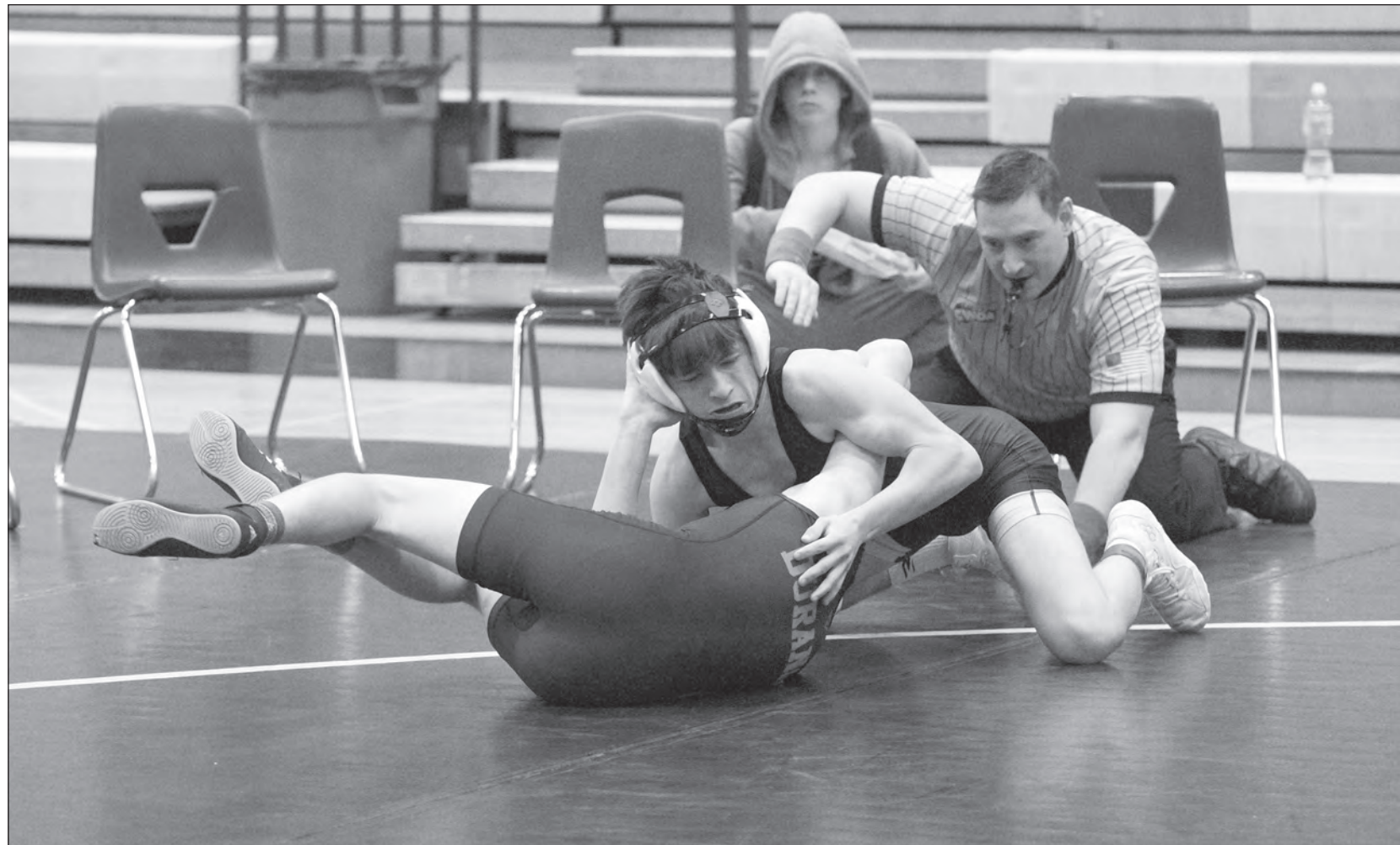
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Sports



WRESTLING



SUN photo/Randi Pierce
Anthony Manzaneres works to pin his opponent in Friday's dual against the Durango Demons. Manzaneres pinned his opponent in one minute and six seconds, earning six points for the Pirates. Pagosa lost the dual by a score of 42-22.

Pirates take 12th at home tournament

By Clayton Chaney
 Staff Writer

Wrestling returned to Pagosa Country last week, with the Pagosa Springs High School Pirate wrestling team hosting the Rocky Mountain Duals and Rocky Mountain Invitational tournament last Friday and Saturday, Jan 10 and 11.

The Pirates matched up against the Durango Demons on Friday, losing by a team score of 42-22.

Coach Dan Janowsky explained in an interview that it was the first action for both teams after the two-week winter break, and the Pirates were unable to field a complete lineup.

"We just didn't have our lineups together," Janowsky said, "but we decided to go ahead and wrestle the guys that could."

Janowsky added that "it was helpful" for the Pirates who were able to compete on Friday, particularly highlighting Taylor Hancey's performance, noting he "had a really good match."

Janowsky explained that Hancey missed the Warrior Classic tournament in Grand Junction due to illness before the winter break and that he is looking to wrestle at any opportunity.

"We wanted to make sure we took advantage of that, and he did a great job," Janowsky said.

Hancey competed in the 165-pound weight class, defeating his opponent by a 13-3 major decision, earning four points for the Pirates.

Anthony Manzaneres competed in the 113-pound weight class and pinned his opponent in one minute and six seconds, earning six points for the Pirates.

There was a double forfeit in the 106-pound, 120-pound and 175-pound weight classes.

Pagosa did not field any wrestlers in the 138-pound, 144-pound and the 150-pound weight classes, resulting in a total of 18 points being awarded to Durango.

Durango forfeited in the 285-pound and 215-pound weight classes, giving 12 points to the Pirates.

Jonathan Baker competed in the 126-pound weight class and was pinned by his opponent in 1:37, giving six points to Durango.

Stetson Osborn competed in the 132-pound weight class and was pinned by his opponent in 1:02, giving six points to Durango.

Michael Thomas competed in the 157-pound weight class for the Pi-

rates and lost his match by getting pinned in 1:39, giving six points to Durango.

Jesus Serratos wrestled in the 190-pound weight class and was pinned in 1:09, giving six points to the Demons.

Rocky Mountain Invite

"It was a busy day ... full day," Janowsky said of the tournament.

The Pirates finished 12th out of 19 teams.

"The competition was outstanding, it really was," Janowsky added, explaining there was a high level of competition across all of the weight classes.

Rocky Ford claimed the top spot in the tournament, Janowsky mentioned, adding, there were "some very competitive programs" on display and "plenty of other good teams and individuals in every single bracket."

Manzaneres and Colton Lucero were the highest-placing Pirates on the day, with both earning second place in their respective weight class.

After receiving a first-round bye, Manzaneres won his next two matches by pinning his opponent in 1:38 and by a 7-6 decision. He then lost his first-place match by pin in 3:51.

"That was back-and-forth match," Janowsky said, adding that Manzaneres will need to make some adjustments and "keep working at it," as he will likely face the same opponents in the regional and state tournaments.

Lucero also received a first-round bye in the 150-pound weight class

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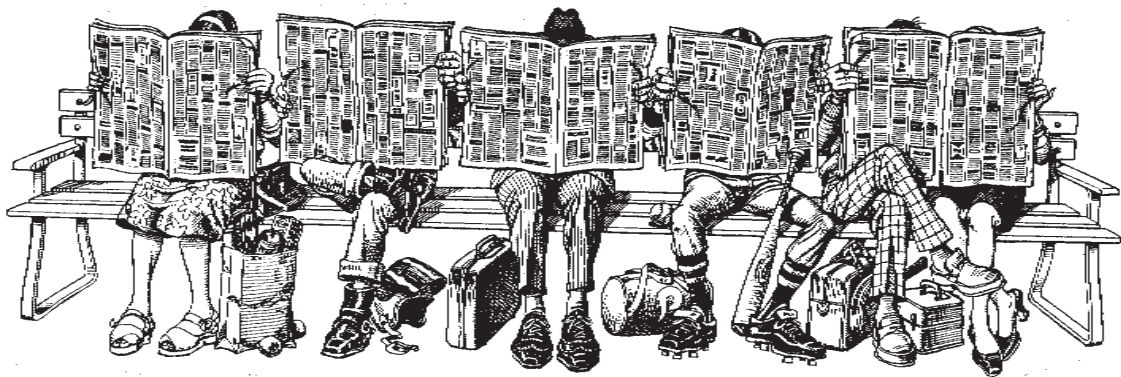
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BASKETBALL

After close losses, Lady Pirates prep for first league contests

By Garrett Fevinger
Staff Writer

The Pagosa Springs High School Lady Pirate basketball team absorbed two highly contested losses Jan. 10 and 14 against opponents from Salida and Durango, bringing their overall record to 5-4 as the squad heads into its first league games of the season.

Against the Salida Spartans on Jan. 10, a seesawing first half left the visiting Lady Pirates trailing 21-18 heading into the third quarter.

"We started pretty slow against Salida," coach Sarah Osborn wrote in an email to The SUN.

By the start of the fourth, the Spartans led by two — 29-27 — and out-scored the Lady Pirates by only three points in the fourth, resulting in a final 41-36 for the 3A hosts.

"We had some late mistakes in the fourth quarter that made it difficult to close it out with a win," Osborn writes. "We did have some good looks and opportunities to score late in the game that just didn't fall."

In that contest, Pagosa's three seniors led the squad in scoring, with Elizabeth Currier bringing in 13 points, followed by Kylie Ketchum with nine and Karsyn Shahan with eight.

The Lady Pirates' rebounding effort was led by Shahan, who counted 10 total on the night — four offensive and six defensive. Ximena Garcia followed with four offensive and four defensive, while Currier had five total for the night.

The team shot 64 percent from the free-throw line, and counted 15 turnovers for the night.

"The team fought hard the entire game and never gave up," wrote Osborn, who added that the tight contest served as good practice for how to close out similar games moving forward.

Four days later hosting the 5A Durango Demons, in a game Osborn called "a battle from the beginning of the tip off," the Lady Pirates stayed in contention throughout, trailing by one and two points in the first half.

By the end of the third, Durango led 29-23 and limited their hosts to four points in the fourth, ultimately prevailing 34-27.

"We had some opportunities in the fourth again to make it a tied game and just missed the shots," Osborn wrote, adding, "I saw improvement from Friday to Tuesday. If we continue to focus on fixing our mistakes each game we will be right where we want to be mid season playing our best basketball!"

Stats for the Durango game were not available as of press time Wednesday.

Tuesday's result leaves the Lady Pirates with a 5-4 overall record and ranked 12th in the 4A Selection and Seeding Index.

Pagosa's first league game of the season is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. Friday in Monte Vista, which stands at 4-3 and is currently ranked 17th in the 3A Selection and Seeding Index.

Tip-off against 30th-ranked Ignacio, 4-6, is scheduled for 2:30 p.m. Saturday in Ignacio.



SUN photo/Randi Pierce
Lady Pirate Karsyn Shahan battles for possession against the Durango Demons on Jan. 14 in Pagosa Springs. Pagosa fell prey to the Demons 34-27.

After early knocks, Pirates look to rebound during league play

By Garrett Fevinger
Staff Writer

The Pagosa Springs High School boys' basketball team is looking ahead to its first conference play of the season after persevering through what coach Wes Lewis called the "meat grinder" portion of the season's schedule.

"I'm not one to make a lot of excuses, but we've had a really tough schedule," Lewis said. "We're kind of through that now. We're going to get into some more manageable games and hopefully we can continue to make strides."

On Jan. 10 in Salida, the Pirates battled to keep close throughout the tight contest, eventually falling 45-42 after a late 3-pointer by the Spartans.

"With about 25 seconds to go, we tied it up and they came down and hit a three with about 11 seconds to go," Lewis recalled.

Against Salida, Lewis highlighted play from Pirates Creede Dozier and Ty Richey, saying both "had a really solid night offensively."

Hosting the 5A Durango Demons on Jan. 14, the Pirates kept within striking distance throughout the second and third quarters, frequently limiting the visitors to single-digit leads.

But Durango landed 3-pointers in the final minutes of the third to build a comfortable 66-38 cushion heading into the fourth.

The Demons held their hosts to just eight points in the game's final quarter and added nine of their own, prevailing 75-46.

Recalling the dynamics of the game, Lewis praised the team's performance after it sustained the loss of Richey, who injured his ankle during practice the day before.

"So, we lost Ty, and that's a big loss for us," Lewis said. "And so we were one man short to start with, but I thought the kids played well."

He added, "We were pretty good in our turnovers, we only had 11 ... on a team that pressed us for the duration of the game, so that was encouraging



SUN photo/Randi Pierce
Pirate Colt Lewis goes up against Durango defenders Jan. 14 in Pagosa Springs during the team's 75-46 loss.

that we took care of the basketball for the most part."

Lewis highlighted play from both Colt Lewis and Seth Zeigler — both of whom he said had "big offensive" games against the Demons.

Stats for the Jan. 10 and 14 games were not available as of press time Wednesday.

With the losses, the Pirates sit at 1-8 on the season as they prepare for their first league games against Monte Vista

on Jan. 17 and Ignacio on Jan. 18.

"One of the things I really challenged the kids with at the Holy Family tournament was just competing — every possession, every quarter, every half, every game — make sure we're competing on everything we do," Wes Lewis said. "And I think we're starting to see that a little bit more."

With Richey's status still in question, that fighting spirit will be all the more important as the team readies

for the weekend play.

"We just got to do the best we can to keep spirits up and keep encouraged," Wes Lewis said. "I think we are getting better in certain areas. There's some things we got to do better, but I do see progress."

Monte Vista, 5-2, is ranked 16th in the 3A Selection and Seeding Index.

Tip-off is scheduled for 7 p.m. Friday in Monte Vista.

Ignacio, 7-4, is ranked 28th; that game is scheduled to start at 4 p.m. Saturday in Ignacio.

In the 4A Selection and Seeding Index, Pagosa Springs is ranked 38th.

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WRESTLING

Lady Pirates take fourth place in New Mexico tournament

By Clayton Chaney
Staff Writer

The Pagosa Springs High School Lady Pirate wrestling team traveled to Kirtland, N.M., last weekend to compete in the Lady Bronco Invitational tournament.

The tournament was held at Kirtland Central High School on Saturday, Jan. 11, where the Pirates claimed fourth out of seven teams.

"The Pirate girls continue to improve," coach Dan Janowsky wrote in an email to The SUN.

All of the Pirates who competed placed in the top seven of their respective weight classes, with Bella Jackson and Laykyn Baxstrom being the top finishers for the Pirates, taking second place in their respective weight classes.

Baxstrom competed in the 235-pound weight class and Jackson

competed in the 105-pound weight class.

Jackson was pinned by her opponent in the first-place match in one minute and nine seconds.

Madi Stretton and Kylie Matyniak each placed third in their respective weight class, with Stretton competing in the 114-pound weight class and Matyniak competing in the 136-pound weight class.

Katie Lucero took sixth place in the 100-pound weight class, while Makayla Beach earned seventh place in the 107-pound weight class.

Janowsky explained, "their progress is quite noticeable, and I think ... their level of enthusiasm is rising."

He mentioned that the Lady Pirates are starting to see that "they're in the mix" with some of the other top teams around the state.

He also mentioned the Lady Pirates are competing with "half a lineup," not-

ing they have six wrestlers competing in tournaments that have up to 14 different weight classes.

"I think they have every reason to feel proud of themselves and to be motivated to keep getting better," Janowsky added, acknowledging the Lady Pirates have been consistently placing in every tournament.

Additional stats for the Lady Bronco Invitational were not available.

This weekend the Lady Pirates are heading to Edwards to compete in the Queens of the Mountain tournament taking place at Battle Mountain High School on Saturday, Jan. 18, with matches scheduled to begin at 11:30 a.m.

"This is the heart of the season really," Janowsky notes.

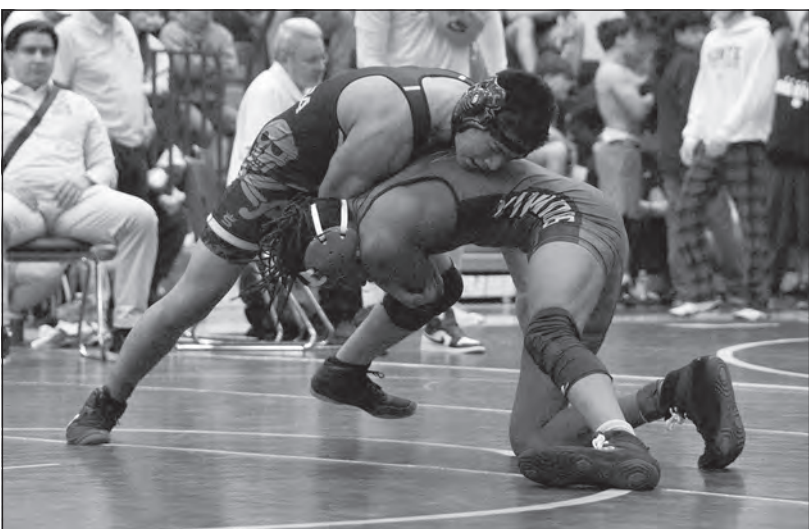
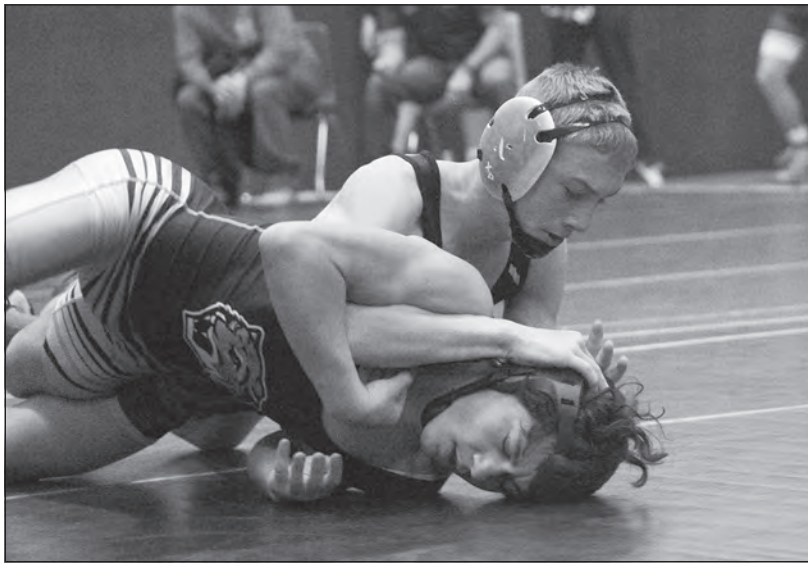
The Queens of the Mountain tournament will feature 14 teams, "that contains nearly all the regional opponents," Janowsky wrote.



SUN photos/Randi Pierce

Rocky Mountain Invitational tournament

Pagosa Springs High School played host to 19 teams for the annual Rocky Mountain Invite on Saturday, Jan. 11. Wrestlers from across multiple states battles for the day's titles throughout the day.





SUN photo/Garrett Fevinger

Local gas prices dipped below \$3 a gallon for one of the first times in recent memory on Jan. 8, but still tracked above state averages. As of Jan. 15, the average price for a gallon of regular gas in Colorado was \$2.895, up from \$2.68 a year ago, according to AAA. The national price as of Jan. 15 was \$3.089.

Public Meetings

The following meetings are subject to change.

Thursday, Jan. 16

Archuleta County Board of Health meeting. 3 p.m., Archuleta County administration building, commissioners' meeting room, 398 Lewis St. View Zoom meeting at: <https://zoom.us/j/91609048375?pwd=d1FFV0J1cGVKa1NHWHFsa2taeGxtZz09>, meeting ID: 916 0904 8375, passcode: 4141885. For more information, visit <http://archuletacounty.org/agendacenter>.

Monday, Jan. 20

San Juan Water Conservancy District special meeting. 4 p.m., 46 Eaton Drive, Suite 5. Visit <https://www.sjwcd.org/> for Zoom option.


Public meeting information should be sent to editor@pagosasun.com with "Public Meeting" in the subject line. The deadline is noon Monday each week prior to publication for that week's issue.

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preview

ARTS & LIFE

WinterFest

Jan. 17-19



Photo courtesy Jeff Laydon

January 16, 2025



Photo courtesy Jeff Laydon

WinterFest weekend will kick off Friday evening with a bonfire at the Archuleta County Fairgrounds.

Live Performers

- Thursday**
The Pagosa Bar: Karaoke, 7:30 p.m.
- Friday**
The Springs Resort lodge atrium: Bob Hemenger, 5 p.m.
- Saturday**
The Springs Resort lodge atrium: Ron and Susan, 5 p.m.
- Sunday**
The Springs Resort lodge atrium: Jackson Mountain Ramblers, 5 p.m.
- Tuesday**
The Springs Resort lodge atrium: Dustin Burley, 5 p.m.

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WinterFest weekend set for Friday through Sunday

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

Despite the fact that we don't have a lot of snow, the organizations putting on the various events throughout the weekend have made accommodations so that WinterFest weekend can continue.

Friday

The festivities will begin on Friday evening with the WinterFest Bonfire to be held at the Archuleta County Fairgrounds. The fire and festivities begin at 5 p.m. Join us for the free concert featuring popular performer Tylor Brandon. There will also be food trucks featuring delicious fare, a hot and cold beverage bar, and lots of warmth provided by the bonfire.

Don't forget to drop your Christmas trees off at the fairgrounds to be used for fuel. Also remember that no outside alcoholic beverages are allowed at this event.

A reception will be held for the hot air balloon pilots at the fairgrounds also that evening, as well as registration for the Skijoring contestants. The bonfire will be flaming from 5 to 8 p.m.

Saturday

Saturday is the busiest day of the weekend, with a variety of activities for the participant and spectator alike.

The morning will kick off with the hot air balloon rally located on the west side of town. The balloons will launch around the Eagle's Loft area, as well as around the vacant field by Walmart around 8 a.m. Please be cognizant to avoid parking on roadways and the highway to take photos or view the balloons. While we love our balloons and the picturesque opportunity they offer with the snowcapped mountains and lakes in the background, we need to keep roadways and arteries open.

The morning will continue with skijoring happening at the Archuleta County Fairgrounds beginning at 10 a.m. and going all day. You can purchase a day or weekend pass. Come out and enjoy the fast-paced, skillful event as skiers and snowboarders are pulled by horses through a designed course. We will have participants from as far as Canada. Check out www.skisandsaddles.com for times, event categories and more.

For the Nordic enthusiast, the BB Gun Biathlon will still take place, just not in town as usual. The course has

been moved up toward Wolf Creek, with the biathlon beginning at 9:15 a.m. for the freestyle competitive race and other categories occurring throughout the morning. While not required, costumes are highly encouraged to add some pizzazz to this skillful event. Visit [www.pagosanor-](http://www.pagosanor-dic.com)

[dic.com](http://www.pagosanor-dic.com) to register for the race.

The downtown area will also be busy in the morning with two activities.

The annual Barkus Parade, benefiting Rugby's Rescue, will rally in Town Park at 10:30 a.m. and head off down the Riverwalk at 11 a.m. Bring

■ **See WinterFest on next page**

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Photo courtesy Pagosa Nordic Club

Nordic enthusiasts and beginners alike are invited to take part in or watch the annual BB Gun Biathlon on Saturday.

WinterFest

■ continued from previous page
your four-legged friend and support the efforts of those working with our animal population. As usual, there will be prizes galore, especially in the costuming category, and with a donation, you can also get a cup of delicious gumbo.

Also at 11 a.m., an independent group has designed a March for Equality. This march coincides with the national People's March occurring in Washington, D.C., the same day. While not a WinterFest activity, this event occurs during that weekend. Those interested in participating will meet in Town Park and the route will be along U.S. 160.

Stay in the downtown area and shop or soak while there is a short break.

Beginning at 1 p.m. the crazy plungers will take to the frigid San Juan River for the Penguin Plunge. Individuals and groups brave the freezing water to raise money for their favorite nonprofit agencies. Last year more than \$10,000 was raised for various organizations. The plungers come out in costumes and a lot of fortitude as they go in the frigid river and swim over Davey's Wave. We always want to thank our swift-water rescue and EMS teams as they ensure that there are no injuries or frozen participants. The parking lot at the Visitor Center will be closed off for emergency crews

and plungers. Please view the festivities from the Riverwalk.

Unfortunately this year, the annual Sledz on Rez, hosted by Build Pagosa, has been canceled. There's just not enough snow to handle those crazy creations this year. However, look for some of the Build Pagosa students at the Plunge.

Close out the day with a live music concert hosted by Skis and Saddles with local crowd-pleaser Brooks-i. The music will begin at 8 p.m. and be held at the fairgrounds.

Sunday

Moving onto Sunday, we again begin with the hot air balloon rally in the same area as Saturday, and it will kick off around 8 a.m. Note that the hot air balloon launch is weather contingent. So, even though we may not have snow, other weather condi-

tions, such as wind or rain, may affect the launch.

If you have been wanting to dip your toes into the cross-country or Nordic adventure, on this Sunday, Jan. 19, the Nordic Club will host its annual "Learn to Cross-Country Ski" event. Whether you are a novice or would like to hone your skills, there is an instructor for each category. Again, visit the club's website to register for the day's class. The categories fill up quickly, so register now.

If you were too busy elsewhere on Saturday, you can still catch the thrills and skills of skijoring on Sunday beginning at 10 a.m. back at the fairgrounds.

No snow? No problem. WinterFest activities are ready for our participants or spectators. Just dress warmly and let's have some winter fun.



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About SAN JUAN EATERY

Hello! I'm Amanda, the Owner and Operator of San Juan Eatery. I've been part of the restaurant industry in Pagosa Springs for over 10 years. Recently, my team and I decided to embark on an exciting new adventure by creating **San Juan Eatery** — a place that blends my love for food with my passion for animals.

For those who don't know me yet, I'm a big animal lover. My husband, Eddie, our son, Nick, and I live on a small ranch filled with dogs, horses, cats, goats, and chickens. I have a deep passion for rescue work, and we actively foster animals through LASSO Horse Rescue and Rugby's Rescue, a local nonprofit dog rescue organization.

You might notice that some of our menu items have playful names — these are inspired by our own rescued animals at home. Since we can't bring our furry family to work, we thought naming menu items after them would be a wonderful way to celebrate them and share their stories with you.

At San Juan Eatery, we're committed to giving back. That is why we donate 1% of our sales each month to a local rescue or animal nonprofit. Be sure to follow us on Facebook, where we feature our chosen organization of the month.

We hope you enjoy your dining experience with us. If there's ever anything we can do to improve, please don't hesitate to let us know — whether in person or by email.

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March for Equality set for Saturday

By Pauline Benetti
Special to The PREVIEW

WinterFest: bonfires, parades, races, balloon ascensions, music and more. It's great fun for the community, snow or no snow.

In the midst of it all at 10:30 a.m. Saturday in Town Park, folks will gather for a peaceful event: the March for Equality.

This event is a reminder that our nation is on the cusp of big changes — changes that could alter the nature of our democracy in ways that will limit our rights and personal freedoms and,

ultimately, will threaten the safety of our marginalized communities.

The March for Equality is a reminder that nearly 50 percent of our voting population spoke out against these impending changes. Ours is a voice that will not be silenced.

Anyone who believes in the importance of raising our voices in unity is invited to meet on Saturday in Town Park at 10:30 a.m. Enjoy free refreshments and meet your fellow marchers. Our family-friendly March for Equality will begin at 11 a.m.. Some signs will be available, but we encourage you to make a sign that

speaks to your personal definition of equality.

Our local event is part of a nationwide movement that will be heard from coast to coast. The invitation, "The People's March DC and Everywhere," is issued on the official website www.womansmarch.com, where Pagosa Springs is included with 270 other cities hosting marches that same day.

For more details about the March for Equality, we invite you to visit our Facebook page, Equality Pagosa, or email us at psequalitymarch@gmail.com.

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End of Life Education group announces first meeting of 2025

By Joan Mieritz
End of Life Education

On Thursday, Jan. 16, at 1 p.m. at the Community United Methodist Church on Lewis Street, the End of Life Education group will begin meeting again after a brief holiday break.

There is so much to learn about this topic. Most people plan and prepare for everything they do in life. Since few people know when they will die, death is something we seldom prepare for and certainly we don't want to even think about.

But, like all the things that we prepare for which usually turn out pretty well, perhaps this taboo and unpleasant subject might turn out better if we face it, acknowledge it and prepare for it. Such a change in attitude certainly can't hurt anything. Many cultures may be living life better with a different attitude. It is not like not thinking about death keeps it from happening. It is the only certainty in life.

This End of Life Education group wants to try something new, different and, perhaps, better. The group has met about 11 times. We have learned

so much, but we have not had time for many discussions.

During this second group of meetings, beginning Jan. 16, we will have more discussions and sharing of feelings and ideas. I will be honest with you that I am not presenting a program that I am an expert on. I don't think there are many death experts. Like with life, we are all muddling through. This is an experiment.

We are going to have a change in program format with showing one of many, many available films. I hope you will make suggestions. Then the film will be followed by a group discussion. We may break up into smaller groups. This is all evolving and anyone with input is welcome to share it. We want to have more group participation.

I hope you will join us.

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SORRY, EVENT CANCELLED. TOO LITTLE SNOW.

Due to insufficient snow, we regret to inform you that the event has been canceled. We truly appreciate your support and understanding. Despite this cancellation, we are pleased to announce that all proceeds already raised will be donated to the Pagosa Springs High School Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs, with sponsor approval.


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Thingamajig Theatre Company to open 'A Walk in the Woods'

By Carter Meritt
Thingamajig Theatre Company

Thingamajig Theatre Company is opening its second offering of the 2024-2025 winter season with "A Walk in the Woods," Lee Blessing's nuanced meditation on diplomacy, trust and the fraught dance of human connection.

Directed by Dennis Elkins and starring Thingamajig Artistic Director Tim Moore as Andrey and Scott Morehead as Jon, the production offers a thought-provoking exploration of Cold War tensions refracted through the deeply personal lens of its two protagonists.

At its core, "A Walk in the Woods" is a conversation — a seemingly simple yet layered exchange between two arms negotiators, one Soviet (Moore) and one American (Morehead). In the quiet of the woods near Geneva, far from the conference tables and flashing cameras, they navigate not just the politics of their time but the fragile terrain of understanding across ideological divides.

The play, written in 1988 but imbued with evergreen relevance, demands a directorial approach that balances the intellectual sparring with the emotional undercurrents. Elkins achieves this with a deft touch, allowing the tension between the characters to simmer just below the surface while never losing sight of the humanity within their carefully chosen words.

Mackenzie Lowe's lighting design suggests shifts in mood and time without overwhelming the action. The interplay of soft washes and sharp contrasts evokes both the natural beauty of the titular woods and the uneasy dualities within the play itself. The use of projections, designed by JD Madsen, adds an unexpected yet welcome layer of depth. Forested backdrops subtly shift, mirroring the ebb and flow of the characters' dialogue. This visual dynamism keeps the audience rooted in the moment.

Jill Fives' work as charge artist adds warmth to the set with painted elements that feel both grounded and impressionistic, capturing the serenity of nature with a touch of abstraction.

Of course, a production of "A Walk in the Woods" lives or dies by its performances, and Thingamajig's duo rises to the challenge.

Moore's Andrey is magnetic, embodying the seasoned Soviet diplomat with a disarming blend of charm, weariness and cunning. Moore's portrayal avoids the trap of caricature, offering instead a deeply humanized figure who reveals his vulnerabilities in the subtlest of gestures — a wistful smile, a pause weighted with meaning.

Opposite him, Morehead's Jon provides an ideal foil. Where Andrey



Photo courtesy Thingamajig Theatre Company

Artistic Director Tim Moore in his last appearance onstage in 2017's "A God of Carnage." "A Walk in the Woods" will welcome him back to the stage for the first time in eight years.

is affable and pragmatic, Jon is tightly wound and idealistic, a younger man grappling with the enormity of his task. Morehead captures the precise, often clipped rhythms of a man who believes in the righteousness of his cause but struggles with the compromises inherent in diplomacy.

Together, the two actors build a rapport that feels authentic and organic, their verbal sparring tinged with an unspoken yearning for connection and understanding.

In today's world, where geopolitical tensions often feel as precarious as they did during the Cold War, "A Walk in the Woods" resonates in unexpected ways. Blessing's script, with its delicate balance of wit, poignancy and philosophical inquiry, finds a fitting home in Thingamajig's production.

Elkins' direction and the uniformly excellent creative team ensure that the play speaks not only to its historical moment, but to the enduring challenges of human interaction in the face of conflict.

Thingamajig Theatre Company's "A Walk in the Woods" is not to be missed this winter season. Whether you come for the sharp dialogue, the stunning visual presentation or simply the joy of watching two actors at the top of their game, you will leave the theater enriched — and perhaps, like the characters themselves, a bit more hopeful about the possibilities of connection.

Thingamajig Theatre Company's production of "A Walk in the Woods" runs at the Pagosa Springs Center for the Arts from Jan. 16 until Jan. 26. For tickets and more information, visit www.pagosacenter.org or call (970) 731-7469.



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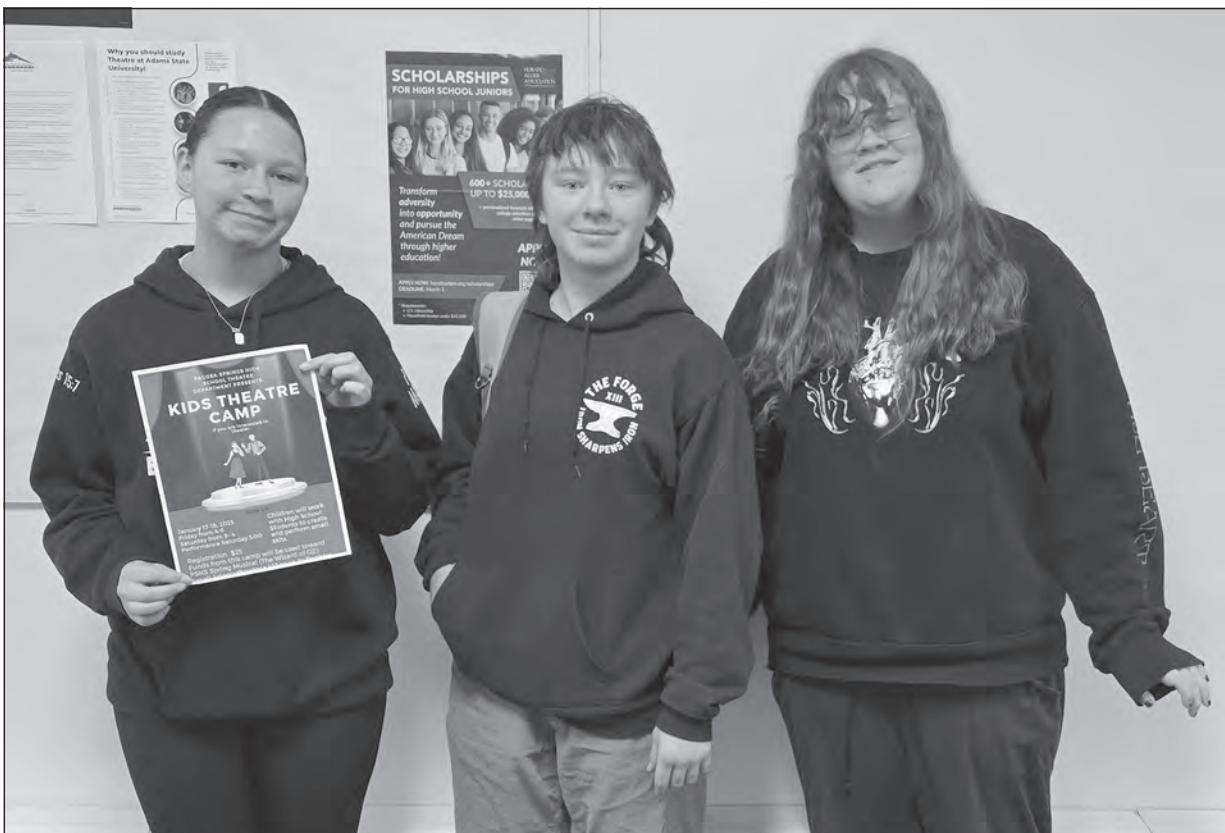


Photo courtesy Pagosa Springs High School Theater Department

Pagosa Springs High School students will lead a kids' theater camp Jan. 17 and 18 that will culminate in a short performance on Jan. 18. Proceeds from the camp will go toward the school's spring musical, "The Wizard of Oz."

High school to host kids' theater camp Jan. 17-18

By Leo Baughman

Pagosa Springs High School Theater Department

The Pagosa Springs High School (PSHS) Theater Department is hosting our very first kids' theater camp.

All proceeds from the camp will go to our spring musical, "The Wizard of Oz."

The camp will be on Jan. 17 and 18 in the PSHS auditorium. Students will spend each day learning, acting and singing under the direction of our talented high school performers for a short performance on Jan. 18.

The registration fee is \$25. Email kdoocy@pagosa.k12.co.us for more info.

Salvation Army of Archuleta County wraps up annual fundraising campaign

By Tom Bruin

Archuleta County Salvation Army

The Archuleta County Salvation Army would like to gratefully acknowledge all of the community churches, civic organizations, local government offices, public safety officers and individuals that volunteered to ring the bell during our recently completed Red Kettle fundraiser.

The Red Kettle fundraiser is the largest and most important fundraiser we do each year. The money we raise does very important work right here in Archuleta

County, and 90 percent of the money we raise stays here in Archuleta County to support various public services for community members in need.

Most importantly, we wish to give a special thank you to everyone that generously deposited money into our kettle this past Christmas season. Every penny we raise is important and makes an impact here in our local community.

For more information about the Archuleta County Salvation Army please check us out at www.facebook.com/ArchuletaSalvationArmy/.

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The importance of being outdoors and connecting yourself with nature

Healthy Archuleta

Yes, it is January. Yes, it is cold outside. But, this is Pagosa. We have the privilege of living in one of the most beautiful areas of southern Colorado. Each day has its own magic, whether it is the bluest sky ever seen or dark gray clouds that threaten snow. It is all beautiful and wonderful. And if you're always indoors, you're missing it.

But aside from the gorgeous views, being outdoors in nature has a slew of benefits for us. As Richardson and colleagues in an October 2020 article in the Ecosystems and People journal state, "The 'pathways to nature connectedness' (sensory contact, emotion, meaning, beauty, and compassion) provide an important and flexible framework to help improve the human-nature relationship."

This connectedness also gives us a sense of ownership, a realization that the natural world exists for our benefit. But, it is fleeting. Urbanization reduces the amount of green spaces. Concrete replaces earth. We lose more than just oxygen. We lose that absolute interaction with what created us in the first place. By being in nature, we should be more protective of it. Awareness of how our actions can change, good or bad, the ecosystems that surround us, for years to come. What are we leaving for future generations if we do not take the necessary actions to protect our own environment? What do we think Pagosa Springs will look like in a hundred years if we fail to consider where we stand with nature?

As we delve into this new year, perhaps we should take a moment to gaze at the beauty of our wonderful location. Breathe in the cold morning

air as the sun is rising over the mountains. Walk among our tall ponderosa pine trees, study the carpet of spent pine needles on the ground, slowly breaking down over time to become one with the earth once again. Nature is a cycle, and we are a part of that cycle. Embrace it and appreciate its purpose in our lives. Experience it every chance you get.

If you are going to be outdoors in the cold, remember to dress appropriately. Be aware of the weather conditions and if there is a chance of snow or extreme cold. Tell someone where you are going and when you expect to be back.

For information about Healthy Archuleta and our efforts, and to stay connected with us, please visit our website at www.foodcoalition-4archuleta.org and follow our posts on social media.

One final note: Please mark your calendar for a presentation by Kirsten Skeehan on geothermal energy and its role in the food system. It will be held Thursday, Jan. 30, from 4 to 5 p.m. The location will be announced soon.

Countywide Women's Bible Study returning to Revelation

By Stan Counsell

Countywide Women's Bible Study

Christmas, the celebration of our Savior's birth, and the start of the new year has begun. People have finally rested, caught their breath and feel recharged for 2025. So, the "Revelation - Historically" Bible study topic continues this Tuesday for the women of Archuleta County.

Many women are curious about what Jesus' disciples of the first century early church, and beyond, believed about "end times". Of course, many just assume what was in their hearts and minds but never researched it. But, learning the history of early church beliefs is exciting and easy to comprehend.

Do we know what many important people of God thought and proclaimed, some even losing their lives for their faith? We have the New Testament thoughts and convictions of the early church, but what about Christian leaders later on?

What did they believe and how did they spread the gospel of Jesus Christ? You can see who and how they lived. Here are but a few of these mighty servants of Christianity:

John Foxe, the author of the highly acclaimed "Foxe's Book of Martyrs", wrote in detail of great leaders, from 1331-1360, many of whom lost their lives for refusing to renounce their faith in Jesus Christ.

John Wyclif (sometimes spelled Wycliffe) was a noted English reformer. Many have heard of, or own, the "Wyclif Study Bible".

John Huss, a well-educated man who became heavily influenced by the writing of Wyclif, began his writings and lectures that gained

thousands of followers even under heavy persecution from established theological leaders of various sects.

Martin Luther, a former priest that became known as the "Father of the Protestant Reformation" and the Lutheran Church.

William Tyndale was the first to translate the Bible from the Greek to English, and his writings inspired the translators of the King James Bible and King James himself.

Other great men of the Bible included: Sir Isaac Newton, John Wesley, John Calvin and so many more. Yet, some of their ministries are now fuzzy or nearly forgotten over the centuries.

For the first 1,800 years of Christianity, most popular doctrines of Revelation didn't exist, were not known, taught or believed. Words like "rapture" and "Great Tribulation" weren't in existence until the early 1830s. What a conundrum. Who believed what and when?

Do we need Sherlock Holmes, Ben Matlock or a congressional committee to sort this out? Not really, for history is clear on the whole matter.

All women are invited to this exciting study of the last book of the Bible. We meet at Grace in Pagosa every Tuesday morning at 10 a.m. Grace in Pagosa is located at 1044 Park Ave. Come visit us in the fellowship hall to learn from God's Word.

You will be surprised.

Community news.

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2 buildings and one parcel. The front of the building is a gallery and workshop. The back unit is an office set up which was a clinic in the past. There is also a Quonset hut on the back of the property. The gallery fronts Highway 160 and parking is on Eagle Dr and Trinity Ln. Included with the gallery are gallery lights, display fixtures, refrigerator and office furniture. There are 2 offices in the gallery, the back unit has a formal reception area with 2 larger offices, 2 smaller offices and 2 more small flexible rooms. Also, the roof was recently replaced.



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Blood donation saves lives, which can include your own

Vitalant

January is National Blood Donor Month, and blood donors with non-profit Vitalant can help save lives and can learn about their own health with the complimentary pre-donation health check.

Longtime donor Howard Berger said the health check helped to save his own life not once, but twice.

In 2019, pre-donation health checks indicated Berger had an elevated pulse. He mentioned it at his next medical checkup and further tests revealed major blockages in three arteries. He had had no symptoms like chest pain or shortness of breath.

After he recovered from heart bypass surgery and attempted to donate again, his health check indicated his iron level was too low. After seeing a doctor and additional testing, he was diagnosed with colon cancer. It was caught early and removed with a successful surgery. He's since been able to return to donating blood.

"I didn't feel any symptoms when my heart rate was too high and I certainly didn't feel any symptoms

when I had colon cancer; I felt perfectly normal," Berger said. "If I had not been a donor, I could've either dropped dead of a heart attack or by the time they would have found that I had colon cancer, it could have been stage four or worse."

Free health check at each blood donation visit

At each donation visit, the Vitalant "mini-physical" checks the donor's pulse, temperature, blood pressure and hemoglobin (iron) levels to ensure they are healthy enough to give blood. Donors also learn their blood type and cholesterol level after giving, and all those results are available in their confidential donor account.

Vitalant Chief Medical and Scientific Officer Dr. Ralph Vassallo said the health data donors can track over time are valuable.

"With about an hour of their time, not only are blood donors helping save patients' lives, but they can keep tabs on their own health indicators," Vassallo said. "Noticing trends over time and sharing those during regular visits with a primary provider is a

great way to head off possible health concerns before they can become serious health issues."

Another benefit for donors, they can earn points with each donation toward free gifts as a special thank you when they opt in to Vitalant's Donor Rewards program.

Healthy, eligible donors are needed every day to make sure blood is readily available for patients who are treated for trauma, undergoing surgeries, fighting cancer, living with blood disorders and more.

Find a convenient blood drive or donation center at vitalant.org, download and use the Vitalant blood donor app or call 877-25-VITAL ([877] 258-4825).

Upcoming local blood drives

Vitalant will operate multiple upcoming blood drives in Pagosa Springs.

There will be a blood drive at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1879 Majestic Drive, on Wednesday, Jan. 22, from 3 to 7 p.m.

On Feb. 3, a drive will take place at Grace in Pagosa, 1044 Park Ave., from 12:15 to 4:30 p.m.

Another drive will take place at the same location on Feb. 20 from 12:30 to 4:30 p.m., followed by another from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on March 20.

For more information or to make an appointment, visit vitalant.org, download and use the app or call 877-25-VITAL.

Pagosa Bible Church to host The Alpha Course beginning Jan. 27

By Regan Powell
Pagosa Bible Church

The Alpha Course is coming to Pagosa Springs beginning Jan. 27 with the chance to explore the meaning of life.

C.S. Lewis said, "Christianity, if false, is of no importance, and if true, is of infinite importance. The only thing it cannot be is moderately important."

If it is of "infinite" importance, then perhaps it is time to hear the evidence for the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Alpha is a series of video talks with discussion breaks about questions of life, such as: What's the purpose of life? How can I have faith? How can a book written more than 2,000 years ago have any relevance to my life today? Why did Jesus die? What is the evidence for the resurrection? How and why do I pray? How does God guide us? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does He do? Does God heal today?

You are invited to join the conversation around life, faith and meaning. If you're looking for a judgment-free space to ask hard questions, share your own opinion or not say anything at all, there's a place for you. Everyone is welcome, no matter your background or beliefs.

The Alpha Course is hosted by Pagosa Bible Church. Each evening will include dessert and coffee. Child care will be provided.

The course will start on Monday, Jan. 27, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. and will run weekly through April 7.

Register at pagosabiblechurch.org under the Alpha banner.



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Creation Care charting new course in 2025

By Sarah L. Riehm
Creation Care Pagosa

On Thursday, Jan. 23, at 5:30 p.m., Creation Care Pagosa will hold its monthly meeting in the Fellowship Hall of the Community United Methodist Church. All are welcome.

This month's meeting will be potluck with dinner starting at 5:30 p.m. Please bring a dish to share.

"Our group started a little over two years ago," said co-founder Sarah Riehm. "We've grown from eight people to 81 on our active roster, so clearly there is an interest in Pagosa Springs among people interested in taking an active role in environmental preservation.

"In 2024, we were privileged to have great speakers, from Nobel Prize-

winning scientist Dr. Terry Root speaking on plastics and the environment to Paul Kriescher explaining how to retrofit a home to make it more energy efficient. This year, our members want to do more hands-on activities and community involvement. Our January meeting will be devoted to setting specific goals and actions for the year.

"Please join us for what could be our most important meeting of the year. What would you like to see happen in our community to increase awareness of environmental issues and to help preserve our precious natural resources? If you are interested in protecting our natural resources, please attend to make your voice heard."

Creation Care Pagosa is a faith-based organization dedicated to com-

munity education and environmental action. Our mission is to equip the citizens of Pagosa with specific tools and training so that they can be better stewards of God's creation.

Creation Care is a volunteer organization, not an official nonprofit. There are no officers or bylaws or dues. If you have any questions, please contact Riehm at sarah.riehm@gmail.com.



Trinity Anglican Church

The Baptist raised Jesus up out of the water, the Bible says, and "the Holy Spirit descended like a dove and a voice came from heaven saying, 'You are my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'"
Interested? Sunday, 10am.

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trinityanglicanchurch.org

Unitarian Universalists to focus on spiritual practices in 2025

By De Anna Hoyle
Pagosa Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

To start 2025, the Pagosa Unitarian Universalist (UU) Fellowship is focusing on spiritual practices.

As spiritual practices go, they can be as varied as individuals are; for example, prayer and meditation, embodied practices such as dance and yoga, and journeys or pilgrimages.

Join us this Sunday at 10:30 a.m. for a program offered by Rica Potenz and Thomas Davenport entitled "Our Pilgrimage on the Camino de Santiago." Their talk will feature photos from their experience, along with the spiritual and practical details of their itinerary through northwestern Portugal and Spain.

Last summer, Potenz and Davenport walked the Portuguese Coastal Route of the Camino de Santiago, a centuries-old Catholic pilgrimage that has become a beloved journey taken by people of all faiths from around the world.

Planetary parade viewing events set for Jan. 24 and 25

By Dena Laterza
Pagosa Sidewalk Astronomers

View the planetary parade at Yamaguchi Park Jan. 24 and 25.

Join the Pagosa Sidewalk Astronomers for this special celestial event when six planets will be visible across the night sky (five with the naked eye).

Meet near the pickleball courts. There will be a short educational presentation from 7 to 7:30 p.m.

Dress warmly and please, dim your headlights ASAP.

Davenport is a middle school teacher, long-time meditator and aspiring kayaker. Potenz is an energy healer and gardener. They produce a podcast together that teaches people how to interpret their dreams.

Come share in community for this inspiring travelogue as we explore the sacred through pilgrimages.

As the fellowship highlights its core as a UU congregation, we look to the recently adopted bylaws of the UU Association. In a section labeled "Inspirations," the following serves as a foundational place to start:

"Direct experiences of transcending mystery and wonder are primary sources of Unitarian Universalist inspiration. These experiences open our hearts, renew our spirits, and transform our lives. We draw upon, and are inspired by, sacred, secular, and scientific understandings that help us make meaning and live into our values. These sources ground us and sustain us in ordinary, difficult, and joyous times. We respect the histories, contexts, and cultures in which these sources were created and are currently practiced. Grateful for the experiences that move us, aware of the religious ancestries we inherit, and enlivened by the diversity which enriches our faith, we are called to ever deepen and expand our wisdom" (source: UUA.org - Article II Purposes and Covenant).

We are a fellowship embracing open minds, loving hearts and helping hands. We invite your participation at any of our offerings. You can find us at Unit B-15 of the Greenbriar Plaza, 301 N. Pagosa Blvd., on the north side facing Pagosa Peak.

We also offer Zoom services the first and third Sundays of the month. Find our current newsletter at PagosaUU.org for the link to join and to find our current programs.

A shortened group meditation practice is now being held each Sunday at 9 a.m. Meditation and Dharma talk is held the second and fourth Sundays from 9 to 10:15 a.m.



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Book study for women to start Jan. 20

By Shanna Robb
Pagosa Catholic Community

Everyone encounters difficulties or challenges at some point in their lives. Challenges are experienced regardless of age, education level, country of origin, faith or economic status.

The type, onset and degree of challenges vary. Yet, none of these factors determine one's ability, or inability, to overcome the challenges presented. What matters is the way in which one chooses to react and who is placed at the center of their life.

As believed by Saint Thérèse of Lisieux (1873-1897), "challenges should be seen as opportunities for grace."

Approaching challenges in this way fed her desire of going to heaven "by a little way, a way that is very

straight, very short, and totally new." Also known as "The Little Flower," despite facing profound crisis and pain in her lifetime, her deep love of God never wavered. At the center of her life was God, which was the source of her peace and joy.

Seeking spiritual nuggets of wisdom, the Pagosa Springs Catholic Women's Fellowship is starting 2025 by hosting a book study of Thérèse's autobiography. Titled "Story of a Soul: The Autobiography of St. Therese of Lisieux," the book beautifully presents the saint's candid writings and opens the door for discussion.

All women desiring simplicity amidst the complexity of this world and wanting to learn more about the beautiful workings of God's grace for them are encouraged to attend.

The book study will start with a video introduction on Monday, Jan. 20, followed by 11 weeks of guided study and discussions. Book, kindle book or study guide format may be purchased online.

The women's fellowship meets every Monday at Pope John Paul II Catholic Church located at 353 S. Pagosa Blvd. Rosary is at 9 a.m., followed by book study and fellowship from 9:30 to 11 a.m.

Come for all or as you wish.

For more information, visit Ih-mjp2.org.

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.

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Spiritual Experiences Group to begin three-month series

By Laurah Brock Young
Spiritual Experiences Group of Pagosa Springs

We have some exciting news to help start your new year with a spiritual perspective.

We are offering a three-month program called "Raise Your Spiritual IQ." This complimentary program offers 10 techniques included in an experience journal. You can choose your adventures. It includes three books that can help you unlock the power of your dreams, understand more about reincarnation and learn the meaning of your inner experiences.

What to expect:

- Expand your inner awareness of past lives, dreams and how they impact you today.
- Share your experiences with other like-hearted people.
- Learn ways to handle challenges from a spiritual perspective.
- Discover techniques to access your

divine intuition.

- Get simple spiritual exercises to directly connect with the Life Source.
- Receive a free book and beautifully illustrated experience journal to jump-start your spiritual adventure.

This month we will explore how you may awaken your full spiritual potential by delving into your past lives.

Drop in. We'd love to see you as we kick off this three-month series. You may come to any or all of the discussions.

We will meet Sunday, Jan. 19, at the Pagosa Lakes Property Owners Association Clubhouse, 230 Port Ave., at 1 p.m.

Eckankar, a spiritual resource for people of all faiths and backgrounds, sponsors this free event. It is an individual, creative practice to experience our unique relationship with the Divine.

Join the Spiritual Experiences Group of Pagosa Springs at <https://www.meetup.com/pagosa-springs-spiritual-experiences-group/>.

SpiritFire Inspirational Living Center announces upcoming events

By Shayla McClure
SpiritFire Inspirational Living Center

The Sunday presentation on Jan. 19 at 11 a.m. will be "Planting Seeds in Your Spiritual Garden."

Join Shayla Azriel on a visually guided meditative tour creating your spiritual garden blessing your present and future life. A love donation will be accepted.

Upcoming events

Jan. 21, 5:30 p.m.: Illuminations presentation: "Emotional Awareness, How Emotions Affect Your Health and Wellness" with Azriel, health scientist and spiritual guide, and lymphatic system therapist. A love donation will be accepted.

Jan. 25, 10 a.m.: Veterans "Thank-you For Your Service Day". Veterans are welcome to receive a free day of massages, reflexology, Reiki and healing sessions, foot baths, pedicures and more from local therapists and healers at the SpiritFire Center for Inspirational Living. Sign up now for your free sessions by contacting (970) 510-0309.

About us

The SpiritFire Inspirational Living Center is a 501(c)(3). We are an all-inclusive community honoring all lifestyles, cultures and religious paths to the Divine.

SpiritFire Inspirational Living Center events are held at 3505 W. U.S. 160, on the second floor of the Pagosa Lodge (elevator available).

SUDOKU

	9	4	8					
3	5	7		6				
2			4			7		1
	3		1		8		4	2
		9						
	6		3		2			7
5		3	9				8	4
				2	3		6	5
								9

Level: Beginner

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!

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	1	2	5	8	4	3	7	9
9	4	8	7	2	3	1	6	5
5	7	3	9	1	6	2	8	4
8	6	1	3	4	2	9	5	7
4	2	9	6	7	5	8	1	3
7	3	5	1	9	8	6	4	2
2	8	6	4	5	9	7	3	1
3	5	7	2	6	1	4	9	8
1	9	4	8	3	7	5	2	6

ANSWER:

New book offers advice on how to lose the winter blahs

By Carole Howard
PREVIEW Columnist, and the library staff

If the thought of a long, dark winter is getting you down, we have a new book in our collection that offers some excellent practical advice to help you not only cope, but also have a more positive winter attitude.

“How to Winter: Harness Your Mindset to Thrive on Cold, Dark or Difficult Days” was written by health psychologist Kari Leibowitz, who lived and did research in Norway and other far-north countries to understand why many people actually enjoy winter. This book is the result of her research and the latest in psychological and behavioral science.

The author suggests three overall strategies. First, let winter be a time for slowing down. Second, revel in coziness and create rituals that take advantage of activities and feelings unique to this time of year. Third, get outside, taking advantage of how your community celebrates the season.

As well, each chapter ends with a list of specific activities to not only improve your winter mental well-being, but also have some fun.

Some are simple, like lighting the fireplace or candles and making an outside bonfire to add warmth and light to winter days.

Others may be so enjoyable for you and your family that they become unique beloved rituals each winter. An example is declaring a snooze day when everyone stays in their pajamas and piles up pillows and blankets in the living room. Call it a daytime slumber party and watch a movie together while snuggling in your makeshift beds.

We hope the author’s pioneering research on wintertime mindsets gives you some ideas to help embrace the darkest season.

Library closure

Your library will be closed Monday, Jan. 20, for the Martin Luther King Jr. national holiday.

Special Ancestral Puebloans talk

Join us next Tuesday, Jan. 21, from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. for a free event featuring Jon Ghahate, Laguna/Zuni Pueblos cultural educator.

He will discuss the evolution and development of the contemporary southwest pueblos from their Ancestral Puebloan roots in the realms of science, community, languages and culture.

This special event is sponsored by the Chimney Rock Interpretive Association.

Science fun for kids

Youngsters aged 6 to 10 are invited to steam Engines, a free science fun

Library News

session tomorrow, Jan. 17, from 2 to 3:30 p.m.

LEGO Club Saturday

Kids aged 6 to 11 are invited to the free LEGO Club on Saturday, Jan. 18, from 11 a.m. to noon. Bring your own LEGOs or use ours to free build.

Pokemon Club on Saturday

If you love Pokemon and are aged 6 to 11, this free club is for you. Bring your cards on Saturday, Jan. 18, from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. when you can play games with others who love this game too. No experience is required.

Tangle drawing for adults

Next Tuesday, Jan. 21, from 1 to 2:30 p.m. adults are invited to a session to enjoy a fun and creative way to create art.

Spanish conversation

Practice your Spanish in a free group setting on Tuesday, Jan. 21, from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. There is no minimum skill level needed.

Note this group now meets twice a month, on the first and third Tuesdays.

Live and online author talks

Next Thursday, Jan. 23, from 1 to 2 p.m., we will host local author Patty Latham at a free session where she will discuss her three popular published books, all set in Pagosa, that feature veterinarian Josie Tate.

Preceding that live talk is a free online author talk at noon in our New York Times bestselling authors series showcasing Amanda Montell, author of “The Age of Magical Overthinking: Notes on Modern Irrationality.” For details and to register, go to <https://libraryc.org/pagosalibrary/upcoming>.

High school math tutoring

Free high school math tutoring for ages 14 and up takes place Mondays from 4 to 5:30 p.m. Registration is required.

Family storytimes

Wednesdays from 10 to 11 a.m., join a free educational hour of reading, singing and free play to build early literacy skills.

Elementary tutoring sessions

Children ages 6 to 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.

■ See Library on next page

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HOW EXERCISE HELPS REVERSE DEPRESSION

If you are suffering from mild to moderate major depression, get out and get moving! This is the good news medical research has for those who suffer from depression. Discover the science for yourself.

In his valuable book *The Upward Spiral: Using Neuroscience to Reverse the Course of Depression, One Small Change at a Time*, Alex Korb, Ph.D, notes that “almost everything that depression causes can be combated by exercise.”

For instance, while depression makes you lethargic, exercise boosts your energy. While depression makes it harder to concentrate, exercise helps with mental sharpness and decision-making. While depression sinks your mood, exercise improves it. And it diminishes anxiety and stress. Exercise strengthens our brains, writes Korb, also a neuroscientist in the department of psychiatry at the University of California, Los Angeles.

“Exercise increases nerve growth factors, such as brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), which are like steroids for your brain. BDNF makes your brain stronger, so it’s more resistant to all kinds of problems, not only depression,” he writes. Any kind of movement boosts the firing rate of serotonin neurons, which triggers the release of more serotonin. Antidepressants actually target the serotonin system to increase motivation and willpower. (Antidepressants also increase BDNF, and exercise does, too.)

Movement may be anything from vacuuming to gardening. Exercise also reduces the stress hormones cortisol and adrenaline, and increases norepinephrine. Korb writes that the difficulties in concentration “are mainly the fault of a lagging norepinephrine system.”

Source: “Exercising When You’re Depressed.” By Margarita Tartakovsky. *Mental disorders and mental illness*

Bonus Tip: Visit <http://www.AmazingFacts.org> for spiritual refreshment every week!

“Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.” *Isaiah 41:10*

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Library

■ continued from previous page Dungeons and Dragons

Next Thursday, Jan. 23, 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

Every Thursday from 9 to 11 a.m., the 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. No appointment is necessary.

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.

Collections

"The Essential Edgar Allan Poe Collection" compiles his best-loved tales and complete poems in one volume. We also have two new large-print collections: "Under Heaven's Own Blue" by John B. Nesbitt is a collection of four short stories about the American West. "Lucy Burdette's Kitchen" by Lucy Burdette contains all the recipes featured in the Key West Food Critic mystery series.

More large print

"Robert B. Parker's Hot Property" by Mike Lupica is a Spenser mystery. "Lazarus Man" by Richard Price follows the survivors of a Harlem tenement collapse. "Bellevue" by Robin Cook is a medical mystery. "Stuart Woods' Golden Hour" by Brett Battles is a Teddy Fay mystery. "The Courting of Bristol Keats" by Mary E. Pearson is book one of a new fantasy romance series. "Christmas in Bethel" by Richard Paul Evans is an inspirational book about an EMT. "The Mirror" by Nora Roberts is book two in the Lost Bride trilogy. "Bandit Heaven" by Tom Clavin explores the hideouts of the Hole in the Wall Gang.

DVDs

"Conclave" is the inside story of the election of a new pope. "The Apprentice" tells of Donald Trump's relationship with lawyer Roy Cohn. "Coal Miner's Daughter" is the true story based on Loretta Lynn's autobiography. "Transformers One" is the origin story of former friends who change Cybertron forever. "Godzilla x Kong: The New Empire" is an action movie. "Joker: Folie a Deux" is a love story. "God's Not Dead: A Light in Darkness" is part of the Christian drama series. "Challengers" features a woman coaching her tennis-playing husband who is on a losing streak.

Novels

"The Light We Lost" by Jill Santopolo follows the intersecting lives of two seniors who meet at Columbia University. "Of Night Birds" by Juhea Kim tells of a once-famous Russian ballerina facing life choices. "This Motherless Land" by Nikki May focuses on a young Nigerian woman sent to England after a tragedy. "Fire Exit" by Morgan Talty is set in Maine's Penobscot Reservation. "Where the Creek Bends" by Linda Lael Miller is about a woman who moves back to her family home.

Books on CD

"Trial by Fire" by Danielle Steel features a Parisian woman trapped by Napa Valley wildfires. "Know Your Newlywed" by Elena Armas is a rom-com about two game show fans. "Robert B. Parker's Hot Property" by Mike Lupica is a Spenser mystery. "The Wide Wide Sea" by Hamton Sides looks at Captain James Cook's final voyage. "The Hanging Party" by William W. and J.A. Johnstone is the first book in a new Texas Lightning western series. "Billy the Kid" by Ryan C. Coleman tells how he went from orphan to outlaw. "North is the Night" by Emily Rath is a fantasy set in Finland.

Material donations

Thanks to George Neill, Nancy Cole, and Joanne and Victor Lucariello for their generous monetary donations.

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.

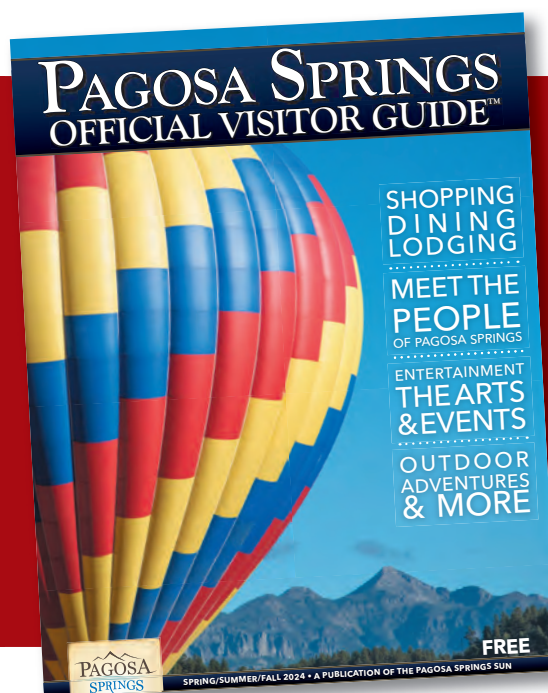
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■ See Library on next page



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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 Barrow's goldeneye.

This is a duck primarily of cold northwestern regions with small populations also occurring in eastern Canada and Iceland. Its migrations occur late in fall and early in spring. Most of the population winters in protected areas on shallow coastal waters, but some venture far inland to cold regions like ours with open water in rivers and lakes. The Barrow's goldeneye is typically only seen in our area between mid-November and mid-April, and then not in large numbers.

Summer finds these ducks in small, shallow, forested mountain lakes. With some exceptions, including a small area in Colorado, the breeding range is limited to a narrow band from Alaska into California. Most of the time they nest in large tree cavities close to water or will utilize nest boxes provided by people.

The diet of this diving duck depends on season and location. In freshwater it feeds mainly on aquatic insects and other invertebrates, small fish, fish eggs and plant material. During its time at sea in winter, it feeds on crustaceans and mollusks.

Barrow's goldeneyes are often seen in the company of the more numerous common goldeneyes. The male Barrow's has a triangular-shaped head with a purplish sheen, and a crescent-shaped white patch on his face which is round in the common goldeneye. His body is snow white below and black above. White markings on his folded black wings give the appearance of piano keys playing across his back.

Barrow's females have rich brown-colored heads atop a gray body. Usually their bills have more yellow than those of female common goldeneyes, but this is not always the case, and the females of these two species are difficult to distinguish. Both goldeneye species have the bright yellow eyes for which they are named.

Like other game birds that live in remote places, goldeneyes are wary and easily flushed from their feeding spots on the river.

For information on events, visit www.weminucheaudubon.org and www.facebook.com/weminucheaudubon/.

Library

■ continued from previous page
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

"How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives." — Annie Dillard, American author of

fiction, nonfiction, poetry and essays, and the 1975 Pulitzer Prize winner for nonfiction.

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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Volunteers needed to make valentine cards

By Rose Chavez
PREVIEW Columnist

The next free art class at the Pagosa Senior Center will be Thursday, Jan. 23, at 1:15 p.m.

Put some heart into your art. Join us in making simple printed cards for Valentine's Day for our homebound adults on Meals on Wheels and congregate meal participants. This is a perfect opportunity for those looking to serve their community, volunteer and have some whimsical fun.

No art skills are required, just willingness to have a good time. All supplies will be provided and there is no cost or registration required. Just show up and get ready to paint.

The instructor for this class is the talented and warm Becky Crowe, a former art teacher and volunteer extraordinaire. She is also a printmaker, has had her artwork published and creates greeting cards for all types of occasions.

For more information, please contact Archuleta Seniors Inc. (ASI) at (970) 264-2167.

Pagosa Springs Scrapbooking and Crafters Club

The Pagosa Springs Scrapbooking Crafters club continues to hold monthly meetings the second Saturday of each month from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Ross Aragon Community Center, 451 Hot Springs Blvd., within the dining hall in the Senior Center.

This creative tradition has been happening since 2005, and we invite all creative individuals to come and share ideas, connect with new and old friends, learn/share creative 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.

Help us create an intergenerational community. Ages 18 and older are welcome. For those youth age 17 and younger, we kindly request an adult chaperone accompany them.

If you would like to be added to the mailing list, please send your request to copenhavercreative@gmail.com and you will receive notification each month of the upcoming meeting, along with handy tips and tricks for scrapbooking and more.

T'ai Chi Chih

The Senior Center offers T'ai Chi Chih with accredited instructor Patti Popovich each Thursday from 2 to 3 p.m. to support older adults who want to discover purpose and fulfillment in this transitional phase of life. Meet in the Senior Center dining hall.

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.

Senior News

All classes will be free for older adults (age 55 and better) and will last approximately one hour.

No special clothing or equipment is required.

For more information, call (970) 264-2167.

Brain fitness and mobility program

Join us through March 3 from 10 to 10:45 a.m. at the Senior Center for a free six-week new Ageless Grace exercise program, taught by Judy, a trained facilitator who will support and help you learn gentle movements to enhance brain health and mobility.

We will spend 30 minutes in a chair exercising and stimulating five areas of our brain functioning. Yes, it is possible to strengthen our neural connections even as we age.

Anyone age 21 and older is invited and encouraged to participate in this program.

It is a cutting-edge brain fitness program based on neuroplasticity that activates all five functions of the brain — strategic planning, memory/recall, analytical thinking, creativity and imagination, kinesthetic learning — and simultaneously addresses all 21 physical skills needed for life-long optimal health functioning.

Emotional Freedom Technique sessions

Join us at the Senior Center the second Wednesday of each month, to participate in the popular, ongoing "Tapping" class (also known as EFT, or Emotional Freedom Technique) from 10 to 11 a.m. that is free and open to all ages and walks of life.

The next session is Feb. 12.

The first half of the class is learning or reviewing the technique, and the second half of the hour is practicing the technique and answering questions.

This is a supportive, fun and informative class taught by Judith Newman, LPC, who has been in private practice for 23 years.

EFT is an evidence-based, self-regulating technique using acupuncture trigger points as well as elements from other therapeutic practices. Extensive research shows EFT to be effective in lowering both psychological and physical symptoms of anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, insomnia, stress and more.

■ See Senior on next page

The Weekly Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

- 1 Like Hubbard's cupboard
- 5 World record?
- 10 Loud door sound
- 14 System for servers
- 15 Shipping container
- 16 Roman robe
- 17 Breathing apparatus
- 19 Screen symbol
- 20 Jacket fabric
- 21 Family-tree study
- 23 Library section
- 25 Sneaky coward
- 28 Catch in a sting
- 32 Stately tree
- 33 Potting mixtures
- 36 Chopin piece
- 37 H.S. lab class
- 39 Track events
- 41 Till fill
- 42 Revs
- 44 Digs for pigs
- 46 Top anagram
- 47 Request
- 49 Token
- 51 Valued highly
- 54 Notre Dame, for one
- 57 Shopping aids
- 61 Workers' protection org.
- 62 Glassmaking color
- 64 Subsequently
- 65 Edit
- 66 Songstress Horne
- 67 Ogled
- 68 Labor's partner
- 69 Washstand vessel

DOWN

- 1 Ward who played Robin
- 2 Turn over ___ leaf

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61						62				63					
64						65						66			
67						68						69			

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- 3 Skyrocket
- 4 Master hand
- 5 Puzzler's dir.
- 6 Shakespeare works
- 7 "See ya!"
- 8 Perform penance
- 9 Peaceful doves
- 10 Thin-heeled shoe
- 11 Off one's rocker
- 12 Highly excited
- 13 Countless
- 18 "Any ___?"
- 22 Skin blemishes
- 24 Gift-tag word
- 25 Actress Winger
- 26 Fake name
- 27 Artist's garment
- 29 Kind of sentence
- 30 Skilled
- 31 Linguine sauce
- 34 Permit
- 35 Pick-me-up
- 38 Ring finger's place
- 40 Psychic
- 43 Kind of loser
- 45 Refine metal
- 48 Railroad porter
- 50 Fit to be tried?
- 52 Mealtime lure
- 53 Cavalry sword
- 54 Shelter for
- 55 White as a ghost
- 56 What you used to be
- 58 Great deal
- 59 It may be carried
- 60 Barely burn
- 63 Mormons, for short

Answers to Previous Crossword:

B	A	N	G	S		S	C	A	M		T	R	E	S		
A	L	E	R	T		C	O	L	A		H	U	L	A		
S	O	L	A	R	C	E	L	L	S		O	R	A	L		
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C	O	P	A	S	E	T	I	C		S	O	R	T	S		
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S	E	E	R			S	O	U	P			R	E	E	D	S

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Senior

■ continued from previous page

This technique is easy to learn and then use any time you want to lower your anxiety, gain clarity about emotional challenges and increase your ability to work with difficult transitions in your life.

Join the class and improve your well-being; meet new people in the community; support yourself and others while learning a powerful, helpful tool; find new ways to deal with insomnia, stress and change.

For more information or questions, please contact Newman at (505) 577-0194 or ASI at (970) 264-2167.

Meals on Wheels volunteers needed

For more than 50 years, the Senior Center (established in 1971)/ASI (established in 2013) has been meeting the social and nutritional needs of older adults (age 60 and better) in our community.

We serve thousands of nutritious meals annually in Archuleta County, and volunteers deliver Meals on Wheels and friendly visits/wellness checks to homebound older adults.

We depend on more than 55 volunteers annually to help us serve and deliver meals and provide other wrap-around services.

The cost of each meal is \$10.50, but we only ask for a suggested donation of \$6 per meal. Meal recipients are asked to contribute what they can afford, and no one is ever turned down.

Meals are delivered Monday through Friday. Participants must be at home to receive meals. Meals will not be left.

Meals on Wheels volunteers receive background checks and training prior to delivery. Typically a volunteer shift is one day a week from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. depending on the size of the route. Staff works closely with volunteers to allow for periodic breaks.

If you are interested in volunteering, please stop by the ASI office at 451 Hot Springs Blvd. to pick up an application. Questions? Please call ASI at (970) 264-2167.

Healthy aging and yoga therapy classes

The Healthy Aging Yoga Series continues to be offered in person at the Senior Center on Mondays from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m.

It is 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 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.

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 request that individuals new to the series arrive early for intake inquiries and to please communicate with our instructor, Kimberly Anderson, directly by email at zinkgraf@gmail.com.

Stretching and mobility class

Community members are invited to attend free weekly classes every Tuesday this fall and winter from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. at the Senior Center.

The stretching and mobility classes for older adults (age 55 and up) are designed to help build balance in the body through functional exercises that aim to improve mobility and flexibility.

Participants will have the opportunity to enjoy a variety of techniques that can help enhance overall movement efficiency.

Though not necessary, a mat is recommended for this class.

The program is instructed by local ballet dance instructor Dee Pitchon, who will provide modifications to ensure the safety and effectiveness of the exercises.

Bingo

The Senior Center continues to host free community bingo games twice a month on Friday afternoons from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.

The dates to kick off 2025 are Jan. 17 and 31, Feb. 14 and 28, and March 7 and 21.

Bring yourself and a friend for an hour of joyful fellowship. We will provide prizes from local businesses for all winners, and snacks will also be provided.

No RSVP is required. Help us create an intergenerational community.

All ages are welcome, but we ask those 18 and younger to come with an adult chaperone. Seats are first come, first served.

For more information, contact us at (970) 264-2167.

Senior Conversations

Join us Mondays at 1:15 p.m. for a series of Senior Conversations with local Bill Salmansohn.

Salmansohn brings to our conversations a variety of topics designed to stimulate discussions within a safe and comfortable environment as we explore our well-being and shared experiences.

This is a unique opportunity to connect with others living within the Archuleta community for friendship and togetherness.

Snacks will be provided.

Afterward, hosted by Robin Williams, is a get-together created for those who wish to continue the conversation. This opportunity is

typically from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m., following Senior Conversations.

The group occasionally reconvenes as an informal gathering at various local restaurants.

Share lunch Monday through Friday

Open to all. Join us at the Silver

■ See Senior on page 19



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 X P W V B A Y L V B I T U D M J K E U F
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 K R C G G K G N I T A K S I G E W E O U
 B K R W M H R C O R G S Y V F H Y Y C G

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

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- HOCKEY
- ICE
- JUMP
- LIFT
- NOVICE
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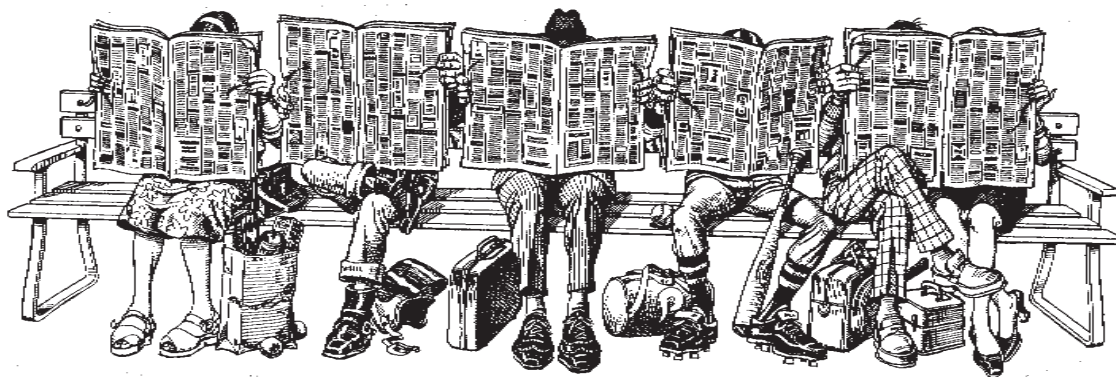
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Senior

■ continued from page 17

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.

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 \$6, 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.

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, Jan. 16 — Greek spanakopita pie, cauliflower rice, garden salad, fruit, baklava and milk.

Friday, Jan. 17 — Pork tenderloin with blackberry glaze, baby baked potatoes, garden salad, fruit, Key lime pie and milk.

Monday, Jan. 20 — Closed in honor and celebration of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. federal holiday.

Tuesday, Jan. 21 — Hawaiian beef and peppers, coconut rice, zucchini saute, garden salad, fruit, chocolate royal cookies and milk.

Wednesday, Jan. 22 — Chicken and mushroom crepes, ciabatta bread, peas and pearl onions, garden salad, vanilla yogurt, fruit and milk.

Thursday, Jan. 23 — Beef pot roast with root vegetables, dinner roll, garden salad, cottage cheese, fruit and milk.

Friday, Jan. 24 — New England clam chowder with oyster crackers, broccoli, garden salad fruit, chocolate cake 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 \$6 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

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

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.

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.

Board vacancies

The ASI Board of Directors has multiple vacant positions open. The terms are three years with an option to renew for an additional term.

Potential candidates should be at least 21 years of age or older and must have a passion for adult and aging services.

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Preview Calendar

All events listed in The PREVIEW Calendar are free of charge unless otherwise noted.

Thursday, Jan. 16

Ruby's Writers Guild. 9-11 a.m., Sisson Library. Ruby's Writers Guild welcomes writers who are looking for opportunities, support and camaraderie with other writers. Members will provide support, resources and guidance for each other.

End of Life Education. 1 p.m., Community United Methodist Church, 434 Lewis St. Join for a film and discussion on the topic of preparing for death.

Kids Clothing Exchange. 1-7 p.m., Open Door Church, 110 Trinity Lane. Shop, swap and let your kids grow with Pagosa Mini Closet.

T'ai Chi Chih. 2-3 p.m., 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.

Knowledge Bowl. 4-5 p.m., Sisson Library. Test your trivia skills in a wide range of subjects.

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.

'A Walk in the Woods.' 7 p.m., Pagosa Springs Center for the Arts. For tickets and show information, see pagosacenter.org or call (970) 731-SHOW (7469).

Friday, Jan. 17

Indoor Pickleball. 8-11:30 a.m., Ross Aragon Community Center.

Kids Clothing Exchange. 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Open Door Church, 110 Trinity Lane. Shop, swap and let your kids grow with Pagosa Mini Closet.

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.

Steam Engines. 2-3:30 p.m., Sisson Library. Science fun for ages 6-10.

WinterFest: Bonfire. 5-8 p.m., Archuleta County Fairgrounds, 344 W. U.S. 84.

'A Walk in the Woods.' 7 p.m., Pagosa Springs Center for the Arts. For tickets and show information, see pagosacenter.org or call (970) 731-SHOW (7469).

Saturday, Jan. 18

WinterFest: Mass Hot Air Balloon Ascension. 8 a.m., west side of Pagosa Springs. See the balloons fill the winter sky in the Pagosa Lakes area. Parking on U.S. 160 to view the balloons is not permitted. Weather dependent.

WinterFest: BB Gun Biathlon. 9:15 a.m., Yamaguchi Park. A unique, fun freestyle ski event in which participants can either classic or skate ski while target shooting with Red Ryder BB guns provided by the Pagosa Nordic Club. There will be prizes for the top finishers and best costumes. Bib pickup will open for all races — 16K, 4K and KidK — at 9:15 a.m. The race fee is \$5 for Pagosa Nordic Club members and \$15 for non-members.

WinterFest: Skijoring. 10 a.m., Red Ryder Roundup Rodeo Grounds.

■ See Calendar on next page

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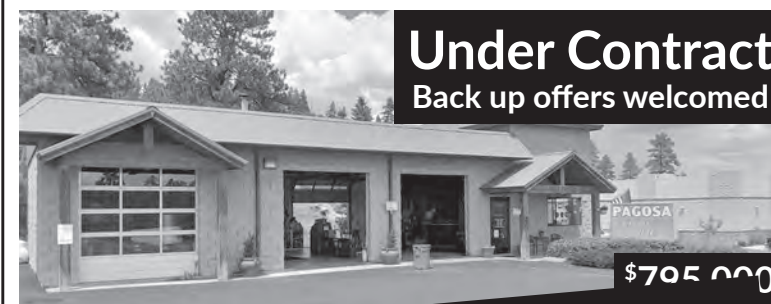
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Preview Calendar

■ continued from previous page

Fast-paced, skillful riding of horses with riders and skiers over obstacles. Tickets begin at \$10 and can be purchased at <https://www.skisandsaddles.com/>.

Sarah Platt Decker Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution meeting. 10:30 a.m., Community United Methodist Church, 434 Lewis St. For more information, call Sheryl Egly at (970) 507-0646.

LEGO Club. 11 a.m.-noon, Sisson Library. For kids 6-11 years old. Bring your own or use the library's LEGOs to free build. Contact the library at (970) 264-2209 for further information.

WinterFest: Barkus Parade. 11 a.m., Town Park. A costumed menagerie of pets will parade around the downtown area. Registration begins at 10:30 a.m.

March for Equality. 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Town Park.

Pokémon Club. 12:30-2:30 p.m., Sisson Library. For ages 6-11. Bring your cards to battle against others who love Pokemon too. No experience is required.

WinterFest: Penguin Plunge. 1 p.m., San Juan River. Support your favorite nonprofits as representatives plunge into the San Juan River. Enjoy the view from the Riverwalk across from the Visitor Center.

Kids' Theater Camp Performance. 5 p.m., Pagosa Springs High School, 800 S. 8th Street. Children from the Pagosa Springs High School Theater Department's kids' theatre camp will perform. Registration for the camp is \$25. The camp is a fundraiser for the school's spring musical, "The Wizard of Oz."

'A Walk in the Woods.' 7 p.m., Pagosa Springs Center for the Arts. For tickets and show information, see pagosacenter.org or call (970) 731-SHOW (7469).

Sunday, Jan. 19

WinterFest: Mass Hot Air Balloon Ascension. 8 a.m., west side of Pagosa Springs. See the balloons fill the winter sky in the Pagosa Lakes area. Parking on U.S. 160 to view the balloons is not permitted. Weather dependent.

WinterFest: Learn to Cross-Country Ski Clinic. 9:45 a.m., Cloman Park. An introductory clinic for adults at beginning and intermediate levels. Weather dependent.

WinterFest: Skijoring. 10 a.m., Red Ryder Roundup Rodeo Grounds. Fast-paced, skillful riding of horses with riders and skiers over obstacles. Tickets begin at \$10 and can be purchased at <https://www.skisandsaddles.com/>.

'A Walk in the Woods.' 7 p.m., Pagosa Springs Center for the Arts. For tickets and show information, see pagosacenter.org or call (970) 731-SHOW (7469).

Monday, Jan. 20

Women's Fellowship. 9 a.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church classrooms.

Deepening the Faith Classes. 6-8 p.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church classrooms.

Tuesday, Jan. 21

Stretching and Mobility Class. 9:30-10:30 a.m., Senior Center. A stretching and mobility class for those age 55 and up.

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.

Veterans for Veterans of Archuleta County. 10 a.m., Pagosa Bible Church, 209 Harman Park Drive. Veterans and family members are invited to share experiences with vets of all ages. Find out about the latest in vets benefits, vets news and community-focused events. Contact (970) 880-8387 for more details.

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.

Adult DIY: Tangle Drawing Art. 1-2:30 p.m., Sisson Library. All supplies will be provided.

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.

'Ancestral Puebloans to Contemporary Southwest Pueblos.' 3-4:30 p.m., Sisson Library. Jon Ghahate, museum cultural educator at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center in New Mexico, will present.

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.

Men's Fellowship. 6 p.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church classrooms.

Wednesday, Jan. 22

Indoor Pickleball. 8-11:30 a.m., Ross Aragon Community Center.

Introduction to Pickleball. 8:30-11 a.m., Ross Aragon Community Center. Register on the Pagosa Springs Parks and Recreation page at <https://secure.rec1.com/CO/pagosa-springs-co/catalog>.

Kids Kare. 9:30-11:30 a.m., Pagosa Bible Church, 209 Harman Park Drive. A weekly club for 3- to 5-year-olds where the Bible is taught with songs, stories, object lessons, games and more. For more information, email Frank and Connie Porter at ceflittlekids@gmail.com.

Family Storytime. 10-11 a.m., Sisson Library. Join us for great stories, fun songs, and plenty of reasons to get up and move. It's a great way for kids to have fun while building the skills they need to become independent readers. For all ages. Call (970) 264-2209 for more information.

Bridge. 1:15 p.m., Senior Center.

Mindful Drawing. 1:15 p.m., Senior Center.

Blood Drive. 3-7 p.m., Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1879 Majestic Drive. Contact local volunteer David Hamilton by call or text at (970) 799-4056 for more information or to schedule.

Elementary Tutoring. 3:30-4:30 p.m., Sisson Library. After-school tutoring in reading and math for grades 1-3. Registration required. Call (970) 264-2209 for more information or to sign up.

Thursday, Jan. 23

Ruby's Writers Guild. 9-11 a.m., Sisson Library. Ruby's Writers Guild welcomes writers who are looking for opportunities, support and camaraderie with other writers. Members will provide support, resources and guidance for each other.

Virtual Author Talk: Amanda Montell. Noon, virtual. "Notes on Modern Irrationality" with bestselling author Amanda Montell. For details and to register, go to <https://library.org/pagosalibrary/upcoming>.

Author Talk: Patty Latham. 1-2 p.m., Sisson Library. Local author Patty Latham will discuss her Napa Valley Vets and Josie Tate trilogy.

Art Class. 1:15 p.m., Senior Center. Make simple printed cards for seniors for Valentine's Day. All supplies will be provided.

T'ai Chi Chih. 2-3 p.m., 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.

■ See Calendar on page 23



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Los Angeles is a wake-up call for the West — especially Durango

By Dave Marston
PREVIEW Columnist

Opinion: Writers on the Range

After fierce winds whipped fire out of brush-covered hills on Jan. 7, entire Los Angeles neighborhoods burned down. Within a few days, more than 12,000 homes and businesses had been destroyed as flames ringed the city. And it's not over yet.

The photos of smoldering neighborhoods and distraught residents are horrific and shocking. Could they also presage the kind of wildfire that might overtake Durango, a town of about 20,000 in southwestern Colorado?

It's a question worth asking. Local fire experts say Los Angeles and Durango are similar in topography. Durango doesn't experience the hurricane-force Santa Ana winds that pushed the LA fires, but it does often have sustained winds of 30 mph and gusts over 40 mph, which can vault burning embers great distances.

Perhaps more importantly, the big city and the town share the same pattern of development.

Angelenos have long coveted proximity to wooded canyons for their homes. Durango residents crave the same access to nature, pushing housing into canyons. In both places, million-dollar homes have been built among flammable trees.

Other similarities include lax regulations that fail to dissuade wildland builders. Then there's the question of storing enough water and having sufficient water pressure to fight blazes. Los Angeles ran out of water fast because attacks on simultaneous fires quickly drew down supplies.

Durango uses around 4 million gallons daily and has two weeks of storage in its Terminal Reservoir. But if the city ran a dozen or more high-flow hydrants, water pressure would plummet in days. Here's a suggestion: Prioritize building the \$11 million, 36-inch proposed water line from Lake Nighthorse, a nearby reservoir, to the city system, boosting raw water storage to four months.

Durango has a history of large wildfires. In 2002, the 73,000-acre Missionary Ridge Fire torched 46 structures. The town suffered another blow in 2018 when wildfire ringed the town, burning 54,130 acres.

Randy Black, Durango Fire Protection District fire chief, is quick to point out that not one structure was lost in 2018, thanks to a coordinated effort by local and state crews.

"We got lucky," he said. "If the June 2018 fire happened later in the season, resources wouldn't have

been available."

Also key were carefully forged relationships among regional fire-fighting resources, Black said, along with extensive planning.

One hundred eighty employees and volunteers staff the Durango Fire District, which covers both the city and a 325-square-mile swath of the county. Black said they focus on what he calls the most important aspect of firefighting — mitigation meant to keep wildland fires from starting in the first place.

That means working to create fire breaks between wildlands and urban areas and removing fuels within the urban core. The town participates by thinning wooded areas on its perimeter, and federal agencies manage both thinning and controlled burns.

"If you don't do the fire mitigation, you run the risk of whole neighborhoods catching on fire," Black said.

Another similarity between Los Angeles and Durango is that both share difficulty in getting fire insurance.

Some insurers have pulled out of California entirely, and when the Durango Fire District built its new in-town firehouse last year, Black said, no one would insure the structure at first. Colorado insurance companies had just weathered 10 years of property losses to wildland fire, and they were loath to take chances.

Colorado's new, state-backed Fair Plan offers a last resort for home insurance, but it's bare-bones coverage of homes worth up to \$750,000. With building costs in Durango now estimated to be \$500 to \$700 per square foot, losing a 2,000-square-foot home to wildfire means rebuilding a much smaller house.

I've talked to many wildland fire experts about how towns can fight these multiple, destructive blazes. Their suggestions boil down to three basics:

First, make building requirements stringent for any home proposed in wildlands.

Second, get residents involved. The Durango Fire District offers homeowners free assessments of fire risk, and it also advises the creation of three zones around a house: Remove

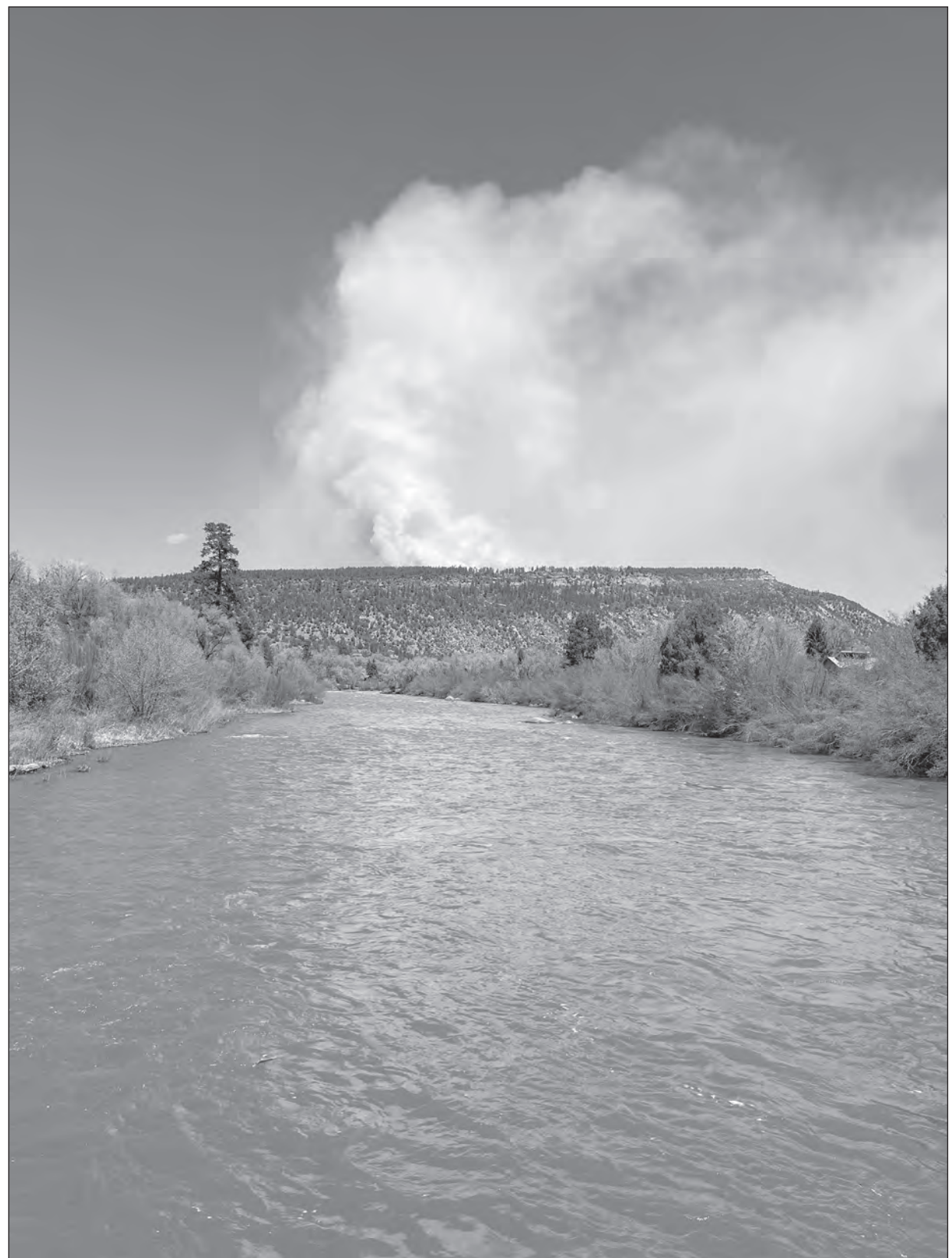


Photo courtesy Dave Marston

A controlled Bureau of Land Management burn near Durango, Colo., in May 2023.

anything flammable within 5 feet, include a turnaround big enough for fire vehicles, and allow only widely spaced trees and mown grass out to 100 feet.

A third step is "hardening" existing structures with fireproof building materials. Black, who built his own house, said he chose cement siding

and a metal roof.

If homeowners take these steps, say insurers, they stand a better chance of keeping their insurance policies. Twenty-four people have lost their lives in the Los Angeles fires as of Jan. 12. Their deaths are a wake-up call to everyone living in the West —

especially Durango.

Dave Marston is the publisher of Writers on the Range, writersontherange.org, an independent non-profit dedicated to lively discussion about the West. He lives in Durango. Views expressed do not necessarily represent those of The SUN.

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Preview Calendar

■ continued from page 21
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.

Creation Care Pagosa. 5:30 p.m., Community United Methodist Church, 434 Lewis St. The meeting will be a potluck. Bring a dish to share. The meeting will be devoted to setting specific goals and actions for the years.

'A Walk in the Woods.' 7 p.m., Pagosa Springs Center for the Arts. For tickets and show information, see pagosacenter.org or call (970) 731-SHOW (7469).

Friday, Jan. 24

Indoor Pickleball. 8-11:30 a.m., Ross Aragon Community Center.

Good News Club. 1:15-3:15 p.m., Pagosa Springs Elementary School. A weekly club for kids in kindergarten through the fourth grade where the Bible is taught with songs, stories, object lessons, games and more. For more information, email Frank and Connie Porter at ceflittlekids@gmail.com.

Potholder Party. 2-3:30 p.m., Sisson Library. Remember those potholders you made as a kid? Re-create a memory and make a new one.

Pagosa Springs Varsity Girls' Basketball. 5:30 p.m., Pagosa Springs High School. Pagosa Springs vs.

Alamosa.

Pagosa Springs Varsity Boys' Basketball. 7 p.m., Pagosa Springs High School. Pagosa Springs vs. Alamosa.

Planetary Parade Viewing. 7 p.m., Yamaguchi Park. Join the Pagosa Sidewalk Astronomers for a special celestial event when six planets will be visible across the night sky (five with the naked eye). Meet near the pickleball courts. There will be a short educational presentation from 7 to 7:30 p.m. Dress warmly and dim headlights as soon as possible.

'A Walk in the Woods.' 7 p.m., Pagosa Springs Center for the Arts. For tickets and show information, see pagosacenter.org or call (970) 731-SHOW (7469).

Saturday, Jan. 25

Pagosa Springs Varsity Girls' Basketball. 12:30 p.m., Pagosa Springs High School. Pagosa Springs vs. Montezuma-Cortez.

Knitters Circle. 1-3 p.m., Sisson Library. Join new or experienced knitters to get help with your project, or sit and knit.

Pagosa Springs Varsity Boys' Basketball. 2 p.m., Pagosa Springs High School. Pagosa Springs vs. Montezuma-Cortez.

Planetary Parade Viewing. 7 p.m., Yamaguchi Park. Join the Pagosa Sidewalk Astronomers for a special celestial event when six planets will be visible across the night sky (five with the naked eye). Meet near the pickleball courts. There will be a short educational presentation from 7 to 7:30 p.m. Dress warmly and dim headlights as soon as possible.

Sunday, Jan. 26

'A Walk in the Woods.' 7 p.m., Pagosa Springs Center for the Arts. For tickets and show information, see pagosacenter.org or call (970) 731-SHOW (7469).

Monday, Jan. 27

Indoor Pickleball. 8-11:30 a.m., Ross Aragon Community Center.

Women's Fellowship. 9 a.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church classrooms.

Brain Fitness and Mobility. 10-10:45 a.m., Senior Center. For anyone 21 and older.

Senior Conversations. 1:15 p.m., Senior Center.

Healthy Aging and Yoga Therapy Class. 2:30-3:30 p.m., Senior Center.

Shakespeare Read Aloud Club. 3:30-5 p.m., Sisson Library. Join in reading "The Comedy of Errors" aloud together. For more information, call Jenny at (240) 426-7887.

High School Math Tutoring. 4-5 p.m., Sisson Library. Math tutors are available for ages 14 and up. Registration is required.

Deepening the Faith Classes. 6-8 p.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church classrooms.

The Alpha Course. 6:30-8:30 p.m., Pagosa Bible Church. A series of video talks with discussion breaks about questions of life. Dessert, coffee and child care will be provided. Register at pagosabilechurch.org.

Submit your calendar items to editor@pagosasun.com; mail them to The Pagosa Springs SUN, P.O. Box 9, Pagosa Springs, CO 81147; or deliver them to The SUN office by noon Monday.

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NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS MEETING. Wednesdays, 5:30 at Pagosa Bible Church. Use side entrance. Call Bailey for details at (719)588-7572.

PAGOSA AA: M-W-F 5:30p.m. Mens' meeting Tuesday 5:30p.m. Saturday and Sunday 10a.m. Tuesday and Thursday at noon. 315 N. 2nd St., County Road 200 (.2 miles off 160). Zoom Sunday 10a.m. Zoom Thursday noon women only; ID 858 319 763, password 754 234. Call Kathi (970)946-1482 or Central Office (888)333-9649.

THERE IS A SOLUTION GROUP of Alcoholics Anonymous meets Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays, 5:30-6:30p.m. Pagosa Bible Church, 209 Harman Park Drive. Questions? Richard: (970)903-1456. Diamond: (970)264-1073. More resources: www.aa.org, www.aa-westerncolorado.com, (970)245-9649, (888)333-9649 (24 hours).

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THE TOWN OF PAGOSA SPRINGS is seeking to hire an **Equipment Operator I** in the Public Works Division. The individual selected for this position will perform a variety of entry-level, skilled, and technical duties related to the construction, installation, maintenance, and repair of the Town's streets, sidewalks, alleys, and related infrastructure. This is a full-time position with benefits. For more information on the position and to apply, go to the Town's website at www.pagosasprings.co.gov and select Employment.

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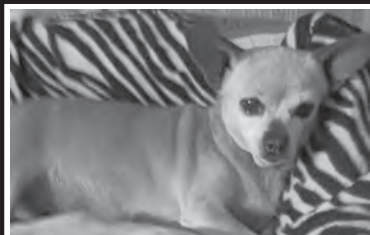
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BE SURE TO CHECK for more yard sales in the Too Late To Classify section.

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PAGOSA VALLEY PROPERTIES: Offering "Aspen Plaza ProSuites" These are Professional Office Suites available for Long Term rental from 135 SF to 205 SF, priced from \$465-\$669/ month. Also, Large Conference/ Event Room Available. Call (970)889-2022 for more information.

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3 BEDROOM 2 BATH. Workshop. 20 acres. Great views of the La Plata. Ignacio. \$475,000. Give Deb Archuleta at Archuleta Properties a call (970)903-2817.

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LAND/ BUILDING SITES

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Tips to make a computer run more smoothly

Special to The PREVIEW

The spinning color wheel on a computer screen is an unwelcome sight. Despite that, it's a frustration familiar to millions of computer users across the globe and indicative of a device that's overwhelmed.

Though there's never a good time to see the spinning color wheel, it tends to appear at those moments when users are particularly busy or staring down important deadlines.

Some computers experience diminished performance due to age, but, oftentimes, users have options other than replacement when their devices aren't running smoothly:

- Turn off automatic startups. The more applications that are running at a given time, the slower a computer is likely to perform. And users may not realize just how many apps are running on their computers at one time. Many apps may be starting automatically whenever a user restarts his or her computer, and these programs could be running in the background. Individuals who suspect this might be why their devices are operating inefficiently can go into their application settings and turn off automatic startups, particularly with apps they rarely use.

- Uninstall apps that aren't used. Device performance also can improve when users uninstall apps they

don't use. New computers come with a variety of programs that are pre-installed. These programs take up space and memory and adversely affect performance, which makes them prime targets for removal.

- Save files to cloud storage and/or a backup hard drive. Inadequate storage space on a hard drive also affects device performance in a negative way. Users with lots of files, be it documents or photos or both, on their computers are urged to utilize cloud storage and delete those files once they're successfully uploaded. Files that users prefer to keep on their computer hard drives can be compressed to free up memory and thus improve speed and performance.

- Utilize the cleanup function on the computer. A cleanup function can help to improve performance by deleting temporary files that are created whenever a computer is rebooted or an application is opened after being shut down. These temporary files can take up a lot of storage, but the cleanup function will delete them, thus improving the speed of the device.

- Update the operating system. An outdated operating system also can adversely affect device performance. Access the settings of the device to determine if a new operating system is available. Some people may be

utilizing an operating system that is several updates behind, and in such instances the performance of the device can be quite poor.

No one wants to see a spinning color wheel on their computer screen. But that wheel might be a byproduct of a host of variables that can be easily and quickly addressed to improve computer performance.

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