Informational school meeting set

Master Plan Advisory Committee to meet Jan. 27, 5:30 p.m. — A7

2024 year in review October, November, December — A5



Hunt sentenced to 18 years for 2021 homicide

By Randi Pierce Staff Writer

in the case.

The defendant in the 2021 death of Michael Kroll was sentenced to 18 years in prison on Tuesday, Jan. 21.

In handing down the sentence to Glenn Canyon Lee Hunt, 62, 6th Judicial District Chief Judge Jeffrey Wilson suggested the plea and sen-



Glenn Hunt

Hunt entered a guilty plea to murder in the second degree on Jan. 6, with that plea stipulating to a sentence of 18 years.

According to a press release previously issued by the Pagosa Springs Police Department (PSPD), Kroll was reported missing from the Pagosa Springs area on Oct. 19, 2021, and his remains were later located in a remote area of La Plata County on Sept. 25, 2022.

Hunt, formerly of Archuleta County, was identified through a joint investigation by the Pagosa Springs Police Department and the Colorado Bureau of Investigation, the press release notes.

The 11-page arrest warrant affidavit in the case alleges that Hunt and Kroll had met on Oct. 16, 2021, at a his children told the court Kroll was "hippie dip" along the river in Pagosa Springs, with Hunt being the last person Kroll was seen with prior to his disappearance.

missing on Oct. 19, 2021, after failing to show up for work. His cellphone was found by a construction worker in the middle of the highway near U.S. 160 and Colo. 151 on Oct. 18, 2021 the same day his dog was dropped off at a Bayfield gas station by a man later identified as Hunt.

The affidavit further alleges data associated with Hunt's cellphone placed him in Bayfield on Oct. 18, 2021, as well as in the area of Middle Mountain in La Plata County - the area Kroll's remains were found nearly a year later.

It further notes DNA analysis of blood found in the camper Kroll was living in "showed strong support that it was a mixture of blood from both Michael Kroll and Glen Hunt."

Hunt was arrested in August of 2023 in Kit Carson County.

Prior to the sentence, the court heard several statements.

Family members and friends of Kroll described him to the court as a friend, brother, son, father, protector, and a bright and shining light.

A friend of Kroll expressed she was leery when Kroll was traveling, but that he believed if he put good in the world, he would be OK.

She expressed hope that when Hunt dies he will be forgotten. "I refuse to remember him," she

told the court of Hunt, adding Kroll will always be remembered and loved.

Kroll's ex-wife and the mother of a bright and shining light, and Hunt's darkness would not prevail over that light.



VOLUME 117 — NO. 17, THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 2025

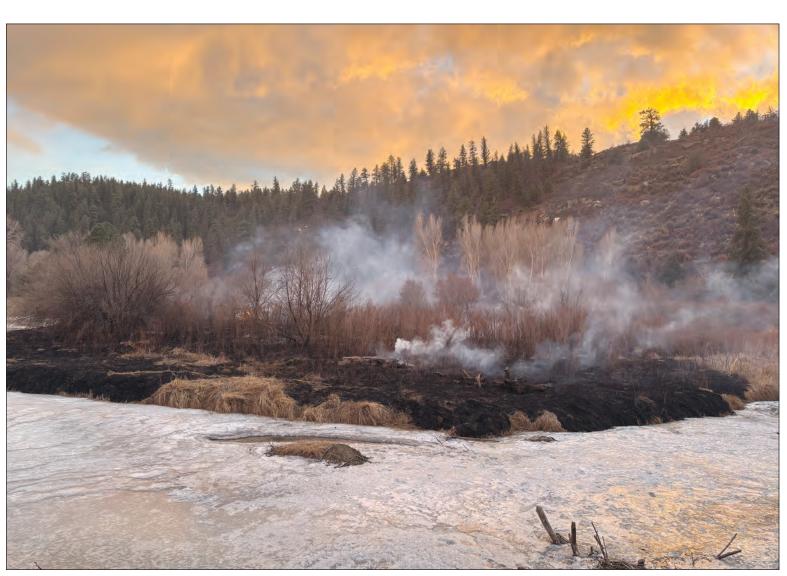


Photo courtesy Archuleta County Sheriff's Office

The River Bottom Fire is pictured on Jan. 11. The fire was one of two grass fires this month, with local officials calling for safe and responsible burning to avoid additional fires.

'In the fire season right now': Commissioners hear about fire management, danger

By Clayton Chaney Staff Writer

how fires are responded to within the county. mentioning destruction being caused by

Conversation also touched on recent fires wildfires currently happening in California and wanting to know how the county would respond to a similar crisis. During the Jan. 21 work session, Le Roux began by explaining what the ACSO is respon-See Fire 11

tence are a good outcome

It notes that Kroll was reported

Kroll's sister told the court Hunt See Hunt A8

Archuleta County Sheriff Mike Le Roux gave a presentation to the Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) during a work session held on Tuesday, Jan. 21, addressing and the fire danger in the area.

The presentation came after Commissioner John Ranson requested to hear about emergency management plans with the Archuleta County Sheriff's Office (ACSO), with Ranson

Medina named **BoCC chair**

By Clayton Chaney Staff Writer

Commissioner Veronica Medina will serve as chair of the Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) for the second consecutive year after being unanimously nominated for the position during the board's meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 22. See Chair A16











SUN photos/Randi Pierce

Despite Mother Nature's lack of cooperation, last weekend's WinterFest festivities featured two longrunning events with the Penguin Plunge on Saturday afternoon in the 32-degree San Juan River and a hot air balloon ascension on Sunday morning.

School district weighing response to possible deportations

By Garrett Fevinger Staff Writer

Archuleta School District (ASD) is joining others from around the state and nation in preparing for new federal immigration policies.

Addressing board members on Jan. 14, ASD Superintendent Rick Holt cited requests from community members and staff that the school district prepare for the "unlikely event that there are deportations of undocumented students and families." "We've begun to prepare for what

that might look like," Holt said.

The preparations came in response to campaign pledges made by Donald Trump who vowed to deport millions of undocumented

immigrants living in the U.S. and who since taking office Monday has taken actions relating to immigration and ending birthright citizenship.

Colorado Education Commissioner Susana Córdova, anticipating those efforts, outlined guidance and recommendations for school districts in a December 2024 letter to superintendents, writing, "Under longstanding federal guidance ... schools are protected spaces where federal immigration authorities should not conduct immigration activities."

In the letter, she points out a 1982 U.S. Supreme Court decision affirming that schools cannot deny enrollment to students on the basis of their immigration status. See Deportations A8

Water conservancy talks continued litigation, legal spending

By Josh Pike Staff Writer

The San Juan Water Conservancy District (SJWCD) Board of Directors discussed legal expenses and expressed its resolve to continue litigation with the Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation District (PAWSD) over the sale of Running Iron Ranch at its Jan. 20 meeting.

The litigation concerns PAWSD's ability to sell the ranch - the proposed site for a reservoir — without the consent of the SJWCD, who has repeatedly expressed opposition to the sale.

The districts are co-owners of the property, and PAWSD is responsible

for making payments on loans for the parcel under the terms of a 2015 agreement between PAWSD, the SJWCD and the Colorado Water Conservation Board, who provided the loans used to purchase the property.

Following an executive session, SJWCD president Candace Jones outlined the history of PAWSD's efforts to sell the ranch and the litigation.

"We are obligated to follow the process of litigation," she said. "We don't have the opportunity to turn the other cheek and just keep talking. Litigation has a schedule. ... And, so, it's kind of like getting sucker punched, the public getting sucker punched, but we have to fight back ... in the See Conservancy A8

Opinion

The Pagosa Springs

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OUR VIEW

Water under the bridge

When we tuned in to this week's county commissioner work session Tuesday morning, we weren't sure how things would go. We were nervous. We had the same apprehension turning on the afternoon's regular meeting.

The apprehension followed a difficult conversation among the commissioners the previous week about trust, confidence and working together in advance of the board's annual decision to name its board chair and vice chair.

The topic has been an awkward one for several years, and sitting through a series of failed motions before one gained a second to get to a vote was at times borderline painful. The division on the commission was clear.

At the Jan. 16 work session, Commissioner Warren Brown brought up the idea of moving to a rotating chair and taking politics out of the decision of who would serve as board chair each year.

What followed was a difficult, but re-

freshingly frank, discussion in which Commissioner Veronica Medina expressed frustrations, as well as a lack of trust and confidence in Brown as a fellow commissioner.

Commissioner John Ranson didn't shy away from sharing his thoughts during the conversation, despite it being his first work session back in the role of commissioner.

That discussion was outlined in an article in the Jan. 16 issue of The SUN.

We felt it was important for the community to know about the conversation and understand the dynamics of the board because, as we firmly believe, it's not just what a board does that's important, but also how they do it.

On Tuesday, however, were pleasantly surprised to see zero drama when it came time to discuss the meeting agenda and when it was time to choose a board chair and vice chair during the afternoon meeting.

Instead, both the work session and the

LOOKING BACK

meeting were cordial and professional, with all three commissioners voting in alignment on the chair and vice chair votes for the first time in years.

The conversations were also notably void of snide remarks and veiled insults. What a breath of fresh air.

It's not easy to bring up issues or problems you have with others, including co-workers, privately, but we watched our commissioners tackle it in a public meeting.

We commend the commissioners for their ability to have such an open and frank discussion.

While we hope no other situations get to that point, we look forward to that transparency continuing.

We also look forward to the division being water under the bridge so the commission can focus on the multitude of important tasks at hand over the course of this year.

Randi Pierce

LEGACIES

By Shari Pierce

100 years ago Taken from SUN files of

Taken from SUN files of January 23, 1925

For some astronomical reason, there will be an eclipse of the sun tomorrow morning, which will be total in the northeastern part of the United States, while watchers in this territory will see nearly half of the sun's diameter covered by the moon as the sun rises. The sun will rise at 7:15 and the eclipse will be ended at 7:46, so in case you fail to observe tomorrow morning's phenomenon, you will have to wait just 100 years before the moon will again similarly obscure the sun.

Thirteen of the blind and partially blind children at the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind, located at Colorado Springs, will shortly be taken to the Colorado General Hospital at Denver for operations by specialists in the hope that they may be given power to see. All are from 5 to 15 years of age, and among the thirteen is Glen Cotton, son of Mr. and Mrs. Guy Cotton of Pagosa Springs, who is partially blind.

The postoffice department cautions banks, merchants and other business men of the danger in cashing money orders presented by strangers unless they have been properly identified.

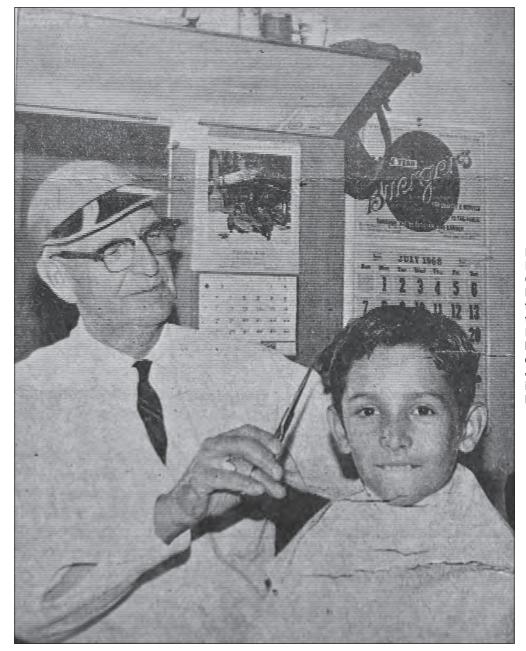
75 years ago Taken from SUN files of January 20, 1950

Fred Nossaman of the Standard Service Station and Vic Poma of the Texaco Station both have mounted plows on the front of their Jeeps. After the heavy snows the hardy little vehicles plow off the sidewalks and drives around town and do a good job of it. The town plow and maintainer were both out last Sunday too, opening up the side streets. A lot of snow has to be moved in town after each storm to get traffic back to normal.

Mr. and Mrs. Terry Robinson have been attending the Stock Show in Denver. Mrs. Robinson came home this week but Mr. Robinson stayed in Denver.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Voorhis spent a social evening with Mr. and Mrs. Jay Catchpole Saturday. That is they planned to spend just the evening, but when they were ready to come home, they found out they were snowed in. Mr. and Mrs. Voorhis were overnight guests of the Catchpoles.

The snowcat belonging to the Telephone Co. which was stuck on East Fork has been pulled out and brought to town for repairs. The telephone company has been having bad luck with the vehicle this winter.



From the Aug. 1, 1968, Pagosa SUN — FIFTH GENERATION – Earl Mullins, left, is giving a haircut–on the house–to a member of the fifth generation of the Belarde family that have been customers in his establishment. Vic Belarde, Jr., is from Albuquerque but is visiting his grandparents here for a time this summer.

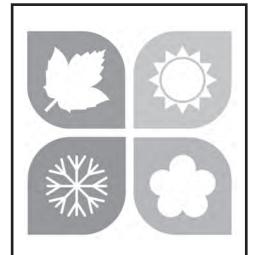
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Date	High L	.OW	Pr	recipita	ation
			Depth	Туре	Moisture
1/14	33	2	0.00	NA	0.00
1/15	43	0	0.00	NA	0.00
1/16	50	11	0.00	NA	0.00
1/17	41	9	0.00	NA	0.00
1/18	28	-1	0.00	NA	0.00
1/19	22	-7	0.00	NA	0.00
1/20	26	-7	0.00	NA	0.00

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50 years ago Taken from SUN files of

Taken from SUN files of January 23, 1975

Total number of skiers at the Wolf Creek Ski Area this year is now in excess of 18,000 and skiing there is excellent. Crowds have not been large, but they have been steady. Several schools are taking part in the school program at the area during the week and there are also some schools or colleges that have been visiting the area. Lift lines are short, the snow is excellent, and skiing is indeed good at Wolf Creek these days.

Archuleta County Commissioners met last week to reorganize and for Commissioner-elect Harold Schutz to take the oath of office.

Schutz was re-elected last fall for a four year term, with the term starting January 14. He was also re-named as chairman of the Board. W.H. Diestelkamp was named vice-chairman. Dr. E. Leonard Marquez is the other member of the Board.

In addition Commissioners examined bonds of county employees, approved depositories for county fund and transacted routine start of the year affairs.

25 years ago Taken from SUN files of

Summery might be the best description of Pagosa Country weather this past week. The only moisture in town was a trace of rain Monday night. Daytime highs floated between 44 and 54 degrees. Lows dipped to 12 degrees Jan 12, but then climbed to 35 at 7:40 a.m. Tuesday, possibly the warmest low temperature ever recorded during January in town.

If it does nothing else, the opening of a juvenile detention center at Durango will save the taxpayers of Archuleta County money and local detention officers a great deal of time.

Following a grand opening last week, the 28-bed Robert DeNier Youth Services Center was ready for business on Jan. 18.

Prior to the opening of the \$3.3 million DeNier Center, a youngster sent to a detention facility by courts or other official agencies in Archuleta County was transported to a facility at Grand Junction. Youngsters are remanded to a juvenile detention facility in cases where they are deemed a danger to the community or to themselves.

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.

Responsible journalism

Dear Editor:

Re: "Los Angeles is a wake-up call for the West - especially Durango"

Is it really worth asking whether the fire that destroyed more than 12,000 homes and businesses within a few days could cause the same amount of damage in Durango, "a town of about 20,000"?

The writer himself states, "Durango doesn't experience the hurricane-force Santa Ana winds that pushed the LA fires." There is a massive difference between 30 to 40 mph wind gusts and sustained winds of 80 to 100 mph. Homes in Durango are built between 6,500 and 8,000 foot elevation, not at sea level.

Another difference is that chaparral, a woody shrub, grows all across California and hardly anywhere else in the United States; it does not grow anywhere near Durango nor in southwestern Colorado. What about population and structure density? The numbers alone tell you that there really is no comparison between Los Angeles and Durango.

Whether by the writer's omission or that of Durango Fire Protection District's new fire chief, the article fails to credit Wildfire Adapted Partnership (WAP), a local non-profit organization that works in five counties across southwest Colorado to assist local residents in creating defensible space, plan wildfire evacuations, and prepare for wildfire on the neighborhood level through education and grant programs.

Wildfire Adapted Partnership (formerly Firewise of Southwest Colorado) formed precisely in response to the Missionary Ridge fire of 2002. In part due to this work, not a single structure was lost to the 416 wildfire of 2018, and this region has not seen the massive loss of structures and lives in any of the almost annual wildfires in southwestern Colorado.

Regarding Marston's proposal to expedite building a pipeline from Lake Nighthorse, in a 2018 article in The Southern Ute Drum," then Southern Ute Vice Chairman Cheryl Frost stated, "I would like to remind everyone here today that Lake Nighthorse was made possible as a result of the settlement of [Ute] water rights. The Tribe asks that the City of Durango be stewards to this land, the waters please don't forget that our Ute water rights were settled with this lake."

While firefighters in Los Angeles are dumping water on some homes, this is really not an effective means to fight wildfire across the forest. Even if construction of a massive pipeline from Lake Nighthorse were expedited, simultaneously drawing down water supply across a municipality

or water district will quickly deplete water pressure and quantities in any location.

Another preventive measure in this region is controlled burns, which the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management plan and carry out every year, to reduce hazardous fuels and restore forest health.

According to his Writers on the Range bio, Dave Martson grew up in a newspaper family and is relocating to Durango. Hopefully, as he settles in, he will learn more about the topography, geography and community. Perhaps the biggest similarity in his recent article is between his inflammatory style and Hollywood drama. Lisa Jensen

Termination from PLPOA committee Dear Editor:

I have served on the Environmental Control Committee (ECC) for the Pagosa Lakes Property Owners Association for the last 2 1/2 years. I dedicated countless hours over that period of time to helping the PLPOA apply its rules and regulations with regard to permit applications from its property owners.

Over the past few months I have expressed the fact that I do not believe the proposed gymnasium project is appropriate for this Association. I considered resigning my position prior to speaking out against the gymnasium project in order to avoid an awkward, confrontational atmosphere at every meeting with Mr. Roth, the General Manager. However the Committee was already a member short with another member about

to step down in early 2025. My leaving would have been an unnecessary and unacceptable burden on remaining Committee members.

In an effort to properly express my opposition to this project, I spoke out against it at an Association meeting on January 8, 2025. I then organized a meeting of other, similarly minded, PLPOA members. On January 13, 2025 I received notice of my termination by way of an email from a subordinate of Mr. Roth. After years of dedicated service to the ECC and PLPOA, Mr. Roth did not have the courtesy of contacting me himself.

Certainly, the timing of my termination is suspect and feels retaliatory. None of our members, especially those who have seen fit to offer their time and services for the benefit of the Association, should be terminated from any position, volunteer, or not, without some opportunity to correct any behavior that might be objectionable. In my case, neither the General Manager nor any member of the Board ever took me aside and advised me directly that there was an issue.

I will not miss working with Mr. Roth and some of his immediate staff. It was a pleasure working with the other ECC members and most of the staff and I will miss them. They are a professional, hard working group that deserve, in my opinion, more appreciative, executive management than they currently receive. I enjoyed meeting other property owners and having the opportunity to help them with their projects. I did not realize, as a property owner, that opposing an Association project would jeopardize my volunteer position.





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Cyrilla Lucero

Feb. 2, 1935-Jan. 18, 2025 Cyrilla received her angel wings. During her working years, she was

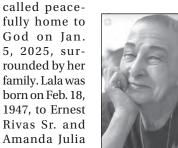
a dedicated customer service specialist in many different roles, at the bookstore and the medical center, as well as salesclerk and restaurant hostess

She was a member of Catholic Sisters, taught Catechism, Eucharistic minister, Epsilon Sigma Alpha for 18 years doing philanthropic work, and

Pagosa Springs Guadalupanas. Cyrilla was known for her beauti-

Candelaria 'Lala' Helen Willingham It is with profound sorrow that we

share the passing of Candelaria "Lala" Helen Willingham, who was



Stollsteimer in Pagosa Springs, Colo.

Lala was well known for cooking

wavering determination and love of

Lala is survived by her husband, Jim Willingham; son Tony Rivas (Rena); daughters Dina Brogan (Gary), Destiny Ritchie (Byron) and Desiree Pruitt (Dylan); grandchildren Marcus, Naquita, Eli, Kristi, Adam, Isaac, Vicente, Amanda, Ira, Danielle, Scarlett, Saxson, Dakota and Dryden; brothers and sisters Tito Rivas (Lisa), Joseph Rivas Sr., Freddy Rivas, Marie Rivas, Molly Cotton, Sharon Wilson and Josie Rivas; as well as many

nieces and nephews, great grandchildren, and great nieces and nephews. Lala was preceded by Amanda

Stollsteimer, Ernest Rivas, Hank Rivas, Albert Rivas, Leroy Cotton, Grace Vigil, Cody Ahern, Johnny Baca, Tony Lister, Rudy Candelaria and Jordan Rivas.

The rosary will be held on Jan. 30, 2025, at the Immaculate Heart of Mary at 6:30 p.m. The service will be held on Jan. 31, 2025, at 10 a.m. at John Paul II. The reception will follow the service, and will be held at John Paul II.







Rivas Sr. and Amanda Julia

at Jan's Cafe and Al's west. She loved to crochet, play bingo and listen to live music, with Variety Express and Los Mitotitos among her favorites. She was also a passionate supporter of the Pagosa Springs High School basketball teams.

her family.

Obituary was known for her strong will, un-

ful and thoughtful greeting cards she sent for all occasions. Each card was chosen with care — sometimes taking an hour to pick the right card — because she wanted her friends and family to feel special.

She grew up in the Pagosa Springs area but was blessed to spend winters in Dayton, Ohio, with her second family, Baldy and Fomp Turner.

Her worldly travels took her to six different countries and 33 states.

She was an excellent cook for someone who didn't know how to boil water when she was first married.

She enjoyed bowling for many years and does not want us to forget what a good bowler she was, even taking state with her team, "The Early Birds."

A loyal Bronco fan for more than 50 years, from their beginnings and even watching each game this season, loving all the victories.

She had a big family and is survived by many, including her three children Kim (Tom), Greg (Tracy) and Dana; six grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; one greatgreat-granddaughter; and youngest brother Gary (Cathy).

She is reunited in heaven with her parents, Cirilo and Mary; brother Ben; sisters Nioma and Sabina; and grandson Troy.

As Cyrilla's son Greg lovingly said, "The Lucero Children from 336 Mt. Princeton Dr. are blessed and doing wonderful because that's the only way Mom would have it."

Rest in peace, Mama — we love you.

In lieu of flowers, Cyrilla requested donations be made to three of her favorite charities:

• Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church (Pagosa Springs, Colo.)

• EWTN (Mother Angelica's Organization in Irondale, Ala.)

• St. Jude Cancer Research for Children (Memphis, Tenn.)

Traditional Catholic services will be held on Friday, Jan. 24, at Immaculate Heart of Mary, downtown Pagosa Springs, rosary at 10:30 a.m., Mass at 11:30 a.m., burial at Hilltop Cemetery and luncheon at Pope John Paul II Catholic Church in uptown Pagosa Springs.

On Feb. 22, 1974, Lala married the love of her life, Jim Willingham. Lala



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.

All letters must:

• be 500 words or less

 include the actual first and last name of the author

 include the author's address and daytime phone number

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

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

Letters quoting other people must contain proper attribution.

There is no guarantee letters will be published.

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

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

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

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Goals & Accomplishments

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

Town of Pagosa Springs

Shari Pierce, Mayor



What are your three biggest accomplishments of 2024?

The town council, boards, commissions and staff worked hard in 2024 for our community.

First accomplishment: Your town council, acting as the board of directors for the Pagosa Springs Sanitation General Improvement District, continued working with staff to improve and maintain the current sanitation collection and pump conveyance systems. Staff is

working to repair the worst of the identified weaknesses in the system. We have contracted with a financial advisor to assist in developing a plan and identifying opportunities for financing needed repairs to the system. The district is also pursuing grant opportunities and guidance from the Department of Local Affairs.

Second accomplishment: The council has continued to work on retaining and hiring quality staff, recognizing the savings to the town of not having a lot of turnover and retraining of staff. In our new budget, we were able to provide a cost of living increase. We also look for ways that we can better staff's work atmosphere and quality of life while still maintaining our high quality of service to the community.

Third accomplishment: We have a council who works together to find what we believe are the best solutions for preserving the health, safety and welfare of the community, looking to the future while remembering our past and those who built our community. We have council members who respect each other and can discuss and acknowledge varying opinions and conduct the community's business with decorum.

What are your three top goals for 2025?

By the town's home rule charter, I am one member of a sevenmember council. We work together to create goals for the council to work on, thus the goals presented here are those of the collective

council. These goals were set by your town council at an annual retreat in 2023 where we discussed and strategized what would be the most important actions for your community. In 2024, the council reviewed the 12 agreed-upon goals, progress on those goals, and agreed these goals are still applicable. These are the top three of 12 goals, which were agreed upon by the council.

1) Develop a long-term strategy to provide essential sanitation collection and treatment services that are financially viable, futureoriented, and maximize the existing assets and partnerships in a community of our size with limited resources.

2) Ensure adequate staffing levels and appropriate employee benefit packages to carry out core services and desired programs for the community.

3) Support private sector and community organizations' efforts to provide housing of all types to ensure housing choices for residents.

We are working to plan a higher-level retreat in 2025 to review these goals in relation to where our community is today and the issues we are now facing. We also will step up our planning to include more in-depth strategy discussions toward meeting our goals and serving the citizens and businesses of our community.

What is your action plan to meet your goals?

1) Most importantly, we need to keep our goals in mind as we are making decisions. The council has had periodic check-ins where we discuss progress toward each of the goals and make sure we are in agreement on next steps toward accomplishing our goals.

2) In 2024, our town manager brought to council the suggestion of hiring a financial advisor to assist us with finding solutions for financing needed to address our most important needs. The council did approve of this step and is currently working with that advisor to obtain revenue bonds to address the most critical of the repairs needed on our sanitation system, which is the council's top goal. This is just the first step in what we will need to do to move community projects forward.

3) Your council and staff will continue to look for opportunities to use partnerships and advisors to assist us in advancing in making the best decisions for our town while moving forward with all of our goals. As indicated, we will also work to develop more in-depth strategies for attaining our goals.

David Harris, Town Manager



What are your three biggest accomplishments of 2024?

In 2024, Pagosa Springs achieved significant milestones that reflect Town Council and staff's commitment to addressing key community needs and planning for a sustainable future. Our biggest accomplishments were:

operation and maintenance of the two wastewater systems.

What are your three top goals for 2025?

My goals as the Town Manager align with the goals and priorities of the Town Council. They are:

• Continued Focus on Sanitation District: The Town is developing a long-term plan to provide essential sanitation collection and regional treatment that are financially viable and future-oriented and that maximize the existing assets and partnerships available. More than likely, the plan will come before voters to authorize funding, the details of which are still being worked on.

• Recruit and Retrain a Quality Workforce: In 2025, we are taking steps



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• Strengthened the Town's Financial Stability: We hired a financial advisor to help the Town manage the challenges of funding large capi-

tal projects, including sewer system improvements, workforce housing, road and storm drainage, and facilities. We also updated the Town's financial policies. Highlights include establishing cash reserves at a minimum 25% or 3 months, rotation of the lead auditor every 5 years to ensure a fresh set of eyes are reviewing the books and updating bidding guidelines and purchasing authority levels.

 Advanced Workforce Housing Solutions: We took meaningful steps to address the housing challenges impacting our local workforce. We hired a shared Housing Coordinator with Archuleta County to streamline efforts to secure grants and help implement housing programs; this is a two-year grant funded position housed at the Pagosa Springs Community Development Corporation (PSCDC). The Town successfully obtained significant state and federal housing grants totaling over \$2 million, and financially supported the PSCDC with an affordable housing project that will provide stability and opportunities for local workers and their families.

• Enhanced Sanitation District Infrastructure: The Town successfully initiated the sale of \$4.8 million in revenue bonds to finance urgent sewer line repairs. Work will continue in 2025 to identify additional funding avenues to cover additional significant sewer system repairs and other capital project needs. We completed a rate analysis for the Pagosa Springs Sanitation and General Improvement District (PSSGID) and approved a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Pagosa Area Water & Sanitation District (PAWSD) to explore the future

to ensure wages keep pace with inflation with cost-of-living adjustments and ensuring parity between the two staff retirement systems.

• Workforce Housing Solutions with Partners: We are working with key partners including Archuleta County, PSCDC, and private developers, to pursue grants and to find solutions to our workforce housing needs. Recently, the Town partnered with a developer to obtain a \$2 million grant for workforce housing, a 96-unit apartment complex near the hospital which will address area median incomes (AMI) of 60% to 140%. This is in addition to another workforce housing project presently under construction, the 50-unit Timberline apartment complex serving 30% to 80% AMI across the street from Walmart.

What is your action plan to meet your goals?

Our plan is rooted in collaboration, forward thinking, and strong community partnerships. We are fortunate to have a great team, including a dedicated Town Council, outstanding department heads, skilled staff, engaged Board and Commission members, and community partners who share a commitment to building a thriving, connected community that supports and respects our cultural and economic differences.

Other highlights include:

• We will continue to work collaboratively with community partners to mitigate the effects of the Colorado Department of Transportation's (CDOT) construction project throughout downtown.

• We recognize that tourism is an important facet and revenue generator in our community. We are dedicated to working with our tourism partners to ensure a healthy balance between resident needs, local business support, and embracing visitors who help make Pagosa Springs such a special place.

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Your source for community news: **The Pagosa Springs SUN**



SYEAR 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 October, November and December.

October

• Temperatures in Archuleta County continued to hover 10-15 degrees above normal as September gave way to October, with the area still waiting on its first cold front of fall.

• During its budget preparations in the fall, the Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) considered absorbing Archuleta Seniors Inc. (ASI) as a department to be run under the county.

During the board's Oct. 1 work session, the BoCC heard from ASI Executive Director Rose Chavez in regard to a memorandum of understanding (MOU) being proposed which would have the county take ASI "under its wing."

Chavez proposed the MOU, along with two other budget requests "in the event that the county does not necessarily think that you guys have the financial capacity to take on ASI as laid out in the proposed MOU."

• Three Pagosa Springs High School (PSHS) Pirate harriers earned all-conference honors at the McGinn Memorial Cross Country Challenge on Reservoir Hill on Oct. 5, which also served as the season's Intermountain League (IML) meet.

The Lady Pirates took fourth overall out of nine teams and third in the IML.

Sienna Rose took 12th out of 71 runners and Kaiya Lyons finished a fraction of a second later in 13th. Rose and Lyons finished eighth and ninth among IML runners, landing them on the all-conference second team.

Connor Thomas was the lead runner for the Pirate boys, finishing 16th overall and fifth among IML runners. Thomas earned first-team all-conference honors with the finish.

• The Pagosa Springs Middle School (PSMS) boys' cross-country team celebrated numerous first-place finishes during its fall season, including its biggest win of the season so far at the McGinn Memorial Cross Country Challenge on Oct. 5.

• The PSMS B football team logged an undefeated season and won the San Juan Basin League Championship on Oct. 5 at Golden Peaks Stadium. The team defeated the Miller Angels 22-14 in the championship county department, with a number of questions and considerations presented, such as things like the structure of the ASI board and whether ASI or the county would have the ability to hire and fire employees.

Later in the month, the commissioners questioned the county's ability to increase funding from \$280,000 to \$610,000 to make ASI employees county employees.

• During the Oct. 15 BoCC meeting, the board unanimously approved a letter of engagement with Northland Securities to provide advice on funding for capital projects, including detailed information in regard to purchasing land and potential building costs for an administrative building.

• Archuleta County Combined Dispatch Director Devin Moffat resigned from his position on Oct. 2, County Manager Jack Harper reported on Oct. 15, with Elizabeth Blizzard appointed interim communications director.

• The dispatch board held a special meeting on Oct. 17 for the purpose of discussing budget requests for 2025 and a resolution giving oversight of the dispatch center to the Archuleta County Sheriff's Office (ACSO).

An amended resolution was ultimately approved by a split vote, with Pagosa Springs Police Chief Bill Rockensock being the only opposing vote.

• On Oct. 17, the town council voted 6-1 against the idea of re-striping Hot Springs Boulevard to accommodate on-street, parallel parking.

Town staff considered adding parking along Hot Springs Boulevard to offset an expected loss of downtown parking during the Colorado Department of Transportation's (CDOT's) U.S. 160 reconstruction project slated to begin in 2025.

• The Pirate soccer team finished out its regular season Oct. 18 and 19 by picking up two more wins, bringing its overall season record to 9-2-3 and landing the Pirates as the 19th-ranked team in the state's 3A Selection and Seeding Index.

• Eleven DUST2 athletes qualified for the Colorado High School Cycling League State Championship in Glenwood Springs Oct. 19 and 20: Rylie Carr, Sophia Alexander, Gianna Shaeffer, Adelyn Hittle, Kaylee Hensle, Van Halterman, Aaron Sowle, Jackson Chaney, Weston Phillips, Justin Sewell and Eric Smith. voted to release a public statement held on Nov. 5. concerning the ranch. • A winter s

The actions followed meetings where PAWSD voted to take steps toward selling the Running Iron Ranch, including engaging in consultation over the sale with the SJWCD and the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB), and obtaining an appraisal for the property.

PAWSD, the SJWCD and the CWCB are the parties to a 2015 three-way agreement concerning the reservoir project and the responsibilities of each organization concerning the parcel.

• For the third year in a row, Rose earned the chance to represent PSHS at the state cross-country meet when she finished 14th at regionals.

Rose ran a time of 20 minutes, 56.03 seconds to earn her way to the season's final meet and beat her PR by one second.

• PSMS eighth-grader Rylan Ash was the first to cross the finish line at the middle school state cross-country championships on Oct. 26, becoming the school's first-ever state champion in the sport.

The boys' team placed eighth at the event.

• In late October, the Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) announced it had arrested a father and teenage son for the July 2 murder of the boy's mother, Chrystal Snow, in Pagosa Springs.

Charles Christopher Martinez, age 43, and his 17-year-old son, Hevon Martinez, both of Cortez, were both booked on the count of first-degree murder, according to CBI.

The teen will be charged as an adult, according to CBI.

• La Plata County unveiled its new weather radar system during a special work session held by the La Plata County Board of County Commissioners on Oct. 29.

The radar is located at the Durango- La Plata County airport in the cell- phone waiting lot and has been operating since August. The station helps fill in a radar gap.

• On Oct. 29, ASD kicked off a series of community meetings on its facilities master plan.

At the meetings, the district provided an update on the progress and outlined the next steps in the facilities master plan, and invited discussion about the plan.

• The Pirate soccer team traveled to the Front Range on Oct. 30 for its first-round playoff matchup against the Aurora West College Prep Academy Spartans.

The Pirates entered the matchup as the 20th-ranked team in the state's 3A division with an overall record of 9-2-3. The Spartans entered the match- up as the 13th-ranked team with an identical overall record.

The Pirates fell 1-0 to the Spartans, bringing their season to an end.

• A winter storm rolled through Pagosa Country in early November, bringing multiple inches of snow to lower elevations, with more than a foot falling in the mountains as of Nov. 6.

According to reports from the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network, snowfall totals from Nov. 4 through the early afternoon of Nov. 6 around the county varied from 5.5 inches in the northern portions of the county to 1.5-2.4 inches reported around the Town of Pagosa Springs and in the Aspen Springs area. Snowfall totals in the Chromo area ranged from 3.8 inches to 5.4 inches.

Wolf Creek Ski Area reported a total of 19 inches from the storm, with 14 inches falling overnight on Nov. 5. That brought the year-to-date snowfall total at the ski area to 55 inches.

• At a Nov. 7 special meeting, the SJWCD board voted to reject an offer to purchase the Running Iron Ranch

The Nov. 7 vote followed the PAWSD board voting on Oct. 30 to instruct the potential buyer to submit their offer to the SJWCD, with PAWSD board members Glenn Walsh and Bill Hudson commenting on the attractiveness of the offer.

Following an executive session at the SJWCD meeting, SJWCD president Candace Jones explained that the SJWCD received an offer by email for sale of the ranch and noted that PAWSD had not shared the terms of the offer it negotiated with SJWCD despite the districts being co-owners of the ranch.

Jones stated that the SJWCD board members reviewed the offer and discussed it with the district's legal counsel in the executive session.

• The Lady Pirate volleyball team entered regional action on Nov. 9 as the No. 34 seed after finishing the regular season with a 10-13 record.

The Lady Pirates traveled to Colorado Springs for regionals, where they took on No. 3 Village and No. 22 Banning Lewis.

Village owned a 20-3 record. Banning Lewis, also from Colorado Springs, was 15-8 on the season.

The Lady Pirates fell to Village and beat Banning Lewis, ending their season.

• The Pirate football team also traveled to Colorado Springs on Nov. 9 for playoffs, where they faced The

See Review A6







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game.

• Elizabeth Smart addressed a local audience Oct. 8 inside the Pagosa Springs Center for the Arts. During her talk, Smart recalled her 2002 abduction and her efforts since then to advocate for child safety awareness and sexual assault prevention.

Afterward, representatives from the Archuleta County Public Health Department, Rise Above Violence and the Cornerstone Project joined Smart to discuss local programs serving victims of domestic violence, sex trafficking and assault.

• PSHS Pirates Johnathon Smith and Tyler Dimond had "two really good days" at the 3A state golf tournament in Pueblo Oct. 7 and 8, according to coach Mark Faber.

Smith ended the tournament with his second all-state designation in as many years after tying for 10th with a two-day score of 147. Dimond ended the two-day tournament tied for 72nd with a 178.

• On Oct. 10, the Archuleta School District (ASD) Board of Education heard that several of its campuses and classrooms are in need of improvements when early findings from a summer survey were shared during the board's meeting.

Reviewing preliminary data collected by RTA Architects, board members learned how the elementary, middle and high schools fared when assessed for educational adequacy and overall facility conditions.

• The aurora borealis, or northern lights, were visible around Pagosa Country in October, with some of the more vibrant colors appearing late in the night on Oct. 10.

• The night sky provided more entertainment on Oct. 13, when Comet C/2023 A3 (Tsuchinshan-AT-LAS) streaked across the sky.

• With a pair of wins on Oct. 12 and 15, the PSHS Pirate soccer team clinched the top spot in the IML for the season. The team had an overall record of 7-2-3 and a league mark of 4-1-1.

• At a work session held by the BoCC on Oct. 15, more discussion took place in regard to the MOU being proposed by ASI that would have the county take on the organization as a Nine racers ultimately competed at the event, and the DUST2 team placed 15th among all Division 2 teams (team scores can include 10 riders).

Coach Janine Emmets won the Yeti Skills Course Female Coach award.

• Wolf Creek Ski Area became the first ski area in North America to open for the 2024-2025 season on Oct. 22, kicking off the ski area's 85th season.

The ski area opened following a storm system that delivered 26 inches of snow and left a midway depth of 16 inches.

• The Pagosa Youth Soccer Rangers all-girls U12 team won the Socctoberfest championship in Farmington, N.M., in October.

Other Rangers teams also shined at Socctoberfest, with the U10 team clinching the championship title in its division.

The U15 and U12 boys' teams earned silver in their respective divisions.

• In October, it was announced that the Archuleta County Road and Bridge Department's Deanna Hibbert had recently been invited to speak at the American Public Works Association conference in Loveland, Colo.

Hibbert's presentation, "Keeping Cool While Plowing Snow," was so well liked she received a call from the director of the Iowa State Conference asking her to do the same presentation at that state conference.

• Tensions between the San Juan Water Conservancy District (SJWCD) and the Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation District (PAWSD) continued to grow over their jointly owned Running Iron Ranch in October.

At meetings, board members of both organizations criticized the other, the PAWSD Board of Directors voted to file for declaratory judgment concerning its ability to sell the ranch and the SJWCD Board of Directors • The PAWSD board continued to move forward with a potential sale of the Running Iron Ranch at its Oct. 30 meeting.

November

• The Pirate football team finished the regular season as the 14th-ranked team in the state's 2A division after falling to the Alamosa Mean Moose on Nov. 1 in Alamosa, earning a spot in the state playoffs.

• Rose placed 56th out of 145 runners at the 3A state cross-country championships on Nov. 2 — her highest finish in her three years of qualifying for the season's final meet. The senior ran a time of 21 min-

utes, 21.18 seconds.

• Unofficial results from the Nov. 5 general election showed the majority of Archuleta County voters aligning with Republican candidates in local, state and federal races, and largely in step with voters from around the state on proposed constitutional amendments and propositions.

In the only locally contested county commissioner race, District 1 incumbent Warren Brown, a Republican, defeated challenges by unaffiliated candidates Wayne Hooper and Ken Bowles. John Ranson was elected commissioner for District 2.

Brad Hunt was elected coroner.

• On Nov. 5, the Pagosa Springs Town Council approved the first reading of an ordinance approving a contract to purchase riverfront property located at 1040 E. U.S. 160.

The four-acre parcel is the former location of Bob's L.P. and is currently being leased by Basin Coop.

The town intends to expand boater access to the San Juan River by purchasing the property, with an Executive Summary Plan stating that the acquisition would "secure public boater access, enhance recreational safety, provide a means for riverwalk trail connectivity to the east, and promote sustainable growth for the recreational economy of Pagosa Springs."

• The Pagosa Fire Protection District (PFPD) Board of Directors heard the results from an impact fee study performed by BBC Research and Consulting during a regular meeting



Review.

Continued from A5

Classical Academy Titans — the No. 3 team.

The Pirates were eliminated from the state playoffs after suffering a 49-7 defeat. The Pirates finished their season

with an overall record of 5-5, including a league mark of 2-2.

• PSMS eighth-graders presented the 23rd annual Veterans Day breakfast on Nov. 11. The breakfast offered an opportunity for students and veterans to visit, a demonstration of a flag-folding ceremony that takes place after a veteran's death, history of major conflicts, music and more.

• Local veterans and citizens also commemorated Veterans Day with a ceremony at Veterans Memorial Park. The ceremony included, among other elements, a flyover, blessing and rifle volley.

• In November, La Plata Electric Association Inc. (LPEA) announced it and Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association Inc. had successfully executed a term sheet as part of the two cooperatives' contract termination negotiations.

The agreement encompasses critical components including power purchases, transmission commitments and the sale of utility assets from Tri-State to LPEA.

• The LPEA Board of Directors announced that Chris Hansen was selected as the new CEO effective Nov. 12.

• In November, the BoCC heard about the possibility of vacating some bridges around Archuleta County.

Those four bridges included a portion of County Road 337 and Carrico Bridge, a portion of County Road 557 and Carracas Bridge, a portion of Navajo Road and bridge, and Old Gallegos Road and bridge.

The board voted in January 2025 to not vacate the bridges.

 A total of six Pirate soccer players received all-conference recognition in the IML: Alex Pham (first team), Christopher-Young Martinez (first team), Gavin Carter (first team and Player of the Year), Chance Ramirez (first team), Jacob Castaneda (honorable mention) and Hudson Davis (honorable mention).

• At a Nov. 14 work session and special meeting, the PAWSD board expressed its displeasure with the SJWCD's rejection of an offer to buy Running Iron Ranch.

The board also considered a variety of potential measures to take against SJWCD, including a vote of no confidence in the district's leadership of the Dry Gulch reservoir project.

• The PSHS Pirate Unified bowling team earned its way to state for the third consecutive year after picking up its second regional title on Nov. 15.

The Pirates had a total pinfall of 501

• A pair of Lady Pirate volleyball players were recognized by the IML for their work on the court during the fall season: Cadence Kerns was named to the all-conference second team and Aspen Pitcher was named to the allconference first team.

• On Nov. 20, board members at Pagosa Peak Open School (PPOS) voted to cap classroom sizes for kindergarten through third grade at 18 students for the current school year, approving a request by School Director Emily Murphy.

Murphy described the cap as a response to parent concerns about classroom sizes and one that could assist the school in its efforts to attract new students.

The cap came a year after the school approved a 21-student limit for the same grade levels.

• After tabling the matter twice, the Archuleta County Planning Commission unanimously approved a motion for recommendation of approval of a board conditional use permit for an outdoor shooting range to be operated on the Keyah Grande property on Nov. 21.

 Pagosa Springs Elementary School third-graders dug into their new dictionaries alongside members of the Rotary Club of Pagosa Springs on Nov. 21. In annual tradition, the Rotarians presented each third-grader with the dictionaries before working with them to learn about their new books.

• On Nov. 21, the town council approved the second reading of an ordinance authorizing the purchase of riverfront property located at 1040 E. U.S. 160.

• The Pirate Unified bowling team placed 19th out of 28 teams at the state tournament on Nov. 22. The team logged a total pinfall of 442.

Pirate bowler Juriah Carter took on a second duty while at the tournament - singing the national anthem a cappella in front of the crowded bowling alley.

December

• The SJWCD board reiterated and expanded upon its opposition to the potential sale of Running Iron Ranch by PAWSD at its Dec. 2 meeting.

Following an executive session convened to discuss the sale of the ranch, Jones commented that the board has publicly stated its objections to the sale of the ranch and that selling the property without "knowing more" would not be consistent with the mission of the SJWCD.

She added that the board rejected a specific purchase offer which purported to include the construction of a reservoir.

However, Jones stated that the offer did not include a commitment to building a reservoir and provided the buyer for no additional consideration" with water rights owned by the SJWCD that were conveyed to it by the Southwestern Water Conservation District.

River's eastern gateway.

The funding will help the town ac- quire and improve a 4.3-acre property adjacent to the San Juan River. The project aims to expand public river access and recreational facilities while preserving the natural beauty of the area.

• The Pirate basketball teams hosted the Wolf Creek Classic Dec. 5-7 to open their 2024-2025 seasons.

After a closely contested loss to the Delta Panthers on Dec. 5, the Pirate basketball team rallied Saturday to defeat the Gunnison Cowboys.

The Lady Pirates enjoyed two wins.

• The Lady Pirate wrestling team opened its season by competing in the Girls' Wolverine Classic in Bayfield on Dec. 7.

Coach Dan Janowsky highlighted that the team has doubled its roster compared to the previous year.

The Lady Pirates finished fourth out of eight teams at the tournament. Laykyn Baxstrom and Bella Jackson each took first place in her respective weight classes. Kylie Matyniak placed second in her weight class, with Maddie Stretton and Aspen Salazar finished third in their respective weight classes

• The Pirate boys' wrestling team began its season at the Wolverine Classic on Dec. 7.

The Pirates finished eighth out of 11 teams.

Colton Lucero earned first place in the 150-pound weight class, Taylor Hancey took third in the 165-pound weight class, Antonio Quezada placed third in the 285-pound weight class, Anthony Manzanares finished fifth in the 118-pound weight class, Stetson Osborn placed sixth in the 132-pound weight class and Tucker Jacobson finished in sixth place in the 138-pound weight class.

• In a Dec. 9 opinion, the Colorado Supreme Court sided with a local attorney in a 2020 case with Archuleta County involving access to public records.

In the ruling, the court affirms that attorney Matt Roane's status as a litigant against the county did not preclude him from requesting records related to the litigation from the county under the Colorado Open Records Act. It also sets precedence for future similar situations.

The case was argued before the Supreme Court on Sept. 24.

· October sales tax collections increased by nearly 14 percent compared to the previous year's figures, according to reports released Dec. 9 by Archuleta County Finance Director Chad Eaton.

The 13.83 percent increase from the previous year accounted for an additional \$226,368.658.

the terms of the district's three-way agreement with the SIWCD and the CWCB that outlines how the Running Iron Ranch will be managed. The board then discussed whether

to make a formal declaration that the ranch is for sale, with PAWSD board member Gene Tautges moving to declare that PAWSD is selling the ranch and Walsh seconding.

Hudson noted that the board was now involved in litigation and asked Tautges whether it would be better to make a decision on the sale after the litigation is resolved or to make the decision now.

Tautges replied that "the other parties made it crystal clear their intention, and I think we owe it to them to make our intentions crystal clear, as well."

Walsh added that the district also should make its intentions clear to its customers that it is seeking the "highest and best offer" for the ranch.

The board then voted unanimously to declare its intention to sell the ranch.

• The Lady Pirate swim team started the season with a bang on Dec. 13 in Delta, with the team qualifying for state in the 200-yard medley relay.

• Community members joined the Veterans for Veterans of Archuleta County at Hilltop Cemetery on Dec. 14 to honor local veterans at the annual Wreaths Across America ceremony. Attendees then placed remembrance wreaths on the graves of veterans at rest in the cemetery.

• During its Dec. 17 meeting, the BoCC approved a conditional use permit for Keyah Grande to operate a commercial shooting range on its property. The decision was made with a split vote of 2-1 with commissioners Warren Brown and Ronnie Maez voting in favor and Medina opposing.

• The home of Archuleta County's future administration building took another turn on Dec. 17 when the BoCC approved a property located at 2901 Cornerstone Drive.

• On Dec. 17, LPEA announced the arrival of its new transformer to be used in its first new substation since 2008 — a critical infrastructure investment aimed at increasing reliability and strengthening the electric grid for the Pagosa Springs community.

This represents a \$6.5 million investment and is expected to significantly improve LPEA's operational flexibility while providing redundancy to reduce the impact of potential power outages in the region.

• The Pirate wrestling team traveled to Grand Junction to compete in the annual Warrior Classic tournament on Dec. 20 and 21.

The Pirates finished in the middle of the 56-team field. Manzanares was the highest-



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over five games, besting Bayfield's 400 and Eagle Valley's 407.

• On Nov. 18, the multimilliondollar plan to reconstruct a 1-mile stretch of U.S. 160 in downtown Pagosa Springs gained momentum, with CDOT signaling it was ready to select a contractor and begin preparing for the project's arrival next in the spring of 2025.

The project is expected to extend from 1st to 8th streets.

 The Colorado Independent Ethics Committee voted unanimously on Nov. 19 to deem complaint 24-16 against Commissioner Veronica Medina as nonfrivolous, allowing it to move forward.

The complaint was originally filed on June 17 by Ashley Springer.

• On Nov. 19, the BoCC unanimously approved and adopted the affordable workforce housing project master deed restriction for phase one of the Pagosa Springs Community Development Corporation's workforce housing project.

The first phase features 10 homes being constructed in the Trails and Chris Mountain II neighborhoods.

• On Dec. 3, the town council, acting as the Pagosa Springs Sanitation General Improvement District board, approved the second reading of Ordinance 20, allowing the issuance of tax-exempt revenue bonds in an amount not to exceed \$4.8 million.

• In early December, it was revealed that canvass board members in seven Colorado counties, including Archuleta County, voted against certifying the 2024 general election results, citing a recent password leak from the Secretary of State's Office as the reason.

Members in Archuleta, Boulder, Eagle, El Paso, Gilpin, Jefferson and Larimer counties refused to certify the results of the Nov. 5 election, which is an administrative task to determine that the number of votes cast and votes counted is equal.

• On Dec. 6, the Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) board awarded a \$420,000 grant to the town to expand public river access along the San Juan

• During a Dec. 10 work session, the BoCC heard a presentation from Troy Bernberg, a financial director with Northland Securities, which provided a property analysis to aid in the county's consideration of purchasing land for the construction of a new administration building.

• Following an executive session during its Dec. 12 meeting, the PAWSD board voted unanimously to have the district's lawyer file a lawsuit requesting declaratory judgment concerning

placed Pirate for the second consecutive week, earning second place.

The Lady Pirates took 10th out of 31 teams at the tournament.

Three Lady Pirates placed in the tournament, with Baxstrom leading the way by taking second place.

• The holiday spirit hit Pagosa Country throughout the month of December, with numerous holiday events held, including the Festival of Trees, concerts and the Old Fashioned Christmas Celebration.

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Archuleta County Democratic Party to meet Feb. 8

By Shawna Seed

Archuleta County Democratic Party

The Archuleta County Democratic Party (ACDP) will conduct its biennial reorganization meeting on Saturday, Feb. 8.

The meeting will be held virtually using Zoom and will begin at 10 a.m.

Colorado Revised Statute 1-3-103(1)(c) requires each county central committee of both parties to meet in the odd-numbered years to organize, selecting a chairperson, one or more vice chairpersons, a treasurer, a secretary, and any other officers provided for by the county bylaws.

Participants also will select a vacancy committee authorized to fill openings in the County central committee and elected offices held by Democrats, as well as delegates to higher-level reorganization meetings.

The meeting is open to all registered Democrats, but only members of the county central committee are eligible to vote. Those who wish to participate should visit archuletadems.org, where a link to registration is available. A Zoom link will be provided to registrants.

Nominations to any position will be accepted virtually from the floor. However, the person nominated must have a nominator and a seconder, one of whom must be a central committee member. Any Democrat registered in Archuleta County may run for any office. Anyone interested in running for an office should contact Carl Young, the current party chair, at dems.archuleta@gmail.com.

All Archuleta Democrats are encouraged to participate in this meeting. This is your chance to influence the course of our party.

Education

Charter school engages community in restorative practices

By Emily Murphy Pagosa Peak Open School

Picture this playground scene: A student kicks a ball to a friend and another student intercepts the ball, running away with it. Soon there are tears, followed by chasing and yelling.

What happens next? This is dependent on what type of school the students attend. Is it a traditional model, or do they attend a restorative practices school?

"In a restorative practices school these kids would meet up with a mediator who facilitates problem solving," Pagosa Peak Open School (PPOS) sixth-grader Quinn said. "We focus on repairing the harm that's been done to the person and their relationship instead of giving them a punishment."

On Jan. 16, students at PPOS celebrated restorative practices with a showcase night, during which the community was invited to learn more about how restorative practices shows up in the school, and what it looks like. Students did a demonstration of a mediation, Randy Compton from Restorative Solutions spoke about the history and importance of restorative practices, and community members shared snacks while reviewing student work.

Displays of "talking pieces," case studies and reflection showed what restorative practices means to the students.

Additionally, Compton worked with the school's Restorative Practices Student Board on its role in the school.

"After the training I felt more confident and prepared to mediate conflict. We got a chance to practice and ask questions, and he shared books with lots of information in them," Quinn <image><caption>

Pagosa Peak Open School students share their talking pieces and writing with the community during the school's Restorative Practice Showcase on Jan. 16.

said. "I joined the board because I knew I would get to help bring people together and help friendships happen in our school. Now I feel more comfortable in my role doing those things."

While students on the board participate in conflict resolution, restorative practices includes practices that build and sustain a community, said PPOS Restorative Practices Coordinator

I Sarah Troxtell.

"I see restorative practices in action throughout the school — in opening and closing circles; in communications between students, advisors and parents; in the tools we use to manage conflict; and in the rituals we've established to foster community," Troxtell said. "The impact on student life is significant. Students become more aware of their emotional states and how those states influence the broader community. They learn to articulate what they need to thrive and succeed at school." Compton emphasized the positive outcomes of restorative practices in

schools. "When restorative practices are implemented well — and it takes time and diligence to do it well — we have seen tremendous benefits in a number of ways," he said. "Students are more engaged and test scores improve. There is an increase in empathy, resilience and lifelong conflict resolution skills, something that will serve them far

into the future in their relationships and careers." PPOS is in its fifth year of implementation of restorative practices, and has not only seen a drop in office referrals and suspensions, but also an increase in test scores and student engagement.

"Restorative practices is an integral part of the culture and community at PPOS," PPOS Middle School Advisor Rue Graham said. "It heavily relies on cultivating positive relationships with students as a proactive approach for classroom management and community engagement. There have been many instances when a problem has arisen that is easily solved with a conversation and agreement to focus on relationship repair rather than imposing punitive consequences for negative behavior."



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PLPOA Gymnasium and Recreation Facility Know the Facts

These statements are generated from the 2023 Strategic Plan and the Revised Recreation Master Plan Nov. 14, 2024. These documents are available at PLPOA.com.

1. PLPOA Strategic Plan, June 8, 2023: No mention of Recreation Master Plan with New Gym, Multipurpose Athletic Field, Parking Lot, Hot Tub and Lap Pool.

School board to weigh cellphone policy as teachers speak up

By Garrett Fevinger Staff Writer

The Archuleta School District Board of Education indicated it would further consider a district-wide cellphone policy after hearing reports from teachers and students that personal phone use during class time is distracting, unsafe and damaging to relationships.

And damaging to relationships. At the top of their meeting on Jan approach involves "teachers encountering personal property of students and having that potentially go awry," she said during the Jan. 14 meeting.

She added, "That can be damaging to relationships with students."

Cellphone use is prohibited during the school day at PSMS, where teachers reported observing students who are less distracted and more engaged with learning — and one another — during class time. "Students interact with each other directly, fostering social skills and building stronger relationships," said fifth-grade teacher Amy Owen. "Overall, the middle school's wellimplemented no cellphone policy has created a more conducive learning environment for many students, and it's very helpful as a teacher." Thomas Davenport, a math teacher at PSMS, agreed and tied the school's cellphone policy to higher academic performance.

Springs Middle School (PSMS), that approach involves "teachers encountaring personal preperty of students" According to beard members

According to board members Amanda Schick and Butch Mackey,

some students are concerned, too. Describing a recent roundtable discussion with high schoolers at PSHS that covered a range of topics, Mackey recalled, "The students brought up the issue of cellphone usage. We didn't bring it up. And they were uniformly in support of not having the phones available to them in class."

14, board members listened as educators shared experiences and perspectives from around the district, where policies concerning cellphone use differ from school to school and, sometimes, classroom to classroom.

"Why should we acquiesce to the pull of a distraction that, in my opinion, is keeping us all from realizing our students' true potential?" asked Darcy DeGuise, an English teacher at Pagosa Springs High School (PSHS).

About one-third of Colorado's largest school districts have adopted stricter cellphone policies in the last two years, according to an August 2024 Chalkbeat survey, with Boulder Valley the latest to do so.

But in many districts and schools, teachers are responsible for establishing and enforcing their own rules around student cellphone use during instruction time. That remains the approach at PSHS.

"The high school has the most flexibility," said Superintendent Rick Holt during a November 2024 discussion about the same issue. "It's simply saying, teachers, you know your content, you know what you're teaching, you can figure out how much is enough."

But according to Carrie Steadman, the gifted and talented coordinator for the district and a teacher at Pagosa "I think it's really made an academic difference on our campus," he said. "We outmatched a lot of our regional peers last year, and I really feel that has something to do with a more distraction-free learning environment."

In addition to those distractions, also alarming for educators like Alissa Shirk, a special education teacher at PSHS, are the risks of unfiltered adult content making its way to minors on school grounds.

"I walked into advisory and I saw a student on an explicit website," Shirk said. "I've seen a lot of examples of egregious use of cellphones, and [students] are not paying their bills or looking at self-help articles like we do ... they're getting caught up in video Those students, Mackey reported, echoed many of the complaints noted by their teachers: that cellphone use in classrooms was distracting and enforcement is inconsistent.

"One of the concerns that they mentioned at the high school level is that a lot of the guidelines shall we say were teacher-specific, so it varied from class to class to class. They didn't like that at all," Mackey said.

Considering those remarks as well as ones made by the teachers present for the Jan. 14 meeting, board president Bob Lynch noted a "nexus" offeedback around the issue, with fellow board members signaling openness to holding further discussions.

"We need to have a conversation [about] what are we doing with the information that we are receiving, from multiple points," said Schick. "What we are hearing from the staff, what we're hearing from students and families."

Mackey indicated he is reaching the point where he would be in support "of what's been presented by the staff here and the students as well."

Mackey earlier noted, "That's something we probably need to continue to make some plans to address, probably sooner rather than later."

Meetings planned for school district's Master Plan Advisory Committee

By Lisa Scott

Archuleta School District Master Plan Advisory Committee

In the fall, Archuleta School District (ASD) Superintendent Rick Holt and Josh Sanchez, director of operations, spoke at five community engagement meetings about the condition of the school buildings and shared information and data from RTA Architects, based in Colorado Springs, who performed a detailed assessment of each building.

This information informs the district's master plan and use of money in the general fund for maintenance and capital improvements on buildings that are over a half century old. The school district is at a fork in the road: utilize funds to maintain the current state of the schools or focus on how to pursue additional financial resources to improve the quality of the school buildings.

A broad spectrum of community members will convene to create the Master Plan Advisory Committee (MPAC) and will meet with representatives of RTA Architects, who will guide the committee through a process to understand the landscape of options for our school buildings.

With the goal of creating an optimal learning environment for students, this information will be pre-

sented to the ASD Board of Education for further decisions about the direction.

The first meeting of MPAC will be Monday, Jan. 27, 5:30 to 7 p.m. in the middle school library. Additional meetings are planned for Feb. 24, March 17 and April 2.

Keeping the community informed and engaged in the process is of utmost importance and will be done with additional community meetings and ongoing communication and information on the website.

For additional information, contact Lisa Scott, MPAC chair, at (970) 749-4268 or lisascott5680@icloud. com.

- 2. Updated Nov. 14, 2024 Recreation Master Plan developed by the Board of Directors and General Manager with a total cost of \$5,377,009.00 to be constructed over the next 5 years to implement.
- 3. Phase I, 2024: New 52-space parking lot, \$300,500.00. Parking lot has been installed before being approved by a vote of PLPOA members.
- 4. Phase II, 2025: New Gymnasium, \$2,000,000.00. No bleachers or restrooms.
- 5. Phase III, 2027: Construct Multi-purpose Athletic Field and Restrooms, \$1,200,000.00.
- 6. Phase IV, 2028: Install new outdoor hot tub, \$80,000.00.
- 7. Phase V, 2030: Construct Lap Pool, \$1,796,509.00.
- 8. Total Investment over next 5 years \$5,377,009.00, with no additional overhead, operational, or unknown expenses figured in the budget.
- 9. The Board of Directors has also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Archuleta County. In return for financial support and assistance in applying for state grants, the new Recreational Complex will be made available to non-PLPOA youth, clubs and organizations.
- 10. This should be a project for Archuleta County in order to service the full community, not the PLPOA.

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Hunt

Continued from front didn't just take a drifter — he took the life of a son, father and brother, and showed blatant disregard for human life.

She indicated Hunt has robbed her of countless memories with her brother, who she noted she thought was the greatest person in the world.

"You gained nothing by hurting Michael," she said, adding, "I hope the things you have done haunt you."

After hearing from Kroll's family and friends, the court heard from Justin Bogan, Hunt's attorney, who asked the court to accept the agreement of 18 years, noting Hunt has more than 500 days of presentence confinement in the case.

Bogan also noted he was struck by the "dignity, grace and strength expressed" in the courtroom during the hearing.

He also told the court that, during

about every conversation he'd had with Hunt, Hunt was "wrought with regret and remorse."

He added that words are imperfect, but added, "He is woefully sorry about what happened to Michael."

Deputy District Attorney Brad Neagos indicated to the court Kroll was a father, son and brother who was "murdered in cold blood."

He added Hunt's darkness has shown throughout his life and Hunt is not safe to be in society.

He added that hopefully removing Hunt for 18 years will keep society safe.

Neagos also pointed out the time the case took, with Kroll's death occurring in 2021 and the family receiving closure in 2025, and credited PSPD Detective Boyd Neagle for his hard work and perseverance on the case.

He also asked Wilson to accept the

18-year sentence.

Hunt then addressed the court.

Hunt expressed that he understands the anger and that it would be impossible to write a statement of reconciliation that would mean anything.

He indicated he knows what it's like to lose loved ones to death.

Hunt also took responsibility and told the court he has encouraged and shared about the sacredness of life with fellow inmates.

He added he is "deeply, deeply sorry."

Hunt further noted that Kroll no longer has a voice, but he can be one for Kroll and will share with others how to respect life and act in society.

He indicated he understands he can't be forgiven, adding later that, moving forward, he will be an example.

Following Hunt's statement to the

Conservancy.

Continued from front

context of the litigation, of course, and the process the court has."

Jones explained the next step in the litigation is to answer the complaint filed against the district by PAWSD, adding that this answer is due by Jan. 31.

"We will follow the process," Jones said. "We will walk and chew gum as best we can at the same time, following the litigation process, continuing to have discussions to the extent discussions might be fruitful or not, and moving ahead with the planning that we have been doing for understanding what can happen out at the Running Iron Ranch."

She commented that the ranch "belongs to the public" and that the district expected to have another 10 years for reservoir planning given the planning period outlined in the three-way agreement.

"Our budget is minuscule com-

pared to the budget that PAWSD has, so we have to move forward purposefully within our budget and protect the public interest in the property as best we can," Jones said. "We started with having people out at the ranch trying to think about public uses of the property and as we were starting to do that, getting people more involved and aware of the property, that's when PAWSD put out their feelers and put it on the market and sell the property out from under the public. So, we will do our best to walk and chew gum at the same time within our budget and respond to litigation because that's the way litigation works and, at the same time, keep understanding what we can do to put that property to the best ... public purpose for the community."

Jones then asked the board for a motion to authorize its lawyer to prepare an answer to PAWSD's lawsuit and any counterclaims in time for

the Jan. 31 deadline in addition to authorizing Jones and SJWCD board member Charles Riehm to work with the attorney to file the document.

The board unanimously voted to approve the requested motion.

Later in the meeting, during his treasurer's report, SJWCD board member Joe Tedder explained that the district had spent about \$4,600 on the litigation so far in January.

He stated that the board allocated \$10,000 in its 2025 budget for legal expenses related to the proposed sale of the ranch.

In previous budget discussions, the board noted that litigation with PAWSD would likely cost more than \$10,000 and the budget might need to be modified at a later date to accommodate increased legal expenses.

"It's unfortunate that we're having to spend money, good public money, on that situation," Tedder said. josh@pagosasun.com

Deportations

Continued from front

Reached for comment via email Tuesday, Holt declined to provide further details about what ASD's response might look like, writing that more feedback is still needed and that plans are still in draft form.

Speaking more broadly during the Jan. 14 meeting, he said, "We're learning from some folks that experienced [deportations] a number of years ago, and what that was like for school districts to all of a sudden have kids at the end of the day whose

ally [having] a safety net built for how to deal with that."

According to a July 2024 study published by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, there were roughly 156,000 undocumented immigrants estimated to be living in Colorado. How many of those are enrolled in local schools remains unclear.

"We don't have, to the best of our knowledge, a large undocumented population," Holt said, adding that ASD is working with local organizaevent that local students are directly impacted by future immigration enforcements.

Fleshing out a plan, he suggested, would stand to benefit the greater ASD community, calling it "our responsibility for the safety of all students and families in our district, regardless of their documented status."

The school board could revisit the issue as soon as its February meeting, though an agenda has not yet been finalized.

court, Wilson told Hunt he appreciated his statement.

Wilson also thanked law enforcement, noting they did a good job getting the case to where it was and calling the outcome a good one given the lack of evidence in some ways, adding that some justice is better than none.

Wilson also noted "no one knows the depth of loss and pain" Kroll's family and friends feel, and you never know how he would have changed the world or someone's life.

He continued that the ripples of Hunt's actions extend forever and Hunt has made society poorer before noting he can't imagine what Kroll's kids are feeling.

Wilson then sentenced Kroll to 18 years in the Department of Corrections followed by five years of parole before alerting Kroll's family and friends to the fact that Hunt is unlikely to serve the full 18 years due to reductions in time.

Wilson then told Hunt he hopes Hunt does well in the Department of Corrections and commended the maturity and class of Kroll's family and friends.

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Rural Colorado educators invited to inquire about future teacher grants

Nathan Yip Foundation

The Nathan Yip Foundation announced recently that rural Colorado teachers can submit a letter of inquiry by Feb. 14 for consideration of a grant that can be used in the 2025-2026 school year.

"The Nathan Yip Foundation's mission is to empower Colorado students, staff and schools in an effort to address the educational and opportunity inequities that can exist between rural and urban schools in the state," Executive Director Jill Shenkel Henwood said. "Schools and teachers are encouraged to look at these grants as a chance to provide opportunities and experiences for students that might not otherwise be possible, either in the classroom or in school-related extracurricular activities.

Schools and districts are encouraged to apply for school and/or district-wide projects, equipment and materials that might not be possible within the budget. Past recipients have used this as an opportunity to replace old microscopes or shop tools, obtain robots and other electronics to build a STEM lab, purchase/replace instruments and much more. Priority will be given to requests that fund projects that will have a lasting impact and can be used for many years. Funds must be used for anything that will positively impact the students/school/community and help to reduce the educational opportunity gap between rural and urban school districts.

A one-page letter of inquiry should be submitted now via email to christine@nathanyipfoundation.org. The letter should include information about the demographics of the school/district, a brief description of the proposed grant request and the approximate amount of money that will be requested.

If the teacher's grant is approved for further consideration, the 2025 grant application will be emailed to the contact provided on the letter by March 3. The final grant application will be due on April 17, and award notifications for the 2025-26 school year will go out in late May/early June with funds dispersed before the start of the new school year.

To qualify, the school/district must be in a rural Colorado School district as designated by the Colorado Department of Education. Requests must be submitted by a school district or staff member.

Collaborations are encouraged; however, a school or school district must submit the letter and subsequent application. Priority will be given to schools/districts and programs serving lower-income com-

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impact students. The Nathan Yip Foundation does not fund the purchase, lease or

renovation of real property; salaries; student scholarships and tuition support; non-rural organizations/ schools/entities (i.e. third party private or nonprofit service/program providers); special events or fundraisers; legislative action, endowments or loan requests.

In 2024, the Nathan Yip Foundation funded 79 teachers in 52 rural Colorado school districts.

Learn more about the grant opportunity and the Nathan Yip Foundation at www.nathanyipfoundation.

For additional information, please contact christine@nathanyipfoundation.org.



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Registration open for alcohol awareness training classes

By Mary Jo Coulehan Pagosa Springs Area Chamber of Commerce

On Tuesday, Feb. 4, the Chamber of Commerce, Town of Pagosa Springs, Pagosa Springs Police Department and the Colorado Liquor Enforcement Division are partnering to provide two free Alcohol Awareness and Serving Safely training classes.

The two-hour classes will be held from 10 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Ross Aragon Community Center on Feb. 4.

Although the classes are free, we are asking for people to register at https://bit.ly/4h6RqLo or go to the Chamber website. From there you can click on the graphic, which will take you to the registration page, or you can find the event on the Chamber's Calendar of Events page and click on that link.

We expect these classes to be popular; therefore, we would like to make sure we have enough room in each class. If your business serves alcohol, we encourage you to send those staff members who may not have taken one of these classes in the past. If you are an events coordinator, we encourage you, or perhaps some of your board members or key volunteers, to attend one of these classes.

At the class you will learn the current regulations regarding blood alcohol content, tips to detect when someone may have had too much to drink, how to respectfully and responsibly decline to serve more alcohol to a person you believe has been imbibing too much, some of the liabilities involved in serving too much, and much more.

In all cases, insurance companies want to know if staff or volunteers have been trained or certified. Therefore, this is an important class to attend.

One of these classes has not been offered for several years, so now is the time to send your people.

Questions on the class may be directed to Mary Jo at the Chamber at (970) 264-2360 or director@pagosachamber.com.

Be safe. Be responsible. Attend this class and send others.

Thanks to our volunteers

As we wrap up another successful

customed to, we know that our events would not happen without the great efforts of our volunteers.

While we will have a thank-you ad where you can see most of the people that helped, some people just get missed or we didn't get their names. This year, we want to start off by

thanking all the people who donated their Christmas trees to the bonfire. We had a huge number of trees and were worried that we weren't going to get through the whole pile. So, thanks to all who helped make this year's bonfire huge.

Thanks also to those fire tenders that fed the bonfire for hours. It was a grueling job. At one point, however, we had some reprieve from some youngsters who kicked it into gear and helped us haul trees over to the fire. Your youth and enthusiasm were a blessing for us "older" volunteers. We didn't get your names, but we appreciated your help.

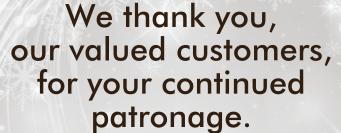
Then there are those volunteers who just participated in many small ways even when they didn't sign up to "work" a shift. People donated things like heaters, helped us our during the day and night of the bonfire, cleaned up the Visitor Center after the plunge,

helped us haul goods and so much more. These events just do not happen without help.

Thank you, community, for every little bit that you did, and a huge hug to all those who worked for hours so that others could have a good time. We appreciate every contribution, big or small.

Next on the Chamber's calendar is the annual Gala and Community Awards at 6 p.m. on Feb. 7 at the Pagosa Lakes Property Owners Association Clubhouse. Get your ticket now or volunteer to help out in some way. Contact Anna, membership coordinator, at info@pagosachamber. com for more information.

Thank you, community, for always pitching in.



We look forward to serving you in 2025.

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aquatic habitats impacted by drought Southwestern Water Conservatior District, San Juan Watershed Enhancement Partnership

On Jan. 17, the Southwestern Water Conservation District (SWCD) announced the receipt of \$25.6 million from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's Upper Colorado River Basin Environmental Drought Mitigation Program (B2E).

This funding, made available through the Inflation Reduction Act, will support 17 critical projects across the Dolores and San Juan river basins, including the Upper San Juan Watershed Enhancement Partnership's (WEP) efforts in Pagosa Springs.

The grant application, developed in collaboration with the Southwestern Water Conservation and Infrastructure Partnership, has a total value of \$29.3 million, including Park Ditch Diversion Restoration and goals. Efforts such as this are \$3.7 million in nonfederal support provided through cash and in-kind contributions from project proponents. These funds will advance key initiatives to mitigate the impacts of drought on aquatic habitats in the Colorado River Basin.

addressing bank stabilization, invasive plant species removal, riparian and process-based restoration, fish passage and habitat connectivity, erosion control, and wetland restoration.

Selected projects prioritize feasibility, readiness and stakeholder engagement. The proposal received support from 37 federal, state, tribal and local entities, including the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, Webber Ditch Company, Tres Rios Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management, San Juan National Forest Service, RiversEdge West, Mountain Studies Institute, Mancos Conservation District, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and the Animas Watershed Partnership.

In the Pagosa Springs area, the Upper San Juan WEP's \$2.2 million and Stream Restoration project includes the reconstruction of existing agricultural diversion infrastructure to remove the need for annual maintenance and improve year-round aquatic connectivity. Additional project goals include stabilizing land-

Funding will support projects slide-impacted riverbanks to prevent erosion, securing water delivery for agricultural and municipal use, and reducing sediment buildup.

The project will restore approximately 1 mile of the San Juan River, improve one agricultural water diversion structure, and reshape portions of the river channel using medium and large rocks.

"First of all, we want to thank the Southwest Water Conservation District for their foresight in organizing this effort, and all the effort that went into completing the application to the Bureau of Reclamation for this SW Basin cumulative effort," said Al Pfister, vice chair of the Upper San Juan WEP. "We believe this is an excellent example of what can be accomplished when partners from the public and private sectors collaborate to further their individual missions needed to help all in the Colorado River Basin adapt to a warming and drying future climate, while maintaining our quality of life."

For more information about the Upper San Juan WEP and its work, visit uppersanjuanwep.com

Pagosa Springs Sanitation General

Improvement District special

meeting. 5 p.m., Town Hall, 551

Hot Springs Blvd. See town web-

site for participation information:

https://pagosasprings.civicweb.

ublic 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 publi-

BJ Jones and Lars Schneider, owners, have spent a

As long-time locals, we operate with small-town

hospitality without the "Pagosa-time mentality." Your

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combined total of over 45 years in Pagosa Springs.

cation for that week's issue.

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punctuality.

Public Meetings

The following meetings are subject to change.

Monday, Jan. 27

- Archuleta County Road and Bridge Advisory Committee meeting. 2 p.m., Archuleta County administration building, commissioners' meeting room, 398 Lewis St. For more information, visit http:// archuletacounty.org/agendacenter.
- Archuleta School District Master Plan Advisory Committee meeting. 5:30 p.m., Pagosa Springs Middle School Library, 309 Lewis St.

Tuesday, Jan. 28

- **Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners work session.** 8:30 a.m., Archuleta County administration building, commissioners' meeting room, 398 Lewis St. View Zoom meeting at: https://zoom.us/j/9160904 8375?pwd=dlFFV0J1cGVKa1N HWHFsa2taeGxtZz09, meeting ID: 916 0904 8375, passcode: 4141885. For more information, visit http://archuletacounty.org/ agendacenter.
- **Archuleta School District Board** of Education special meeting. 5 p.m., Zoom. Visit www.mypagosaschools.com for more information.
- Pagosa Springs Planning Commission meeting. 5:30 p.m. Town Hall, 551 Hot Springs Blvd. See town website for participation information: https://pagosasprings. civicweb.net/portal/.

Thursday, Jan. 30

Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation District Board of Directors meeting. 5 p.m., 100 Lyn Ave. or via Zoom. View on Zoom using meeting ID 882 7393 5489 and password 921441. For more information, visit pawsd.org.

Monday, Feb. 3

Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners and PLPOA Board of Directors joint meeting. 5 p.m., Archuleta County administration building, commissioners' meeting room, 398 Lewis St. For more information, visit http://archuletacounty.org/agendacenter.

Tuesday, Feb. 4

- **Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners work session.** 8:30 a.m., Archuleta County administration building, commissioners' meeting room, 398 Lewis St. View Zoom meeting at: https://zoom.us/j/9160904 8375?pwd=dlFFV0J1cGVKa1N HWHFsa2taeGxtZz09, meeting ID: 916 0904 8375, passcode: 4141885. For more information, visit http://archuletacounty.org/ agendacenter.
- Archuleta County Board of County **Commissioners meeting.** 1:30 p.m., Archuleta County administration building, commissioners' meeting room, 398 Lewis St. View Zoom meeting at: https://zoom. us/j/91609048375?pwd=dlFFV0J 1cGVKa1NHWHFsa2taeGxtZz09, meeting ID: 916 0904 8375, passcode: 4141885. For more information, visit http://archuletacounty. org/agendacenter.
- Pagosa Springs Town Council meeting. 5 p.m., Town Hall, 551 Hot Springs Blvd. See town website for participation information: https://pagosasprings.civicweb.

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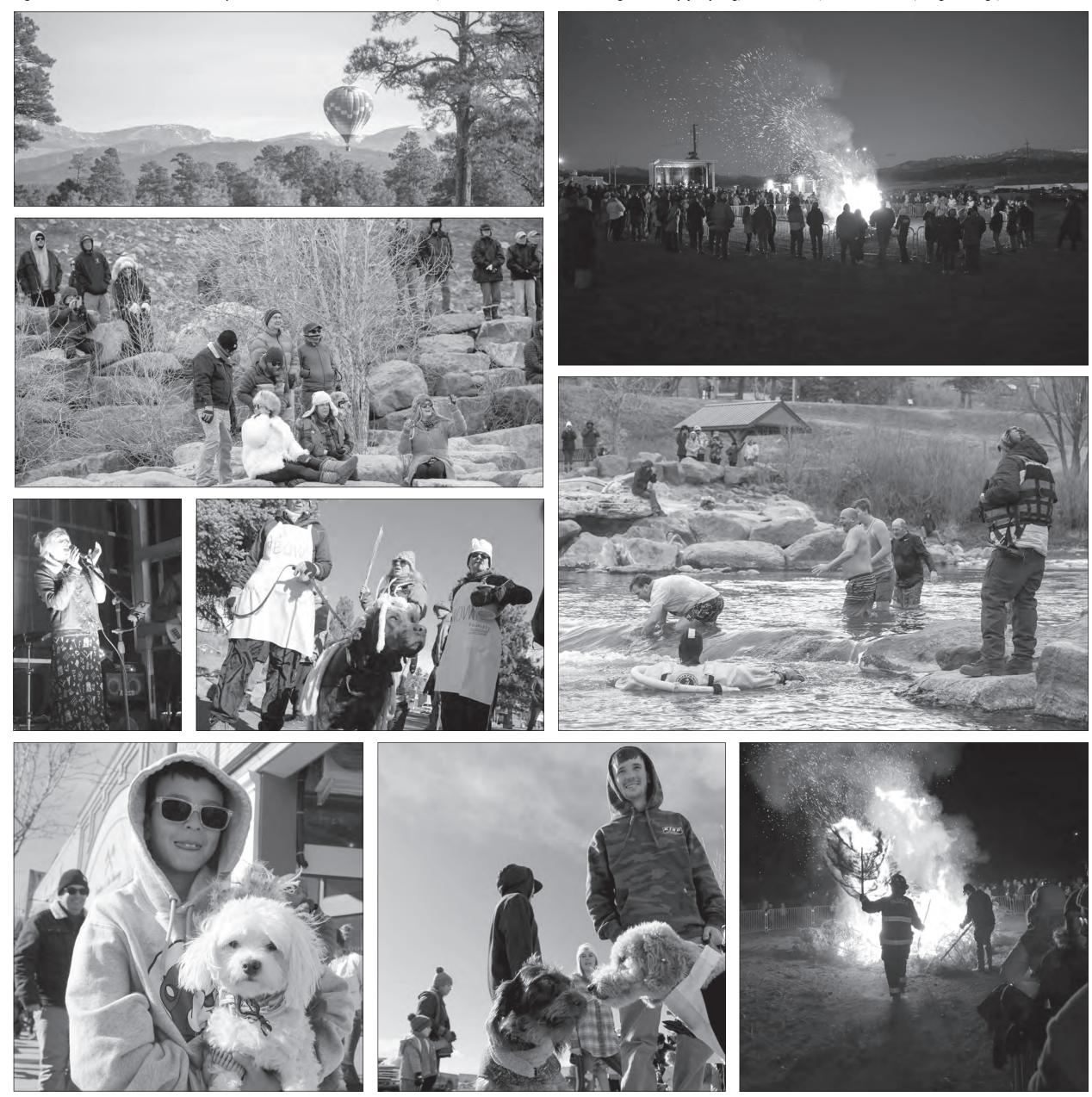
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A general lack of snow in the area didn't stop most of last weekend's WinterFest events, with locals and visitors alike able to get out to enjoy skijoring, hot air balloons, the Barkus Parade, Penguin Plunge, bonfire and more.



Fire

Continued from front

sible for under state statutes.

"Basically, in a nutshell, what those refer to is the sheriff's responsibility for suppression of wildland fires, but also the conduit to the state to leverage resources in the event we have a significant event," Le Roux said, explaining that the sheriff's office acts mostly as a coordination piece.

He noted that the majority of counties' unincorporated lands in the state are covered by a fire protection district.

"Here in Archuleta, we're unlucky enough that we're not," Le Roux said, explaining that the rest of the unincorporated lands within the county "falls on the sheriff's office from an initial attack wildland response point of view."

He added, "We in addition run a wildland fire initial attack crew with a fire apparatus that we house under the Division of Emergency Operations, falling under the sheriff's office."

Archuleta County is served by three fire protection districts: the Pagosa Fire Protection District (PFPD), Los Pinos Fire Protection District and Upper Pine River Fire Protection District, with the PFPD covering the most land of the three, Le Roux noted.

He indicated that Los Pinos covers areas near Arboles, while the Upper Pine covers a stretch along U.S. 160 near Yellow Jacket pass, leaving about 220 square miles of wildland district exclusively for the sheriff's office to cover.

For the remaining land left to the ACSO, it runs two type six engines and a type four engine, Le Roux indicated, mentioning one is a countyowned asset and the other two units are leased "at a competitive rate" from the state at \$200 a year.

Between those three units, "we have the ability to carry 1,500 gallons of water," Le roux said.

He also mentioned that the ACSO is responsible for parts of Mineral and Hinsdale counties with private inholdings, noting there are other fire response agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service, the Southern Ute Indian Tribe and the Bureau of Land Management.

Le Roux referred to a map of fire protection in Archuleta County as a "pretty crazy patchwork of jurisdictional complexities."

He went on to explain that the ACSO is under a five-year operating agreement plan that has a total of 14 signatories, including neighboring counties and fire resource agencies, that addresses how fires are responded to in our area.

He explained there is a "manda-

Photo courtesy Archuleta County Sheriff's Office

The site of the Jan. 16 Chimney Rock Fire is pictured following the incident. The fire was contained at about four acres the same day it began.

to do without any suppression by incorporating factors like weather.

He also mentioned the software can provide an estimate as to how many people, homes or vehicles may be in an area that can potentially be affected from a fire event.

Le Roux also explained the ACSO is responsible for evacuation orders, noting that the goal is to get the notification out as soon as possible, but just because smoke may be visible that doesn't necessarily mean evacuations are needed, using the Coal Mountain fire as an example in that the fire was far enough back in the forest that it wasn't going to affect the county.

Archuleta County uses an emergency notification system called Nixle that citizens can sign up for to receive notifications, Le Roux explained.

He went on to explain that the ACSO is not responsible for evacuating animals from ranches, "but I'm an animal guy," explaining that the emergency response crews will "do what we can."

He noted there are limited resources for that.

Le Roux encouraged the public to make a plan in case of such an event, specifically noting that it can be beneficial to practice trailering horses beforehand.

"All of that stuff ahead of time certainly helps first responders," he said.

Fire season

Emergency Operations Deputy Director Roy Vega was also in attendance with Le Roux during the work session and added that conversations are happening in preparation for "upcoming fire season, but we're in the fire season right now."

"No one expects to fight fire in 2 below," he said, explaining that the lack of snow on the ground makes wildland fires a real concern this time of year.

"We're much the same as we were in 2017, in the winter. In fact, I think we're probably worse off than we were," he added.

Le Roux indicated that he foresees this summer being similar to 2018, when the entire forest was shut down for a Stage 3 fire ban.

He also spoke about the fire mitigation work within the county, noting there's "been a lot of positive mitigation projects around the county."

He went on to say that fire responsibility starts with homeowners and responsible burning practices, "and what we have is a lot of people that don't burn responsibly."

He explained that the county has an ordinance mandating that everyone needs a burn permit in order to burn on property.

Burn permits are available from the PFPD for \$10.

Le Roux added that, when done correctly, burning as a form of mitigation" is not a bad option."

He then predicted that "we will almost certainly go into a Stage 1 fire ban shortly," and will likely follow with a Stage 2 fire ban.

Commissioner Veronica Medina asked about a U.S. Forest Service program known as Virtual Incident Procurement that allows community members to offer support in such events.

Le Roux indicated that the program allows community members to provide fire suppression equipment to first responders.

"I think the biggest assistance that e can have as a county is for people to be responsible with their actions moving forward," he added.

mitigation capabilities as your local utility."

He mentioned that LPEA's first line of defense is around vegetation management, noting that it "drastically lowers" the chances of a fire starting due to electrical equipment.

He also mentioned LPEA is "using a number of tools" to do that, including satellite imagery, image processing software and drone inspection on a frequent basis.

Hansen indicated that LPEA is also looking into policies around deactivation of lines during high wind and storm events, noting there's "pros and cons of that."

"So, those are a few of the things top of mind for us as we refresh and increase our wildfire mitigation capability," he said.

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tory mutual aid component" that lies between the agencies.

"We've always had excellent working relationships with all of our partners, so the document until now has never really been tested," Le Roux said. "Everybody responds to everybody's fire all of the time with whatever resources they can because we realize where we are. We're at the end of nowhere, which is why we live here and why we love it, but getting resources from further afield tends to have issues and there's time constraints getting it."

He went on to explain that the agreement set up a program in which the ACSO can front-load state assets within the first 24 hours of an event that is free to the county.

"Every big fire starts as a small fire, and every big cost always started as a small cost," Le Roux said.

Le Roux spoke about the Chris Mountain and Coal Mountain fires that occurred in Archuleta County in 2023, and how there were certain areas in the county as a top concern such as high density living next to the national forest.

"It's not the last time we're gonna have fires up there," Le Roux added.

He explained that, after those fires, the Forest Service mapped those entire areas showing what values may be at risk in the event of another fire.

"There's lots of forested area on the backside of County Road 700, north of County Road 500 that has the potential to do some damage," Le Roux said.

Le Roux explained that the ACSO purchased a subscription for a software known as Zonehaven that can predict what a fire has the potential



Vega cautioned that grass can still catch fire in extreme cold temperatures, like Archuleta County has been experiencing recently.

Le Roux explained that there have been two wildland fires in Archuleta County this month, one occurring on Jan. 11 and one on Jan. 16. each burning approximately two to four acres.

He noted that one of the fires was "started by juveniles erroneously," and the other likely from unsafe burning practices.

He explained that the ACSO had issues with the fire truck's water lines freezing during one of those events.

LPEA

During the same work session, the BoCC met with La Plata Electric Association (LPEA) CEO Chris Hansen, who started with LPEA in November 2024.

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Hansen also spoke about what LPEA is doing in terms of fire resistance and mitigation work.

"Fire is top of mind for everyone ... also top of mind for us," Hansen said, "We are really actively looking at how we can strengthen our fire

treated. Seems pretty simple.

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Sports

BASKETBALL

After 'rough streak,' Pirates go 1-1 in conference debuts

By Garrett Fevinger Staff Writer

The Pagosa Springs High School boys' basketball team rebounded from a challenging stretch of the 2024-2025 season to snap an eightgame losing streak and go 1-1 while on the road last weekend against teams in Monte Vista and Ignacio.

The games represented the Pirates' first conference matchups of the season and came on the heels of what coach Wes Lewis called a "rough streak" of the team's schedule.

With the results, the Pirates stand at 2-9 overall and 1-1 in 3A/4A Intermountain League play.

Facing a strong opposing offense Jan. 17 in Monte Vista, Pagosa found itself down 17-25 at halftime and trailing by 14 heading into the game's final eight minutes.

The hosts would go on to add 12 points in the fourth to close out the Pirates 51-36

"We struggled a little bit offensively scoring the ball," Lewis reported. "We had some easy ones we didn't convert on that we needed to to keep it close."

But with a message from their coach to "stay as positive as possible," the Pirates rebounded one day later in Ignacio, where the team battled for its first conference victory of the season by defeating the Bobcats 46-40.

"It was kind of a back-and-forth game. I don't think either team ever led by more than 10 points," Lewis recalled, adding, "Our turnover count was pretty favorable, and I thought we rebounded the basketball a lot better."

For the Pirates, the win came as a welcomed "sigh of relief," according to Lewis.

"It's been a while since we've had

a win and it sure felt like it was good for morale," he said.

Stats for the games were not available as of press time Wednesday, though Lewis praised Seth Zeigler's rebounding efforts in Ignacio.

The Pirates sail into deeper conference waters this weekend as hosts to squads from Alamosa on Jan. 24 and Montezuma-Cortez on Jan. 25.

In preparing for those contests, Lewis explained he reminded the team what it did well to earn the win in Ignacio.

"It's been a while since we've had a win and it sure felt like it was good for morale." **Coach Wes Lewis**

"We gave ourselves a chance to win because we did two things really well, as far as taking care of the basketball and rebounding the basketball, and [I] tried to just make it a point of emphasis to continue to do those two things to continue to help our chances," he said.

Against Alamosa, 2-10 overall and 0-2 in 3A/4A Intermountain League play, tipoff is scheduled for 7 p.m. Friday.

Montezuma-Cortez stands at 9-4 overall and 1-1 in league play. That game is scheduled for 2 p.m. Saturday.

Both games are set to take place at Pagosa Springs High School.

Then, on Tuesday, Jan. 28, the Pirates will take a break from league action to take on the 2A Del Norte Tigers in Del Norte at 7 p.m.

The Tigers are 3-6 on the season.



Photo courtesy Pagosa Springs High School

Creede Dozier lofts toward the basket during play against the Ignacio Bobcats on Jan. 18 in Ignacio. The Pirates went on to defeat the Bobcats 46-40 to claim their first conference win of the season.

Ski area's 85th Winter Bonus Fun Race results announced

Wolf Creek Ski Area

On Jan. 12, Wolf Creek Ski Area welcomed an eager crowd of 60 racers for the third fun race of the season. With a few clouds in the sky and a perfectly groomed course, the event provided an electrifying atmosphere category with a time of 35.68 seconds. Other standout performances

0.07 seconds ahead of Burkett. Wolf Creek Ski Area's Fun Race included Lindsay Braun, of Pagosa Series continues to deliver excite-Springs, in the Girls' 6-8 division, who ment, and the season's next events clocked in at 34.41 seconds to secure are just around the corner. Join us the gold medal, and Bralee Inman, for the Groundhog Day Race on Feb. from Durango, who took first place 2. The 85th Anniversary Fun Race in the Women's 26-30 group with a will take place on Feb. 9, with the



for skiers of all ages and skill levels to showcase their talents.

The fastest time of the day was recorded by Dan Hultgren, of Pagosa Springs, who dominated the Men's 36-40 category with an incredible time of 26.08 seconds. This stellar performance set the tone for a day filled with remarkable racing efforts.

Among the women, Lauren Cummings, from Concan, Texas, made an impressive debut as a first-time racer, taking gold in the Women's 21-25 time of 28.47 seconds.

On the men's side, the Boys' 12-14 division saw fierce competition, with Rylan Soden, of Pagosa Springs clinching gold with a time of 29.16 seconds. Garrett Dempsey, from Mississippi, earned gold in the Men's 26-30 group with a strong performance, finishing in 29.23 seconds. The Men's 41-50 category also featured a thrilling contest, with Casey Bristow narrowly beating Scott Burkett to take gold with a time of 29.30 seconds, just

Presidents' Day Race closing out the month on Feb. 16.

Fun Races are open to participants of all ages and abilities, with 14 age brackets ranging from 3 to 70 and up. Registration is free with a lift ticket and takes place at Raven's Nest from 9:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. on race days. Additional sign-ups are available at the top of the course until 12:30 p.m. Awards for each race will be held at 3 p.m. on the Sundeck, with medals awarded to the top finishers in each category.



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BASKETBALL



Photo courtesy Pagosa Springs High School

Lady Pirate Lexi Campbell goes up for a shot against Ignacio Bobcat defenders Jan. 18 in Ignacio. Campbell added two points and five rebounds in the team's 51-22 conference victory.

Lady Pirates go 2-0 in first league matchups

By Garrett Fevinger Staff Writer

The Pagosa Springs High School girls' basketball team flexed its signature defense during the season's first conference matchups last weekend, defeating squads in Monte Vista and Ignacio to go 2-0 in the 3A/4A Intermountain League.

Against Monte Vista on Jan. 17, the Lady Pirates limited their hosts to single-digit points for the first, third and fourth quarters, and led the contest throughout.

At the start of the third quarter, ahead by four, Pagosa tallied 12 points to Monte Vista's six, extending the team's lead to 10 by the start of the fourth.

In the final quarter, the Lady Pirates held Monte Vista to four points and added another 10 of their own to win their conference debut 42-26.

"We played well in both Ignacio and Monte Vista as a team," coach

Currier and Karsyn Shahan led in scoring with 15 points each, with the remainder distributed among the squad. Shahan put up one 3-pointer in the game, as did Amber Snarr.

Leading in rebounds was Lexi Campbell and Currier, who each brought down six for the night. Currier also led the night in assists with five.

The team had 17 turnovers against Monte Vista but also 17 defensive rebounds in addition to eight steals. The Lady Pirates made 12 of 19

attempts from the free-throw line. In Ignacio on Jan. 18, the Lady Pirates again deployed their defensive strength to hold the Bobcats to five and six points in every quarter while picking up a 51-22 win.

"We were really excited to see our post play dominate the game," Osborn wrote.

Leading the Pagosa offense was Kaila Limebrook with 12 points on the night, followed by Shahan with 10, which included three 3-pointers, and Currier with nine points, which included two 3-pointers. Limebrook also led the team in rebounds, tallying nine offensive

Against Monte Vista, Elizabeth and one defensive. Currier brought down eight rebounds and Shahan had seven.

> Shahan led the team in assists with five; she and Ketchum also added three steals each.

> "[Limebrook] had her first double double as a varsity player and played a huge role for us in that game," Osborn reflects. "She crashed the boards hard and got us extra possessions and finished from the free throw line."

The team made five of 10 freethrow attempts in the game.

Looking ahead, Osborn noted a feeling of collective excitement as the team heads into home games this Friday and Saturday.

"We are excited about how we are playing currently as a team and look forward to our continued progression throughout the season," she wrote.

The Lady Pirates, 7-4 overall, are scheduled to continue league play Jan. 24-25 as hosts to Alamosa and Montezuma-Cortez.

thers, currently 0-2 in league play and with a 3-7 overall record, at 12:30 p.m. on Saturday.

Both games are set to take place at Pagosa Springs High School.

Alamosa is currently ranked third in 3A/4A Intermountain League standings while Montezuma-Cortez is sixth. Pagosa Springs stands in second.

Then, on Tuesday, Jan. 28, the Lady Pirates will take a break from league action to take on the 2A Del Norte Tigers in Del Norte at 5:30 p.m. The Tigers are 7-2 on the season.

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Sarah Osborn wrote in an email to The SUN. "Our senior guards did a good job of getting everyone involved in the game and leading us on both the offensive and defensive ends of the court."

Tip off is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. Friday against the Alamosa Mean Moose, also 2-0 in league play and with an 8-3 overall record.

The squad is then scheduled to face the Montezuma-Cortez Pan-



WRESTLING Lady Pirates take second at Queens of the Mountain tournament

By Clayton Chaney Staff Writer

The Pagosa Springs High School Lady Pirate wrestling team earned second place in the Queens of the Mountain tournament held in Edwards at Battle Mountain High School on Saturday, Jan. 18.

The Lady Pirates earned a total of 98 team points to claim second place in the tournament, with West Grand taking first place with a total team score of 114.

The Lady Pirates had three firstplace finishers with Bella Jackson in the 100-pound weight class, Kylie Matyinak in the 130-pound weight class and Laykyn Baxstrom in the 235-pound weight class.

Janowsky indicated that this was the first championship for both Matyniak and Jackson, commenting that it "shows where we're going."

Jackson won her first four matches, pinning each opponent. She pinned her first opponent in one minute and seven seconds, her second opponent in 44 seconds, her third opponent in 1:11 and her fourth opponent in 1:40.

Jackson won her first-place match by 12-4 major decision, earning a total of 25 team points on the day.

Janowsky commented that Jackson "knows how to compete" and is a "good learner."

He added that Jackson "[does] the things you gotta do," and fights for positions and points in every match.

Matyniak won her first-round match by pinning her opponent in 5:33. She then pinned her next two opponents in 1:51, and 3:47, earning a total of 20 team points on the day.

Madisen Stretton took second place in the 110-pound weight class, earning a total of 14 team points on the day.

Stretton won her opening-round match by pinning her opponent in 5:17. She then won the following match by a decision of 7-0, which sent her to the championship round, where she was pinned in 1:17.

Janowsky explained that the Lady Pirates picked this tournament to compete in because of the number of regional opponents.

"It was very encouraging to see where we were, how we stacked up against a lot of those," he added.

Baxstrom claimed first place in the 235-pound weight class due to forfeit as there were no other wrestlers in that division, Janowsky explained.

"We know she's in that area anyway," Janowsky said of Baxstrom.

MacKayla Beach competed in the 105-pound weight class, losing three matches on the day, but still earning a total of seven team points.

Beach was pinned in her first match in 54 seconds, lost her second match by 17-2 technical fall and was pinned by her third opponent in 1:15.

Audriana Smith wrestled in the 135-pound weight class, also losing three matches and earning seven team points on the day.

Smith was pinned by her first opponent in 21 seconds, pinned by her second opponent in 2:54 and pinned by her third opponent in 2:26.

Aspen Salazar competed in the 145-pound weight class, losing two matches and earning nine team points on the day.

Salazar was pinned in her opening-round match in 3:19 and was pinned in her second-round match in 1:33.

Upcoming schedule

This Friday, Jan. 24, the Lady Pirates will join the Pirate boys' wrestling team in a dual against Bayfield in Bayfield. Matches are set to begin at 5 p.m.

On Saturday, Jan. 25, the Lady Pirates will travel to Ignacio to compete in the Butch Melton Invitational tournament, with matches set to begin at 9 a.m.

The Lady Pirates will wrestle at home for the first time in history next Tuesday, Jan. 28, in a dual against Montezuma-Cortez alongside the Pirate boys' wrestling team. Matches are set to begin at 5 p.m.

"Fans will be able to see the girls at home for the first time," Janowsky said, noting, "It's pretty cool."

Janowsky added that the Lady Pirates are excited and "they feel the improvements that they're making."

He noted that the team has lost some of the early-season apprehensions it had and now, "they're going after it, going after wins." clayton@pagosasun.com

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Swimming

Lady Pirates log pair of 'great' meets

By Randi Pierce Staff Writer

The Pagosa Springs High School Lady Pirate swim team recorded a number of personal bests at a pair of meets last week.

The team competed in Delta on Friday, Jan. 17, and in Grand Junction on Saturday, Jan. 18.

"Both meets were great," coach Heather Miller wrote in an email to The SUN, highlighting that a number of Lady Pirates dropped times during their "great" swims.

The Lady Pirates placed sixth out of seven teams in Delta, with the final team results for Grand Junction not available by press time Wednesday.

In Delta, two Lady Pirate teams competed in the 200-yard medley relay in Delta. The team of Marlowe Hedgecock, Leah Blackman, Chloe Gantt and Asia Gorman placed sixth and scored 18 points with a time of two minutes, 21.32 seconds. The team of Ruby Snell, Gianna Shaeffer, Grace Cram and Aubrey Gerdel finished 10th and scored six points with a time of 2:40.23.

Shaeffer took 20th in the 200-yard freestyle with a time of 3:01.45, with Kaiya Lyons following in 21st with a time of 3:06.11 and Gemma Slingerland following in 22nd with a time of 3:07.68.

Gantt earned 11 points with her fourth-place finish in the 200-yard individual medley. She swam a time of 2:53.43. Gerdel took 14th in the event with a time of 3:25.38. Snell followed in 15th with a time of 3:31.28. Lucia Rivera finished 16th with a time of 4:10.17.

Cram took ninth and earned four points in the 50-yard freestyle with a time of 31.36 seconds. Hedgecock finished 11th and garnered two points with a time of 31.40 seconds. Katelyn Fricke finished 26th with a time of 35.72 seconds. Blackman took 28th with a time of 36.35 seconds. Bella Gutierrez finished 34th with a time of 39.07 seconds, and Brooklyn Trujillo followed in 35th with a time of 39.43 seconds.

Gorman garnered four points in the 100-yard butterfly with a time of 1:33.72, which landed her in ninth.

Hedgecock took eighth and earned five points in the 100-yard freestyle, swimming a time of 1:09.04. Lyons took 19th with a time of 1:20.14. Gerdel finished 20th with a time of 1:20.58

"Marlowe Hedgecock, Bree Gerdel and Kaiya Lyons all had big drops in the 100 free in Delta," Miller wrote, "and Bree dropped even more time

team of Gorman, Cram, Hedgecock and Gantt took eighth and earned 10 points with a time of 2:02.26 - .26seconds short of qualifying for state.

Miller notes, "they swam great especially with at least one member of the really swimming the 500 free in the event prior. I am sure they will get it this weekend or next."

Fricke, Slingerland, Blackman and Gerdel took 15th with a time of 2:24.44. The team of Lyons, Snell, Gutierrez and Shaeffer finished 16th with a time of 2:28.05.

Gorman took 12th in the 100-yard backstroke with a time of 1:24.14, earning one point. Snell took 16th with a time of 1:32.31. Gutierrez finished 20th with a time of 1:57.12. Rivera finished 22nd with a time of 2:11.95.

"Overall the majority" of the swims were best times by significant amounts and those that weren't best times were very close." **Coach Heather Miller**

Blackman led the Lady Pirates in the 100-yard breaststroke with a sixth-place finish and a time of 1:30.46, which earned nine points. Shaeffer finished 11th and earned two points with a time of 1:34.98. Gantt finished 16th with a time of 1:38.82. Trujillo finished 22nd with a time of 1:56.62.

Miller notes Slingerland, Trujillo, Blackman and Shaeffer all had "amazing" swims in the event, with all cutting two seconds or more at the Delta meet.

The 400-yard freestyle relay team of Slingerland, Trujillo, Rivera and Fricke took fifth and earned 20 points with a time of 6:00.30.

The next day, the Lady Pirates were in action at the Grand Junction Invite.

Two Lady Pirate squads hit the water for the 200 medley relay at the meet, with the team of Hedgecock, Blackman, Gantt and Gorman taking ninth and earning 18 points with a time of 2:21.03.

The team of Gerdel, Shaeffer, Cram and Fricke took 19th and garnered four points with a time of 2:41.73.

Gorman led the Lady Pirates in the 200 free, finishing 14th overall and

Seven Lady Pirates took to the water for the 50 free: Gantt finished 20th with a time of 29.20 seconds, Gerdel finished 37th in 32.34 seconds, Lyons finished 46th with a time of 35.10 seconds, Fricke finished 49th in 35.68 seconds, Slingerland followed in 50th with a time of 36.29 seconds, Gutierrez took 61st with a time of 39.92 seconds and Trujillo finished 62nd in 40.20 seconds.

Gantt took ninth and earned nine points in the 100 fly with a time of 1:18.25.

Gerdel finished 31st in the 100 free with a time of 1:17.81. Gutierrez took 47th with a time of 1:20.77. Trujillo finished 48th with a time of 1:35.36. Gorman took 15th in the 500 free and earned two points with a time of 6:55.77.

The 200 free relay team of Gorman, Cram, Hedgecock and Gantt finished 11th and earned 12 points with a time of 2:02.53. The team of Fricke, Shaeffer, Lyons and Gerdel finished 19th and earned two points with a time of 2:19.61. The team of Slingerland, Rivera, Trujillo and Blackman took 23rd with a time of 2:32.12.

With a time of 1:22.19, Hedgecock led the Lady Pirates with a 21st-place finish in the 100 back. Cram took 26th with a time of 1:25.50. Slingerland finished 36th with a time of 1:39.84. Lyons finished 42nd with a time of 1:44.81.

Blackman earned three points with her 16th-place finish in the 100 breaststroke. She swam a time of 1:32.85. Shaeffer finished 22nd with a time of 1:36.62. Rivera finished with a time of 1:56.31 to take 29th.

"Asia Gorman had great swims at both meets getting best times in all individual events and cut nearly 20 seconds from her 500 free time from last week," Miller wrote, adding Hedgecock, Gerdel and Lyon also had all individual best times at both meets.

She adds, "Overall the majority of the swims were best times by significant amounts and those that weren't best times were very close."

The coach also notes the team saw progress in the areas it focused on in practice.

"We definitely saw progress in turns this week but will continue to work on them and focus more on starts this week. We will also work on bring back in more speed work as we get closer to the end of the season," she wrote.

This week, the Lady Pirates will take part in a pair of meets in Durango.

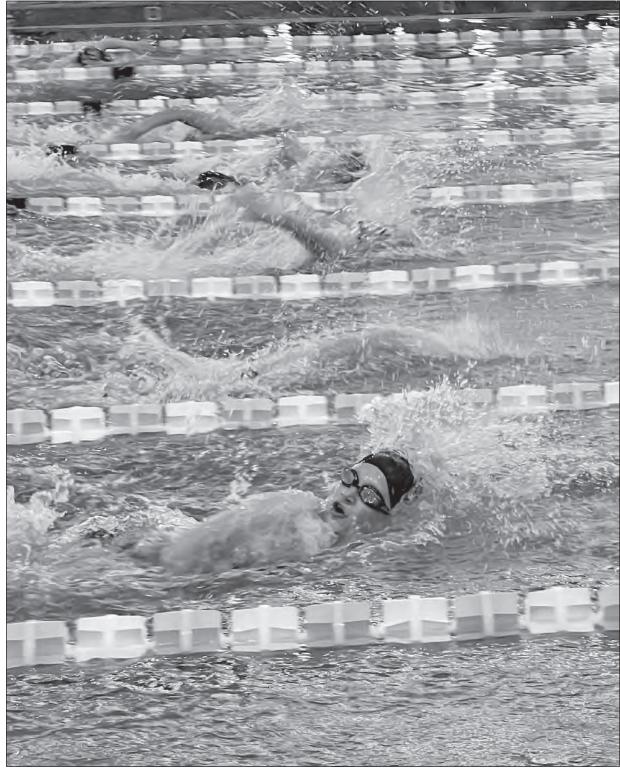


Photo courtesv Heather Mille

Lady Pirate Chloe Gantt swims at the Grand Junction Invite on Jan. 18. The team logged a number of individual best times at the meet.





job,

Pirates!

in Grand Junction.

Cram took ninth in the 500-yard freestyle with a time of 7:01.39, earning four points.

Miller highlights Cram dropped another 12 seconds in the event after a big drop last week.

Three Lady Pirate squads took part in the 200-yard freestyle relay. The

earning three points with a time of 2:35.09. Cram finished 18th with a time of 2:41.86, and Rivera finished 31st with a time of 3:35.93.

Blackman scored one point with an 18th-place finish in the 200 individual medley with a time of 3:30.83, and Shaeffer followed in 19th with a time of 3:31.73.

The first will begin at 3 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 24, and the second will begin at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, Jan. 25.

"I hope with the work on starts and speed we will [see] more improvement in the relays and shorter events," Miller wrote.

randi@pagosasun.com

WRESTLING **Pirates compete in Mel Smith Invitational**

By Clayton Chaney Staff Writer

The Pagosa Springs High School Pirate wrestling team traveled to Florence to compete in the Mel Smith invitational Tournament held at Florence High School on Friday, Jan. 17, and Saturday, Jan. 18.

The Pirates finished 27th out of 30 teams with a team score of 28 points. Cedaredge claimed the top spot in the tournament with a team score of 187 points.

Coach Dan Janowsky explained that the Pirates were missing wrestlers in the 150-pound, 155-pound and 167-pound weight class due to injuries and one wrestler competing in a different tournament.

"We've got some injuries that have impacted our varsity lineup," Janowsky said.

He explained that Colton Lucero competed in the Top of the Rockies tournament held on the same days in Lafayette.

Janowsky mentioned that the team had planned to send Lucero to that tournament since before the start of the season, and noted that the Top of the Rockies has a reputation of being one of the "toughest" tournaments.

Lucero won four matches and lost two on the day, coming up one round short of placing in the 150-pound weight class.

"It was a really good place for him to wrestle," Janowsky said, even though it hindered the Pirates' team score at the Mel Smith Invitational.

Lucero won his opening round match with a 5-2 decision, then lost

the following match by pin in one respectively. minute and 17 seconds.

Lucero then won three straight matches, pinning two opponents and defeating one in a sudden victory. He lost his last match of the day by pin in 2:24

At the Mel Smith Invitational, Anthony Manzanares earned the highest place of the Pirates in the 106-pound weight class, taking fifth place.

Janowsky commented that he was "really impressed with the bracket itself," and that "There's an unusual number of 106-pounders and [Manzanares] is right in the middle of it."

He added that Manzanares' physical and mental skills are improving as the season goes on.

"We are progressing," he added. Manzanares was able to pin his first two opponents in 2:53 and in 1:26,

He then lost his third-round match by a major decision of 8-0, sending him to the consolation round-four match, where pinned his opponent in 28 seconds.

Manzanares pinned his opponent in the following round in 2:17, which sent him to the consolation semifinal match, which he lost by a major decision of 11-0. He won his fifth-place match by pinning his opponent in 2:26, earning a total of 21 team points for the Pirates.

Antonio Quezada competed in the 285-pound weight class and earned a total of seven team points on the day.

"He's wrestling better, too; it's pretty obvious," Janowsky said of Ouezada.

Quezada lost his opening-round ■ See Wrestling A15

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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Public Notices

COMBINED NOTICE - PUBLICATION CRS §38-38-103 FORECLOSURE SALE NO. 2024 008

To Whom It May Concern: This Notice is given with regard to the following described Deed of October 22, 2024, the undersigned Public Trustee caused the Notice of Election and Demand relating to the Deed of Trust described below to be recorded in the County of Archuleta records Original Grantor(s) Kirk J. Chipps Original Beneficiary(ies) United States of America acting through the Rural Housing Service or successor agency, United States Department of Agriculture

Current Holder of Evidence of Debt United States of America acting through the Rural Housing Service or successor agency, United States Department of Agriculture Date of Deed of Trust October 13, 2005 County of Recording Archuleta Recording Date of Deed of Trust October 13, 2005 Recording Information (Reception No. and/or Book/ Page No.) 20510839 Original Principal Amount \$122,865.00

Outstanding Principal Balance \$90,886.83 Pursuant to CRS §38-38-101(4)(i), you are hereby

notified that the covenants of the deed of trust have been violated as follows: Failure to make timely payments as required under the Evidence of Debt and Deed of Trust THE LIEN FORECLOSED MAY NOT BE A FIRST

LIEN. Lot 6, Pagosa Overlook, a Planned Unit Develop

Phase One & Future Development Phase Two, Lot 6X Block 53 and 54, according to the plat thereof filed August 31, 2005, as Reception No. 20509150, in the office of the Clerk and Recorder, Archuleta ounty, Colorado. Purported common address: 454 South Seventh

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

NOTICE OF SALE The current holder of the Evidence of Debt secured by the Deed of Trust, described herein, has filed Notice of

Election and Demand for sale as provided by law and said Deed of Trust. THEREFORE, Notice Is Hereby Given that I will at public auction, at 10:00 A.M. on Thursday, 02/20/2025, at the Archuleta County Treasurer's Office at 449 San Juan St. Pagosa Springs, CO 81147, sell to the highest and best bidder for cash, the said real property and all interest of the said Grantor(s), Grantor(s) heirs and assigns therein, for the purpose of paying the indebtedness provided in said Evidence of Debt secured by the Deed of Trust, plus attorneys' fees, the expenses of sale and other items allowed by law, and will issue to the purchaser a Certificate of Purchase, all

as provided by law. First Publication 12/26/2024 Last Publication 1/23/2025 ame of Publication Pagosa Springs Sun THE SALE DATE IS CONTINUED TO A LATER Name of Publication DATE. THE DEADLINE TO FILE A NOTICE OF INTENT TO CURE BY THOSE PARTIES ENTITLED TO CURE MAY ALSO BE EXTENDED; DATE: 10/22/2024 Elsa P. White, Public Trustee in and for the County of Archuleta, State of Colorado By: Elsa P. White, Public Trustee The name, address, business telephone number and bar registration number of the attorney(s) representing Halliday, Watkins & Mann, P.C. 355 Union Blvd. Ste 250, Lakewood, CO 80228 (303) 274-0155 The Attorney above is acting as a debt collector and is attempting to collect a debt. Any information provided ©Public Trustees' Association of Colorado Revised Published December 26, 2024 and January 2, 9, 16 8 23, 2025 in The Pagosa Springs SUN. (253345) Commnet Wireless proposes to build a 155-foot 6-inch self-support lattice communications tower at the approx. vicinity of 1683 Kleckner Lane, Pagosa

Springs, Archuleta County, CO 81147. Public commer regarding potential effects from this site on historic properties may be submitted within 30 days from the date of this publication to: Trileaf Corp, Samantha Neary, s.neary@trileaf.com, 2121 W. Chandler Blvd., Ste. 108, Chandler, AZ 85224, (480) 850-0575. 1/23/25 CNS-3885848#

Published January 23, 2025 in The Pagosa Springs SUN. (255583)

PAGOSA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON ESTABLISHING IMPACT FEE AND ADOPTING IMPACT FEE SCHEDULE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Board of Directors of the Pagosa Fire Protection District wil conduct a public hearing on its intent to establish and impose an impact fee and adopt an impact fee schedule within its jurisdictional boundaries. A copy of the impact fee schedule is available for inspection in the District's administrative office at 165 N. Pagosa Blvd. Pagosa Springs, Colorado. The public hearing will be held at the District's administrative office on February 4, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. at which time the Board wil consider establishment of an impact fee and adoption of an impact fee schedule. Any interested party may attend the public hearing and may, at any time prior to the Board's establishment of an impact fee and adoption of an impact fee schedule, inspect the impact fee schedule, and file or register any comments of objections thereto

By: /s/Tomi Bliss, District Manager Published January 23, 2025 in The Pagosa Springs SUN. (255906)

PUBLIC NOTICES: YOUR **RIGHT TO KNOW**

The notices you see on this page include important information from local governmental bodies and attorneys that may be of interest to you. These notices can include information about public hearings, property assessments and changes in assessment, assumed names, name changes, claims notices, public meeting dates and financial statements.

Legal advertising Deadline: Friday 4 p.m.*

Bring your legal advertisement or public notice to our offices at 457 Lewis Street, or email to legal@pagosasun.com

*Deadlines are moved up for holiday weeks. Please check for an ad in the paper for specific dates and times.

the legal holder of the indebte Amanda Ferguson #44893 Attornev File # CO23617 may be used for that purpose 1/2015

Town council tables consideration of metro districts

By Derek Kutzer Staff Writer

On Jan. 21, the Pagosa Springs Town Council decided to table consideration of whether or not to allow metropolitan districts to form within town limits.

Metro districts are special-purpose districts allowed in the state under the Colorado Special District Act.

Metro districts are described in an agenda document as quasi-municipal governments and political subdivisions of the state, with their own elections and board of directors.

Metro districts are usually formed to fund specific infrastructure needs within a district's boundaries, such as road maintenance, wastewater services, or maintaining parks and recreation facilities, and are usually funded through property taxes from the owners within that district.

At the meeting, council member Leonard Martinez suggested that he thought the town should not even be considering the issue of allowing metro districts until it develops a "strategic plan" around the issue of growth and development.

He noted that it felt "premature" and like the "tail was wagging the dog."

The town should not "put this tool in place until there's a developed strategic goal in place to guide it," he said.

Mayor Shari Pierce said that, after listening to a detailed presentation on metro districts by Town Attorney Bob Cole, she had "tons of notes" on things that concerned her about metro districts within town limits, and she urged the council not to "rush it"

Council member Brooks Lindner said that, after Cole's presentation, he

Following an executive session

held by Archuleta County Board of

County Commissioners (BoCC) on

Tuesday, Jan. 21, the BoCC directed

staff to meet with representatives

of Pagosa Partners I Inc. to further

discuss the details of purchasing a

By Clayton Chaney

Staff Writer

building.

was having a hard time understanding how metro districts would benefit the town

Replying to Lindner, council member Madeline Bergon suggested that "the win" for the town would be kickstarting development, if that's what the town ultimately wants.

Agreeing with Martinez, Lindner commented that there's "no way we can answer" that right now without a strategic goal in place.

Development Director James Dickhoff chimed in to list some of the other potential benefits to the town of allowing metro districts, including secondary road connectivity and expanding the housing supply, but he also expressed agreement with Martinez, adding that "strategic planning would be wise" before any decision is made on the issue.

The idea of allowing metro districts within town boundaries was first presented by Dickhoff at a Dec. 19, 2024, meeting, but he explained that he wanted to bring Cole, an expert on the issue, into the conversation at the Jan. 21 meeting.

Currently, the town has no metro districts within its boundaries, but Archuleta County has several within its boundaries. Dickhoff told the council. adding that, in the future, the town should decide if it wants to allow or prohibit metro districts within its boundaries.

Dickhoff pointed to a few examples of metro districts within the county. saying that Alpha Rock Ridge operates as one, "mainly for maintaining roads," and that Aspen Springs and Timber Ridge are other examples of metro districts.

County continues to consider Cornerstone

enter the executive session, which

lasted for approximately 30 minutes

before the regular meeting was re-

Commissioner Veronica Medina

previously explained that there is

no real estate agent involved with

the Cornerstone property and that

negotiations are between the county

property for future admin building

convened.

He noted that metro districts "are becoming more and more common," and can serve as an "essential tool" to serve growth that town resources can't provide.

At the January meeting, Cole said that one of the "high points" of allowing metro districts is that they can serve as a "tool to advance development and create infrastructure."

But Cole also told the council that metro districts should not be allowed haphazardly and, if the town decides it wants to allow them, it should develop clear policies to "reduce the risks."

He noted that, together with Dickhoff, he could help the town develop a policy that would allow the town some control over how metro districts operate within the town's boundaries.

Agreeing with the idea of developing a strategic plan on what type of development the town wishes to see, Cole suggested that the council should first decide on what purpose it wants metro districts to serve, and that answering that question would help shape any policy that would put limitations and regulations on a metro district.

Bergon stated that she was not ready to make any decisions on the matter, but that the council shouldn't "write off" the idea of allowing metro districts, adding that they could end up being beneficial to the council's goals.

Dickhoff also revealed at the meeting that the issue had come up due to a single developer who had come to the town with the idea of using this "tool" to spur development.

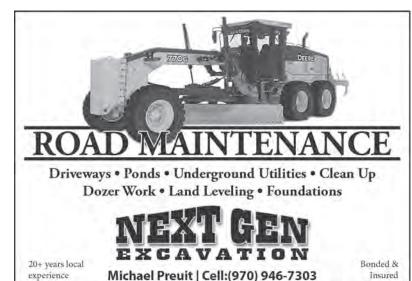
He said that if metro districts were approved by the council, more developers would follow suit with the one inquiring about metro districts.

Ultimately, the council was on the same page that it was not yet ready to even consider the idea of allowing metro districts within town limits until it first develops a strategic goal on development and growth and then learns more about the pros and cons of metro districts

Martinez said that making any decision now on metro districts "would be a signal that we do not have strategic discipline nor do we understand the value of strategy."

The council decided to push the issue down the road for future consideration.

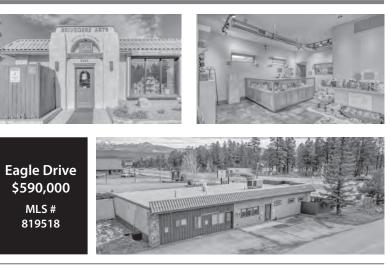
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2 buildings and one parcel. The front of the building is a gallery and workshop. The back unit is an office set up which was a clinic in the past. There is also a Quonset hut on the back of the property. The gallery fronts Highway 160 and parking is 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.







Cloman Industrial Park \$380,000 MLS # 819174

.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'

Shellie Hogue REALTOR°, BROKER C: 970.759.8109 ShellieCHogue@gmail.com

www.shelliehogue.com



property located at 2901 Cornerand property owner. County Manager Jack Harper exstone Drive for the purpose of building a new county administration plained that the matter discussed during the executive session was a

The BoCC voted unanimously to letter of intent between the county and Pagosa Partners I for the purchase of approximately 5.52 acres of land to build a new county administration building.

> Medina indicated that there were no decisions made in executive session, "but the conversation is that we just need to give staff, the county attorney and the county manager, direction to speak with the party and just hash out some more of the details and we will bring it back."

clayton@pagosasun.com

Commissioners discuss fire suppression system issues at Hughes Pavilion

By Clayton Chaney Staff Writer

using a county-owned fire hydrant to to the fire suppression system, with make snow for the skijoring event at Harper indicating there would likely

be an insurance claim.

WinterFest was held Jan. 17-19, featuring a community bonfire, live music, an ascension of hot air balloons and a skijoring competition.

Skijoring is an athletic competition in which athletes are pulled by a horse around a snow track on either skis or a snowboard.

During a work session held by the Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) on Tuesday, Jan. 14, County Manager Jack Harper indicated that there have been issues with the fire suppression system at the Hughes Pavilion, located at the county fairgrounds.

"We've been having issues for about two weeks with the fire suppression system out at Hughes Pavilion," Harper said.

He explained the system at the Hughes Pavilion is a "dry suppression system," meaning it uses a dry chemical powder to extinguish fires.

Harper indicated the system was installed by Cooper Fire Protection Services, a company out of Farmington, N.M.

He went on to explain that "because there's no snow on the ground," the contractor hired for the skijoring event, Skis and Saddles Skijor Pagosa, was the county fair grounds.

In doing so, water was released into the dry fire suppression system, Harper noted, creating a "water hammer" and freezing in the suppression system pipes.

"We're trying to get all the water out of a suppression system which is a dry system," Harper said.

Harper explained that Cooper Fire has been out to the pavilion to assess the issue, and that a permanent fix would not be possible until after the skijoring event.

Commissioner Veronica Medina asked why the county is responsible for the Hughes Pavilion, with Harper explaining the building is under the county's insurance.

Medina also inquired as to why the contractor for the skijoring event was using the fire hydrant instead of hauling water, and asked if there was a contract in place between the county and the event contractor to use the hydrant.

Harper indicated that he was unsure if a contract with the county was in place, and that it may not be until the summer to get the system "100 percent" fixed.

Medina questioned if the contractor would be paying for repairs needed

After the event took place and during a work session held on Jan. 21, Harper indicated there are "no more issues with Hughes Pavilion" and that Cooper Fire was able to get everything "squared away."

He added that the county is in contact with Cooper Fire to expedite the invoice process

County Attorney Todd Weaver explained there was a contract in place between Skis and Saddles and the rodeo management group, indicating the contract held Skis and Saddles liable for any damages to the premises.

He explained that the Hughes Pavilion is leased to the rodeo management committee, describing the situation as "kind of a convoluted structure."

Medina indicated that the county should be informed of the contract and asked Weaver, "Did you even review the contract?"

"No, I never saw it," Weaver replied. Medina mentioned that going forward those contracts should still come to the county to review because the county is responsible for the insurance on those buildings.

Weaver mentioned that there were

"a number of lessons learned."

Wrestling

Continued from A14

match by pin in 54 seconds, and then received a second-round bye. In his third-round match he pinned his opponent in 2:02, sending him to the consolation round-three match, which he won due to forfeit.

Quezada then lost the following match by pin in 1:51.

Janowsky explained that Quezada built an early lead in his final match, but was unable to come away with the victory.

He explained that they made some "strategic mistakes and rushed some positions that we didn't need to rush ... and it cost us."

Jonathon Baker competed in the 126-pound weight class, losing two matches on the day by a 17-1 technical fall and being pinned in 2:20.

Stetson Osborn wrestled in the 132-pound weight class and lost two matches after receiving an opening-

round bye. Osborn lost his secondround match with a 20-3 technical fall, and was then pinned in the following match in 19 seconds.

Tucker Jacobson competed in the 138-pound weight class and lost his opening-round match by a technical fall of 20-4. He then received a secondround bye and was pinned by his opponent in the third round in 1:39.

Vinny Fish wrestled in the 144-pound weight class and received an opening-round bye. He then lost his second-round match by 15-0 technical fall and was pinned by his next opponent in 2:07.

Jesus Serratos competed in the 215-pound weight class and received an opening-round bye, then lost his second-round match by pin in 2:56.

Serratos then received a thirdround bye and lost his fourth-round match by pin in 2:07.

Janowsky mentioned that it's im-

portant for the Pirates to "remain optimistic," noting that everyone still has the chance to qualify for state at the regional tournament.

"They work hard," he said. "We've just to help 'em continue to believe and press their attacks."

Upcoming schedule

Starting Friday, Jan. 24, the Pirates will compete in six duals in a total of four days, Janowsky explained.

The Pirates will travel to Bayfield on Friday to compete in their first Intermountain League dual of the season. Matches are set to begin at 5 p.m.

On Saturday, Jan. 25, the Pirates will compete in a five-team dual in La Jara at Centauri High School. Matches are set to begin at 9 a.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 28, is senior night for the Pirates as they host a dual against Montezuma-Cortez. Matches are set to begin at 5 p.m.

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Town council revises application for federal funding for completing Town-to-Lakes Trail

By Derek Kutzer Staff Writer

On Jan. 21, the Pagosa Springs Town Council approved a resolution to revise an application for federal funding that would support the completion of the Town-to-Lakes Trail and local road network connectivity.

The town is seeking a Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT).

Previously, on Nov. 21, 2024, the council approved a resolution for \$17 million worth of funding, but an agenda document on the matter states that due to "continued material price escalations and [after] discussions with a state funded grant writing consultant," staff is now asking for "an increase in the contingency line item from 20% to 30%."

At the meeting, Projects Manager David Hilborn explained that, since the town originally applied for the grant, "updates on material costs" has led town staff to "improve our application" and increase the amount of funding it is asking for.

This revision would increase the funding to \$20.5 million, which is described as "a conservative number that is based on staff and consultant cost estimations that include a 30% contingency to account for inflation and unanticipated expenditures," the document states.

Hilborn explained that 93 percent of the trail project is located within 2020 Census Tract 9743, identified as a rural and historically disadvantaged community, which allows the town the opportunity to apply for "no match" funding from the DOT.

"That would mean that the town would not be liable or obligated for any of the costs for the project up to whatever the funds that are

awarded," he said.

At the Nov. 21, 2024, meeting, Development Director James Dickhoff explained that the town had previously applied — unsuccessfully — for \$16 million in funding, but added that "we were invited to submit another application" in this round.

Dickhoff explained that town staff had met "with RAISE staff a couple times, and they indicated that we actually scored fairly well, but it's just a very competitive national federal grant."

"This is a wonderful opportunity, and should that land in our lap that would be incredible, so just keep pushing on it." Council member Mat deGraaf

He explained that RAISE received about 1,100 applications in the last round, "and they only awarded 135 applications."

Gaining written support from the property owners along the proposed trail would also strengthen the town's chances this time around, he added.

"We'll keep applying for these opportunities. They are very competitive, but we feel like we have a very good project," he said.

The document describes the planned commuter trail as "the final link that would achieve comprehensive nonmotorized connectivity between existing infrastructure in both uptown and downtown Pagosa Springs."

The scope of work outlined in the application encompasses several key components:

• Design and construction of a 12-foot-wide concrete commuter trail extending from Great West Avenue to Harman Park Drive.

• Design and construction of a connecting road and adjacent trail from Harman Park Drive to Cornerstone Drive.

• Design and construction of a 12-foot-wide concrete commuter trail extending from Pinon Causeway to South Pagosa Boulevard, including a trail connection to the existing hospital trail.

• Design and construction of a trail between the hospital and Village Drive, providing safe routes to the existing crosswalk at U.S. 160 and Pagosa Boulevard.

"If awarded, the funding obligation deadline will be September 30, 2030, and all funds must be expended by September 30, 2035," the document states.

"This grant opportunity is exceptionally rare ... the Town will not be required to allocate any funds, provided that the project expenses do not surpass the amount awarded by the U.S. Department of Transportation," the document states.

Commending town staff for its work on the application and the trail project, council member Mat deGraaf said, "Keep on it."

"This is a wonderful opportunity, and should that land in our lap that would be incredible, so just keep pushing on it," deGraaf said.

Mayor Shari Pierce added, "I know this is something that the community really, really wants, but when it comes to some of the other things that we need to do, this is the one that gets pushed to the back, so if we could get a grant to promote it, that's the way to go, I think."

The motion to revise the application for the RAISE grant for the completion of the Town-to-Lakes Trail was passed unanimously by the council.

derek@pagosasun.com

Tips for preventing frozen pipes

· Insulate pipes or faucets in un-

Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation District

cold weather preparation tips:

to flow from faucets.

Chair

perature is above freezing.

Continued from front

held on Tuesday, Jan. 14.

opponent in the election.

tant for any elected official."

serving as chair of the BoCC.

our hands a little bit."

dina," Ranson said.

following year in 2026.

position.

The Pagosa Area Water and Sanita-

• Allow a steady drip of cold water

• Assure the basement area tem-

Before making a nomination or

voting on the matter, Commissioner

John Ranson initiated discussion on

the topic, explaining that the board

had "what I thought was a really good

discussion" during a work session

revolved around "the importance of

teamwork up here," adding that he

believes it is "important to include

others when you make a big decision."

to meet with both Medina and Com-

missioner Warren Brown prior to

taking office as he did not have an

sentatives and good people," Ranson

said. "And they both care deeply

about the constituents in our com-

munity, which I think is very impor-

Ranson also noted that it was

"kind of a hard decision to come to,"

indicating he'd be "totally comfort-

able" with either Brown or Medina

Brown's suggestion that the chair be

a rotating position to "take this out of

equally important years for the chair

nate Medina as chair for 2025, and to

"go with" Brown's concept of rotating

chair position the following year and

"I have total confidence in Com-

Brown seconded Ranson's motion

Before voting, Medina comment-

have Brown serve as chair for 2026.

missioner Brown just like I do Me-

to nominate Medina as chair, but not

to hold the board to a decision for the

Ranson also commented on

He noted that 2025 and 2026 are

Ranson then motioned to nomi-

"These two are really great repre-

Ranson indicated that he was able

He noted part of that discussion

tion District suggests the following

heated areas.Utilize heat tape on pipes in

crawl spaces.

• Seal off access doors, air vents and cracks.

• Open cabinets and closets that contain water lines to allow for the circulation of warm air.

• Locate the master shutoff valve so water can quickly be turned off if a leak occurs.

• Check empty and vacant buildings to ensure heat is maintained.

See the district-wide email sent on Jan. 21 from Dropcountr for more on preventing frozen pipes this winter season.

ed that the discussion during the Jan. 14 work session "was a good conversation, " and that "it needed to be had."

She added, "A lot of things were said that needed to be said and we moved on."

The board then unanimously approved Ranson's nomination for Medina to serve as the chair for 2025. The board then unanimously approved Brown to serve as vice chair.

Board and committee appointments

During the Jan. 21 meeting, the BoCC also made appointments to various boards and committees for local and regional organizations.

"They may appoint other members of the community or staff in their place," the agenda states.

The following is a list of the appointments made:

• Archuleta County Housing Authority: Ranson, with Medina as alternate.

 Archuleta Seniors Inc.: Ranson.
 Archuleta County Weed Advisory Board: Brown.

• Club 20: Medina, with Mary Jo Coulehan as alternate.

• Pagosa Springs Community Development Corporation: Brown, with Ranson as alternate.

• Archuleta County Fair Board: Medina.

• Housing Solutions for the Southwest: Ranson, with Medina as alternate.

• Pagosa Springs Area Tourism Board: Ranson, with Brown as alternate.

• Archuleta County Board of Health: Medina and Brown.

• Region 9 Economic Development District: Medina and County Attorney Todd Weaver, with Coulehan as alternate. • San Juan Basin Area Agency on Aging: Ranson.

San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership: Medina.
San Juan/Dolores/San Miguel

River Basins Roundtable: Medina. • Southwest Council of Govern-

ments: Medina.

• Southwest Opioid Response District: Ranson.

• Southwest Transportation Planning Region: Brown and Public Works Director Mike Torres.

• Southwest Water Conservation Board: J.R Ford.

• Pagosa Springs Urban Renewal Authority: Johanna Tully-Elliot.

The appointments were approved unanimously.

The BoCC also made 2025 proxy designations for Colorado Counties Inc. (CCI) committees.

Those designations include:

• Tourism, resorts and economic development: Ranson, with Brown as alternate.

• General government: Brown, with Medina as alternate.

• Taxation and finance: Ranson.

• Transportation and telecommunications: Brown, with Ranson as alternate.

• Public lands: Brown, with Medina as alternate.

• Agriculture, wildlife and rural affairs: Medina, with Brown as alternate.

• Land use natural resources: Brown, with Ranson as alternate.

Health and human services: Medina, with Director of Human Services Heidi Martinez as alternate.
CCI legislative: Brown, with Medina as alternate.

• Underfunded Courthouse: Brown, with Ranson as alternate.

The designations were approved unanimously.

clayton@pagosasun.com



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Late Night at the Library

Drevier

S &

4:30 to 7:30 p.m. • Saturday, Jan. 25 • Sisson Library



Photo courtesy Ruby M. Sisson Memorial Library Friends and Foundation

Late Night at the Library set for Jan. 25

By Leslie Cole

Ruby M. Sisson Memorial Library Friends and Foundation

Enjoy an evening of craft making with friends, and delicious food and drink, at the next Late Night at the

Library on Saturday, Jan. 25, from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m.

At this fundraiser for the Mountains of Opportunity Building Campaign to expand and renovate the library, guests can make Valentine's Day cards and crafts, and learn or practice the art of origami. Dinner and drinks are included for this 21-and-older evening.

Space is limited; purchase advance tickets, \$50, at Ruby Sisson Memorial Library (cash or check) or at pagosalibrary.org.

Healthy Archuleta to host Growers and Producers Forum

Healthy Archuleta

Healthy Archuleta's Growers and Producers Forum meets monthly now that the holidays are over, bring-

WHIPS luncheon set for Jan. 28

By Nancy Ford Women Helping in Pagosa Springs

WHIPS, Women Helping in Pagosa Springs, will have their monthly luncheon Tuesday, Jan. 28, at 11:30 a.m. at Ramon's Mexican Restaurant.

The cost is \$20. We must have you RSVP to (970) 946-1895 by Sunday, Jan. 26.

All women are welcome.

Live Performers

ing interesting topics for discussion and learning. This month, the forum will meet

on Thursday, Jan. 30, from 4 to 5 p.m. at the library. The topic deals with an important

local resource, geothermal heat, and will be discussed from different points of view.

Kirsten Skeehan will bring to light past efforts here in Archuleta County to locate new sources and harvest the heat for commercial purposes.

Courtney King will share some impressions and photos of Iceland's use of geothermal heat to supply the country with greenhouse produce.

Next month, Chris Frederics will contrast his experience growing produce in a geothermally heated dome, the Geothermal Greenhouse Partnership's Education Dome in Centennial Park, with growing outside on his own farm.

This is a great opportunity for our local growers and producers to network and learn from one another. To learn more about Healthy Ar-

chuleta, please visit www.foodcoalition4archuleta.org.

Subscribe to The SUN at PagosaSUN.com

Thursday

The Pagosa Bar: Karaoke, 7:30 p.m.

Friday

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

Saturday

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

Tuesday

The Springs Resort lodge atrium: Rock N' Rebels, 5 p.m.

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Geothermal Greenhouse Partnership provides update

By Laura Hamilton Geothermal Greenhouse Partnership

The Geothermal Greenhouse Partnership (GGP) is thriving as we enter 2025, with exciting developments and community initiatives on the horizon.

In 2024, we welcomed five new members to our board of directors. Joining Pauline Benetti, Keith Bruno, Sally High, Chad Hodges, Andrew Mylroie, Cameron Parker, Jenelle Syverson and Robin Young are Chris Frederics, Christina Knoell, Sherry Murphy, Tarrie Parker and Laura Hamilton.

Our mission is to educate the community in sustainable agricultural practices. Producing food yearround using local renewable energy remains at the forefront of our efforts.

Dome updates and soil rejuvenation

The Education Dome, which has been closed for soil restoration and facility maintenance, just welcomed its first two classes of students in Ianuary.

Behind the scenes, our team of volunteers has been hard at work improving soil structure, replenishing nutrients and enhancing microbial activity to ensure optimal growing conditions for our plants. The new students will be learning about all things growing and have already brought so much excitement to the newly revitalized space.

In our commitment to maintaining all our facilities, we will soon begin the soil restoration and repair process in the Community Dome. This temporary closure is a necessary step to ensure the continued success of our community gardening initiatives, and it is essential for maintaining the long-term health and productivity of our greenhouses.

Community engagement and fundraising

The GGP board is holding a summit this month to realign our organization with our core mission and purpose. We're excited to plan a series of engaging events for the coming year that will bring our community together and showcase the incredible potential of geothermal greenhouse gardening.

As we undertake these important maintenance and improvement projects, we're reaching out to our supportive community for assistance. The costs associated with dome repairs and soil rejuvenation are significant, and your contributions can make a real difference. Every donation, no matter the size, helps us continue our work in sustainable agriculture education and community engagement.



Hardware

Looking ahead

The GGP is more committed than ever to serving our diverse community. We're excited about the possibilities that 2025 holds and are grateful for the continued support and enthusiasm of Pagosa Springs' residents.

We invite you to stay tuned for announcements about upcoming events, volunteer opportunities and ways to get involved with the GGP. Please check out our Facebook at

Geothermal Greenhouse Partnership or Instagram at pagosaspringsggp for the latest information and links to our donation pages.

Together, we can continue to grow food and community connection with local energy, making Pagosa Springs a model for sustainable living. Your support and involvement are crucial to our success. We look forward to seeing you at the greenhouses soon and sharing in the bounty of our collective efforts.

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Page 4 - Section 1 - The Pagosa Springs SUN - PREVIEW - Thursday, January 23, 2025

PAGOSA SCENE . .



March for Equality





PREVIEW photos/Garrett Fevinger Scene ... gathering for the March for Equality on Jan. 18 through downtown Pagosa Springs. Community members waved flags and carried homemade signs with messages lifting up American ideals such as freedom, liberty and neighborly love.





FALL/WINTER HOURS: MONDAY: 11 AM - 10PM 0 TUESDAY: CLOSED WEDNESDAY: CLOSED THURSDAY: 11AM - 10PM FRIDAY: 11AM - 11PM SATURDAY: 11AM - 11PM SUNDAY: 11AM - 10PM 970.582.2011 120 Piedra Rd, Pagosa Springs, CO 81147 We've expanded! Pet Salon & Boutique Now accepting By appointment only new clients. Tues-Sat 9:30-5:00 970-585-WAGS (9247) 444 Lewis Street, Pagosa Springs, CO 81147 pawlishedpetsalon.com pawlishedpetsalonandboutique@gmail.com • F I D RODS. Men, do yourself a favor and let Rosie help you choose your wife's bamboo pajamas at PJ'S for Valentine's Day ... PJ'S ... and you can also talk fishing with PJ. A great date night idea! **Bugs & Brews Fly Tying Class** £ 💻 February 17 To register March 17

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Toys available for checkout for toddler fun and learning

By Carole Howard

PREVIEW Columnist, and the library staff

If your toddlers are bored with their toys and want something different to play with, here's good news: We have developed a collection of toys for children aged 3-6 that are available for free checkout — and they're geared to learning as well as fun.

Examples include multicolored magnetized blocks and tiles in a variety of shapes like squares, triangles and pie shapes that toddlers can use to build whatever their creativity and interests desire. Other toys are gears, a loom kit and a flower garden building set — and more are on the way.

While the kids play, parents and caregivers can take advantage of guides to help make the toys tools to develop skills including spatial thinking, color perception, fine motor skills and hand/eye coordination.

All sets can be checked out for three weeks. We hope you enjoy this latest addition to our children's services designed to support your child's earliest development.

Save the date for Friends book sale

Please mark your calendar for next Saturday, Feb. 8, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. when the Friends of the Library will host a popup book sale in the large meeting room of your library. Also, please see the new donations guidelines below if you are intending to donate books to the Friends.

Live and online author talks

Today, 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

Potholder party tomorrow

Join us Friday, Jan. 24, from 2 to 3:30 p.m., when all ages are invited to make those potholders you made as a kid and create new ones. All materials are supplied at this free event.

Adult knitting Saturday

Join new and experienced knitters Saturday, Jan. 25, for our free Knitters Circle from 1 to 3 p.m. It is aimed at anyone over the age of 18 who would like to knit together or get some help if you are stuck on your project.

Shakespeare read-aloud



Shakespeare fans of all ages are invited to join in reading aloud "The Comedy of Errors" that began Monday, Jan. 13, and will run through Feb. 24 from 3:30 to 5 p.m. at the free Shakespeare Read Aloud Club. This is an all-ages program. Call Jenny at (240) 426-7887 for more information.

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.

Online author talk

Our highly popular free online author talks continue next Tuesday. Jan. 28, at 11 a.m. when Seth Fishman will discuss "An Inside Look at Working with a Literary Agent." For details and to register, go to https://libraryc. org/pagosalibrary/upcoming.

Dungeons and Dragons

Next Tuesday, Jan. 28, 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.

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.

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.

Nonfiction 'For Dummies' books

We have five new "For Dummies" guides covering artificial intelligence, probability, statistics, trigonometry and iPhone for seniors.

Other nonfiction

'The Cancer Journey" by Dr. Chadi Nabhan is a Johns Hopkins See Library on next page





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January 28th Rock N'Rebels

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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



EATERY 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

With love and gratitude, Amanda Tobin



Library

continued from previous page

Press book dealing with diagnosis, treatment, recovery and prevention. "Essential Wilderness Navigation" is a guide to finding your way with or without a map, compass or GPS. "Preserving with a Purpose" by Sarah Thrush is a canning and preserving book with 125 recipes. "Instant Pot, Air Fryer and Slow Cooker Cookbook" is a Taste of Home book with more than 130 recipes. "Watercolor in Nature" by Rosalie Haizlett teaches how to paint woodland wildlife and botanicals with 20 beginner-friendly projects. "Knitting Design" by Sharon Turner shows how to fashion your own knits from a master pattern. "Knitting Socks" by Ann Budd contains 16 patterns. "More Last-Minute Knitted Gifts" by Joelle Hoverson has 30 ideas for elegant gifts for all levels of knitters.

Large print westerns

"Some Die Young" by William W. and J.A. Johnstone is book two in the Man from Waco series, "Riders of the Skull" by John D. Nesbitt is a murder mystery. "On the Royle Range," also by William W. and J.A. Johnstone, is book three in the Forever Texas series.

Other large print

"The Serviceberry" by Indigenous scientist Robin Wall Kimmerer considers how our economy is rooted in scarcity, competition and the hoarding of resources. "Close to Death" by Anthony Horowitz is a Hawthorne and Horowitz mystery. "We Three Queens" by Rhys Bowen is a Royal Spyness mystery. "The Baxters Devotional" by Karen Kingsbury offers 30 timeless truths from the author's popular fictional family.

Books on CD

"An Honored Vow" by Melissa Blair is the final book in the Halfling Saga romantasy series. "How To Sleep at Night" by Elizabeth Harris revolves around a family after a member decides to run for Congress as a Republican. "Immortal" by Sue Lynn Tan is a romantic fantasy about a young ruler fighting to protect her kingdom.

Mysteries, suspense and thrillers

"Triangle" by Danielle Steel features an art gallery owner in Paris. "The Mistletoe Mystery" by Nita Prose is a Molly Gray mystery involving a Secret Santa gift exchange. "Bellevue" by Robin Cook is a medical thriller. "Golden Hour" by Brett Battles features Stuart Woods' characters Teddy Fay and Stone Barrington.

Other novels

"Lazarus Man" by Richard Price follows the lives of residents after their tenement collapses in East Harlem. "The Book Swap" by Tessa Bickers tells of a pen pal relationship written in the margins of books. "Lula Dean's Little Library of Banned Books" by Kirsten Miller reveals the clever way a busybody censor of books is foiled. "The Husbands" by Holly Gramazio is a humorous look at swapping husbands. "The Mystery of Time" by Kaliane Bradley features a civil servant working on a top secret project. "Trial by Fire" by Danielle Steel focuses on a Parisian woman trapped in a Napa Valley wildfire. "First Lie Wins" by Ashley Elston highlights a nice Southern girl with a perfect life who doesn't exist.

New donations guidelines

Please note these new donation guidelines established by the Friends of the Library for their book sales that help supplement the library collections and fund other requests that benefit your library.

When we are open, high-quality used book donations are gratefully accepted at the front desk - not down the outside returns slot at the library or the drop box at City Market, please.

Books on time-sensitive topics that can quickly become out of date are wanted only if they have been published within the last five years. These subjects include politics/current events, health and medicine, sports/exercise, business, technology, science, education and travel guides. Not accepted are reference materials, textbooks and nonprint material like CDs, DVDs, Blu-ray,

VHS or cassette tapes because they do not sell at Friends of the Library sales.

No more than two boxes at a time because of space constraints and ensure all books in excellent condition, please.

This week we want to thank our many anonymous donors for their generous donations, especially those who responded to the 2025 goal of Barb Brattin, our library di-See Library on next page





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Photo courtesy Friends of the Library Ken Morrison, a lifetime member of the Friends of the Library since 1984, is pictured here with **Ruby M. Sisson Memorial Library Director Barb Brattin. Morrison** won a copy of "Lost Birds" by Anne Hillerman. The book was a timely donation, as it was also the first book read by the new Just Friends Book Club. The club, open to all Friends members, met for the first time on Jan. 13. Many had purchased copies of the book when the author visited Pagosa Springs last fall. To join the Friends of the Library, visit PagosaLibrary.org or email Donna Mosher at donnamosher@ icloud.com.

Library

continued from previous page

rector, to improve and expand our nonfiction collection. Please see the Jan. 9 "Library News" column for more details. "Trust is like the air we breathe — when it's present, nobody really notices; when it's absent, everybody notices." — Warren Buffett, American investor and philanthropist who is chairman and CEO of Berkshire Hathaway and one of the best known

Quotable quote

Planetary parade viewing events set for Jan. 24 and 25

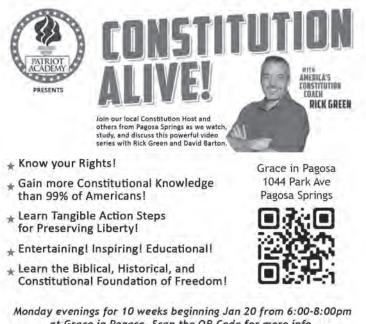
By Dena Laterza

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.



Monday evenings for 10 weeks beginning Jan 20 from 6:00-8:00pm at Grace in Pagosa. Scan the QR Code for more info. Course and digital workbook are FREE. A spiral-bound workbook is available for \$20. Refreshments will be provided.

Community news.

For more information on library

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H&R BLOCK

is happy to announce that

JoAnn Howell

has joined our office!

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Sunday

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 Also Available

Thursday-Sunday Specials Let Us Host Your Party To Go Orders Catering

ALL MARLIN

SpiritFire Inspirational Living Center announces upcoming events

By Shayla McClure

SpiritFire Inspirational Living Center

Spiritual topics are discussed every Tuesday at the SpiritFire Inspirational Living Center.

Upcoming events

Jan. 25, 10 a.m.: Veterans "Thankyou 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.

Jan. 27: New moon drumming

circle with Shayla Azriel. A love donation will be accepted.

Jan. 28, 5:30 p.m.: Illuminations presentation: "Happy Face Hands and Feet" with Kathy Forrest, Tibetan reflexologist and counselor. Join in for a fun evening while getting a foot soak at the same time. A love donation will be accepted.

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. We are the "Good Vibe Tribe" who practices Science of Mind principles of positive thinking.

The vision of SpiritFire Inspirational Living Center is to empower each participating member to become their "best self." Our mission is to create a world that works for everyone through self empowerment and awareness of the creator's divinity.

We welcome local talents to share gifts, aptitudes and knowledge.

SpiritFire Inspirational Living Center events are held at 3505 W.U.S. 160, on the second floor of the Pagosa Lodge (elevator available). Obtain information by joining us; emailing pagosacommunitynewthought@ gmail.com; mailing P.O. Box 1052, Pagosa Springs, CO 81147; or calling (970) 510-0309.

Pagosa Bible Church to host The Alpha Course

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 over 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 run weekly through April 7.

Register at www.pagosabiblechurch.org under the Alpha banner.

Preview Calendar

otherwise noted.

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.

Online Author Talk: Amanda Montell. Noon, virtual. "Notes on Modern Irrationality" with bestselling author Amanda Montell. For details and to register, go to https://libraryc. 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 See Calendar on next page



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Hour

505 Piedra Rd. Open 7-6 Mon. - Thur.



All events listed in The PREVIEW Calendar are free of charge unless

Preview Calendar

continued from previous page 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.
- Late Night at the Library. 4:30-7:30 p.m., Sisson Library. Make Valentine's Day cards and crafts, and learn the art of origami. Dinner and drinks are included. For those 21 and older. A fundraiser for the Mountains of Opportunity building campaign to expand and renovate the library. Tickets are available at the library or pagosalibrary.org.
- 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 pagosabiblechurch.org.

See Calendar on next page

PLPOA Gymnasium and Recreation Facility Know the Facts

These statements are generated from the 2023 Strategic Plan and the Revised Recreation Master Plan Nov. 14, 2024. These documents are available at PLPOA.com.

- 1. PLPOA Strategic Plan, June 8, 2023: No mention of Recreation Master Plan with New Gym, Multipurpose Athletic Field, Parking Lot, Hot Tub and Lap Pool.
- 2. Updated Nov. 14, 2024 Recreation Master Plan developed by the Board of Directors and General Manager with a total cost of \$5,377,009.00 to be constructed over the next 5 years to implement.
- 3. Phase I, 2024: New 52-space parking lot, \$300,500.00. Parking lot has been installed before being approved by a vote of PLPOA members.
- 4. Phase II, 2025: New Gymnasium, \$2,000,000.00. No bleachers or restrooms.
- 5. Phase III, 2027: Construct Multi-purpose Athletic Field and Restrooms, \$1,200,000.00.
- 6. Phase IV, 2028: Install new outdoor hot tub, \$80,000.00.
- 7. Phase V, 2030: Construct Lap Pool, \$1,796,509.00.
- 8. Total Investment over next 5 years \$5,377,009.00, with no additional overhead, operational, or unknown expenses figured in the budget.
- 9. The Board of Directors has also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Archuleta County. In return for financial support and assistance in applying for state grants, the new Recreational Complex will be made available to non-PLPOA youth, clubs and organizations.
- 10. This should be a project for Archuleta County in order to service the full community, not the PLPOA.

DO YOU WANT TO BECOME THE RECREATION DISTRICT FOR THE COUNTY AT OUR EXPENSE?

website: plpoa.info

Call PLPOA, 970-731-5635, and make sure they have your email for communications and voting information.

Paid for by Concerned Citizens

Preview Calendar

■ continued from previous page Tuesday, Jan. 28

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.
- Online Author Talk: Seth Fishman. 11 a.m., virtual. "An Inside Look at Working with a Literary Agent" with Seth Fishman. For details and to register, go to https://libraryc.org/ pagosalibrary/upcoming.
- WHIPS (Women Helping in Pagosa Springs). 11:30 a.m., Ramon's Mexican Restaurant. The cost is \$20. All women are welcome. An RSVP to (970) 946-1895 by Jan. 26 is required.

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.

- 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.
- Pagosa Springs Varsity Boys' Wrestling. 5 p.m., Pagosa Springs High School. Pagosa Springs vs. Cortez. 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. 29

- 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-yearolds 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.
- 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. 30

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. Mem-

- bers will provide support, resources and guidance for each other.
- 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.
- English as a Second Language. 4-7 p.m., Sisson Library. Your library offers English as a second language classes. These classes are free. Call (970) 264-2209 or email for more information. Beginning students are encouraged to attend from 4-5 p.m., intermediate students from 5-6 p.m. and advanced students from 6-7 p.m.
- PALS Adult Education. 5:30-8 p.m., Sisson Library. Pagosa Adult Learning Services, or PALS, can help you with high school equivalency, GED, college prep, financial aid, tutoring and more. Mark can help you develop a plan to achieve your education goals. Call (970) 264-2209 for more information.

Friday, Jan. 31

- 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

See Calendar on next page



Pipes froze and flooded your home? Call us for 24/7 Emergency Response Call 970-946-0238 or 970-749-9028 Mountain Men DISASTER RESTORATION FLOOD MITIGATION As long-time locals, we operate with small-town CRAWLSPACE **INSPECTIONS/ Disaster Mitigation** WORK **Fire Restoration** Smoke and Odor Mold Remediation Structural Drying Water Extraction Removal **Lars Schneider BJ Jones** 970-946-0238 970-749-9028 MountainMenDM.com · mail@mountainmendm.com

NATIONALLY LICENSED INSURED **LOCALLY OWNED & OPERATED**

BJ Jones and Lars Schneider, owners, have spent a combined total of over 45 years in Pagosa Springs.

hospitality without the "Pagosa-time mentality." Your time is as valuable as ours, so we operate with punctuality.

Mountain Men Disaster Mitigation is here to service you and your family through providing quality in our work, and being timely and efficient.

Don't forget to check your crawl spaces for standing water. Water mixed with the normal environments produced in a crawlspace is the perfect breeding ground for microbial growth. We also offer sump pump system installations and repairs as well as moisture barriers. Call today for a free evaluation!

Tickets available for Valentine's Day soirée

By Rose Chavez PREVIEW Columnist

Join us for the first Pagosa Springs Valentine's Day Soirée Fine Food and Wine Pairing on Feb. 14 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Ross Aragon Community Center, 451 Hot Springs Blvd.

Enjoy a selection of exceptional curated wines, savory appetizers and delicious chocolates, all crafted by local artisans. Live music from the gifted Gus Palma will enhance the evening's ambiance.

The soirée will also feature a silent auction with unique items and fantastic door prizes. This event invites everyone — singles, couples, and groups — to enjoy an unforgettable evening while supporting Archuleta Seniors Inc. (ASI).

Tickets are limited, so don't miss out. Purchase tickets at https:// givebutter.com/ValentinesWinePairingSoiree, call (970) 264-2167 or visit our office.

Why fundraise?

Poverty rates for individuals aged 65 and older in Archuleta County have risen from 5.2 percent to 9.0 percent, impacting approximately 1,300 individuals.

The soirée is crucial for raising funds to support essential health and social services for vulnerable older adults and family caregivers in our community.

Poverty in rural America presents barriers to vital resources for all age groups, but older adults are especially vulnerable, including experiencing barriers to: health care, healthy food and affordable housing, among other critical supports.

ASI operates independently as a nonprofit, relying on public and private funding, donations and more than 70 community volunteers. Unfortunately, funding sources have been unstable, making your support vital for our efforts to serve the community effectively.

Impact of ASI

Since 2023, more than 1,000 unduplicated older adults and care-



givers in Archuleta County have benefited annually from our signature nutrition program, which offers nutritious meals served in a welcoming environment.

In 2024 alone, we provided approximately 35,000 meals, including deliveries to homebound older adults, a convenient grab-n-go service and dine-in/socialize options.

Annually, we also serve more than 600 unduplicated older adults and caregivers via facilitating quality referrals to local organizations/agencies, providing social connection and support through various activities, including community clinics, fun games, educational classes, discussion groups, and creative and empowering community events.

Volunteers needed to make valentine cards

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 ASI at (970) 264-2167.

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 See Senior on next page



Trinity Anglican Church

At a marriage feast the wine runs out. Jesus' mother tells him. He points to six empty 20-gallon jugs. They fill them with water. When poured, it is fine wine. What happened? Come Sunday, 10am.

> 246 Harman Park Dr. trinityanglicanchurch.org



Preview Calendar

- continued from previous page Porter at ceflittlekids@gmail.com.
- Bingo. 1:30-2:30 p.m., Senior Center. Free. Those under 18 must have an adult chaperone. For more information, contact (970) 264-2167.
- Friday Flix. 2-3:30 p.m., Sisson Library. For all ages. Join for a family-friendly film and snacks.

Saturday, Feb. 1

Pagosa Springs Varsity Boys' Wrestling: Crossover Duals. 10 a.m., Pagosa Springs High School. LEGO Play. 11 a.m.-noon, Sisson Library. For ages 6-11. Bring your own LEGOs or use the library's to free build.

- Pagosa Springs Varsity Girls' Basketball. 2:30 p.m., Pagosa Springs High School. Pagosa Springs vs. Centauri.
- Pagosa Springs Varsity Boys' Basketball. 4 p.m., Pagosa Springs High School. Pagosa Springs vs. Centauri.
- 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.



Photo courtesy Archuleta Seniors Inc. The free art class at the Pagosa Senior Center at 1:15 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 23, will including making printed cards for Valentine's Day for homebound adults on Meals on Wheels and congregate meal participants. 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.



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

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

Senior

continued from previous page

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. Those 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.

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 Mondays 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 lifelong 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.

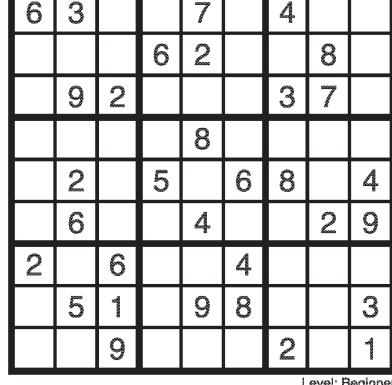
The first half of the class is learning or reviewing the technique, and the second half of the hour is practicing the technique and answering questions.

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, selfregulating technique using acupressure 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.

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 See Senior on next page



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 vour sudoku savvy to the test!

Level: Beginner

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!

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Senior

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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. 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 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.

See Senior on next page



New location: Downtown, above the theatre 422 PAGOSA ST., NO. 5 970-880-0468 • 412-508-1060 P.O. BOX 3265, PAGOSA SPRINGS • jyg44law@gmail.com

HOW EXERCISE LOWERS YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE

Exercise has proven to be a great stress reliever and blood circulator. Therefore, it isn't hard to believe that it even benefits blood pressure.

Examine the evidence in today's excerpt. Flexibility and strengthening exercises such as lifting weights are an important part of an overall fitness plan, but it takes aerobic activity to control high blood pressure. And you don't need to spend hours in the gym every day to benefit. Simply adding moderate physical activities to your daily routine



Any physical activity that increases your heart and breathing rates is considered aerobic exercise, including:

Household chores, such as mowing the law	n, raking leaves or scrubbing the floor
Active sports, such as basketball or tennis	Climbing stairs
Walking	Ingging

		J°000
	Bicycling	Swimming
^	American Heart Association recommends you	get at least 150 m

The American Heart Association recommends you get at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise, 75 minutes of vigorous exercise or a combination of both each week.

Aim for at least 30 minutes of aerobic activity most days of the week. If you can't set aside that much time at once, remember that shorter bursts of activity count, too. You can break up your workout into three 10-minute sessions of aerobic exercise and get the same benefit as one 30-minute session.

Source: Exercise: "A drug-free approach to lowering high blood pressure." http://www.mayoclinic.org

Bonus Tip: Visit http://www.AmazingFacts.org for spiritual refreshment every week!

"And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed." Hebrews 12:13

A public service from your Adventist friends & neighbors at Pagosa Springs Seventh Day Adventist Church. Disclaimer: This and all our Nature's Remedies are for health information purposes only. The Seventh Day Adventist Church is not responsible for results.



will help. --

Senior

continued from previous page

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. 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.

Monday, Jan. 27 — Singapore coffee ribs (pork), squash casserole, garden salad, fruit, orange blossom muffin and milk.

Tuesday, Jan. 28 — Beef Marsala with mushroom sauce, scalloped potatoes, dinner roll, garden salad, fruit and milk.

Wednesday, Jan. 29 — Teriyaki chicken with quinoa rice pilaf, sauteed greens, garden salad, fruit, peach pie and milk.

Thursday, Jan. 30 - Cod and shrimp Veracruz, roasted asparagus, garden salad, vanilla yogurt, fruit and milk.

Friday, Jan. 31 — Chicken and dumplings, roasted cauliflower, garden salad, fruit, cranberry nut muffin 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, Grabn-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-tolearn, 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.

Bridae

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 tricktaking 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

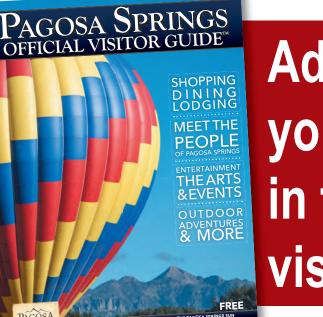
The ASI Board of Directors has multiple vacant positions open. The terms are three years with an option to renew for an additional term.

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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A digitally enhanced version of the guide will be online at PagosaSUN.com and ExplorePagosa.com. The Pagosa Area Tourism Board will provide a link to this guide on visitpagosasprings.com.

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Bird of the Week



Photo courtesv Charles Martinez

This week's Bird of the Week, compliments of the Weminuche Audubon Society and Audubon Rockies, is the northern shrike.

This is another bird of the far north that travels to regions like ours to spend the winter. In summer it breeds throughout Alaska and the far northern reaches of Canada, but migrates to western Canada and the northern United States for winter. We are at the southern edge of its winter range.

During migration and in winter, northern shrikes are found in partially open habitats with brushy cover. In all seasons they avoid completely open and densely forested areas.

Northern shrikes are colored gray, have a thick neck, rounded head and thick, hooked bill. They have black feathers in the wings and tail and a black mask that narrows where it meets the bill. They are very similar in appearance to the loggerhead shrike, whose mask is thicker and usually extends over the bill, and whose white undersides lack the barring of the northern's.

This medium-sized songbird is strictly a carnivore and a ferocious hunter. In summer it primarily feeds on insects, with the addition of some small birds and mammals. In winter when insects are scarce, birds and rodents become the main sources of food. Small birds are most commonly taken, but the shrike will also hunt birds larger than itself like robins, jays and doves.

Shrikes lack the talons of larger birds of prey and instead use strong feet to hold their captures down while delivering a killing bite that severs the spinal cord. They are known to kill more prey than they can eat at once, but save the excess for later by hanging it on thorns, barbed wire or notches in trees. This hanging of carcasses from hooks like meat in cold storage has earned them the nickname of "butcher birds.

Even in winter northern shrikes are territorial and aggressive against other bird species. Their hunting territory may be more than 360 acres in size. They are most easily spotted when they occupy a prominent perch to scan for prey. Take a second look at that bird sitting on the wire and you might just find this one.

For information on events, visit www.weminucheaudubon.org and www.facebook.com/weminucheaudubon/.



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LPEA announces new battery program, enhanced EV incentives, expanded rebates, webinar

La Plata Electric Association

As National Cut Energy Costs Day shines a spotlight on saving money through energy efficiency, La Plata Electric Association Inc. (LPEA) is proud to introduce its "Resolve to Electrify" campaign.

This 2025 initiative includes new and updated programs designed to help members reduce energy costs; improve home comfort; and contribute to a cleaner, more sustainable future.

"Resolve to Electrify is more than a campaign — it's a call to action to join LPEA in shaping a brighter energy future," said Chris Hansen, CEO of LPEA. "Every step we take together whether it's installing a battery system, transitioning to electric vehicles or upgrading to energy-efficient appliances — helps us modernize the grid. When we come together as a community, our collective efforts can make a profound impact, not just on our homes, but on the future.

The "Resolve to Electrify" campaign is grounded in the principle of beneficial electrification (BE) ensuring the transition to electric technologies delivers net positive outcomes for both individuals and communities.

From lowering utility bills to improving air quality and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, LPEA's 2025 initiatives, including the launch of the Community Power battery storage initiative, are designed to deliver practical solutions and bring meaningful benefits to members.

Battery Storage Rebate Program

The cooperative announced its first Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) rebate program enabling members to invest in home energy storage.

Members can receive up to \$2,000 in rebates for home battery systems, with an additional bonus rebate of up to \$1,000 for systems in interconnection limited zones.

By storing excess energy from offpeak hours (when it's cheaper and cleaner) for use during peak demand, members save money and help reduce grid stress. These systems also support demand response, helping optimize energy use during peak times and reduce overall energy costs for the cooperative.

To learn more, visit https://lpea. coop/battery-energy-storage-systems.

Electric vehicle (EV) rebates increased

LPEA's EV program is central to See LPEA on next page

the cooperative's commitment to BE, empowering members to reduce their carbon footprint while strengthening the grid.

The program now offers up to \$500 in rebates for Level 2 home chargers of a member's choice, a significant increase from the previous \$125. With more flexibility than ever, members can build their home charging infrastructure on their own timeline - installing a charger before purchasing an EV to ensure convenient charging from the first day of ownership.

Through LPEA's time-of-use rate program, members can reduce costs by shifting electricity use to lowerrate periods, making EV charging a simple and effective way to save money while reducing strain on the grid.

LPEA's EV program isn't just about driving electric vehicles — it's about driving a sustainable energy future for all. To learn more, visit https:// lpea.coop/electric-vehicles.

Expanded all-electric rebates, now for remodels

LPEA is expanding its rebates for members transitioning to all-electric heating and cooling, water heating, and appliances. Residential members building new all-electric homes or completing a fully electric remodel conversion can receive a \$500 bonus rebate.

LPEA members are eligible for this bonus on top of the other rebates available for each specific equipment type. Eligible upgrades include heat pumps, electric heat pump water heaters, induction cooktops, smart thermostats and more - each helping reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promoting energy efficiency.

This all-electric rebate helps make the transition to electrification both financially accessible and environmentally impactful, strengthening the cooperative's long-term goals for a cleaner and more sustainable future.

To learn more, visit https://lpea. coop/all-electric-residential-newconstruction-or-remodel-bonus.

'Resolve to Electrify'

To further engage with the new program offerings, LPEA is hosting a special webinar on Wednesday. Jan. 29, at 1 p.m., where members can learn more about the initiatives within the "Resolve to Electrify" campaign.

The webinar will cover the new rebate programs, energy storage options, and enhanced EV incentives, with opportunities for Q-and-A and

The Weekly Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Up to it 5 Mover's challenge
- 10 Task for Perry Mason 14 USPS concern
- 15 Key
- 16 Enthusiastic
- 17 Facts. briefly
- 18 Sparkling
- 20 Kind of diver
- 22 Geriatrics focus
- 23 Dieter's no-no
- 26 Like notebook paper
- **27** Triumphant cry
- 29 Male hormone 31 Rock Hudson flick, " Come
- Back" **33** Willing to go along
- 37 Haiku, e.g.
- 38 Long suit
- 40 Molten rock
- 41 Toothed wheel
- 43 Up and about
- 44 Producing tears
- 47 Bit of advice
- 48 Use an SOS pad
- 51 College life
- 53 Carl Sagan
 - series
- 55 "Thinking Out Loud" singer Ed
- 58 Pick up speed
- 61 Jazz singer
- Simone
- 62 Pained sound
- 63 Zealous
- 64 Places for props
- 65 Component
- 66 Bodega, for one
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How to make the most of your local library

Special to The PREVIEW

Local libraries are invaluable resources for residents, including students and their families.

The value of libraries has been recognized for far longer than many may realize. The Franklin Public Library, opened in 1778 in Franklin, Mass., is considered the first lending library in the United States. Since then, libraries have become integral components of communities across the nation and even the globe.

It's easy to overlook a local library, but residents who resolve to make the most of these venerable institutions can do so in the following ways:

• Get or renew your library card. The first step to making the most of a local library is to sign up for or renew your library card. Each member of the family, including children, can get their own card, which affords access to books on site and often additional texts and offerings the library can request from other branches.

• Acquaint yourself with all the offerings at your local library. Books may be the first thing people think

of when pondering local libraries, and modern branches still maintain extensive catalogs of books spanning the genres. But libraries also offer more than books. Film fans may be surprised to learn libraries typically have extensive catalogs of films that can be borrowed on DVD, and some even allow movies to be streamed through library-affiliated streaming services. Libraries also offer services to adults, including seniors, and children that can range from tax preparation tips to passport application assistance to craft projects for youngsters.

• Utilize the research capabilities of local libraries. Card members have access to a wealth of resources at their local libraries, and that includes research databases that might require paid subscriptions if users try to access them on their own. These databases can help individuals grow their knowledge about the world they live in and prove invaluable to students young and old who are conducting research for school projects.

• Grow your social network. Not

LPEA

continued from previous page

additional guidance from LPEA experts.

To register, visit https://lpea. coop/events/lpea-resolve-electrifywebinar.

Additionally, LPEA will host two in-person events:

• Pagosa Springs: Feb. 5 from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Ruby M. Sisson Memorial Library.

• Durango: Feb. 20 from 1 to 4 p.m. in LPEA's BE Lobby.

National Cut Energy Costs Day highlights practical ways to reduce energy consumption and lower utility bills. In addition to rebates, LPEA offers energy efficiency audit rebates for both residential and commercial members. By securing a professional audit and completing at least one recommended upgrade, members can receive up to \$250 for residential properties to help reduce energy costs and improve efficiency.

"This is a true example of community power in action," added Hansen. "As a cooperative, we're all in this together. By working collectively, we can reduce energy costs and accelerate the adoption of innovative energy technologies. Every member's participation strengthens our community and moves us closer to a sustainable, resilient energy future."

LPEA encourages members to explore the "Resolve to Electrify" programs to take actionable steps toward energy efficiency and sustainability by visiting lpea.coop.

About LPEA

LPEA is a member-owned, notfor-profit, electric distribution cooperative serving La Plata and Archuleta, with segments of Hinsdale, Mineral and San Juan counties.

LPEA is the fifth-largest cooperative of 22 in Colorado and aims to provide safe, reliable electricity at the lowest reasonable cost to its approximately 36,500 members.

For additional information, contact LPEA at (970) 247-5786 or visit lpea.coop.



all social networks are grown online. Community-based events and programs sponsored by and hosted at local libraries can be great places to meet neighbors with similar interests.

Local libraries are more than just places to borrow a book. Residents can utilize an array of services to make the most of their local libraries.





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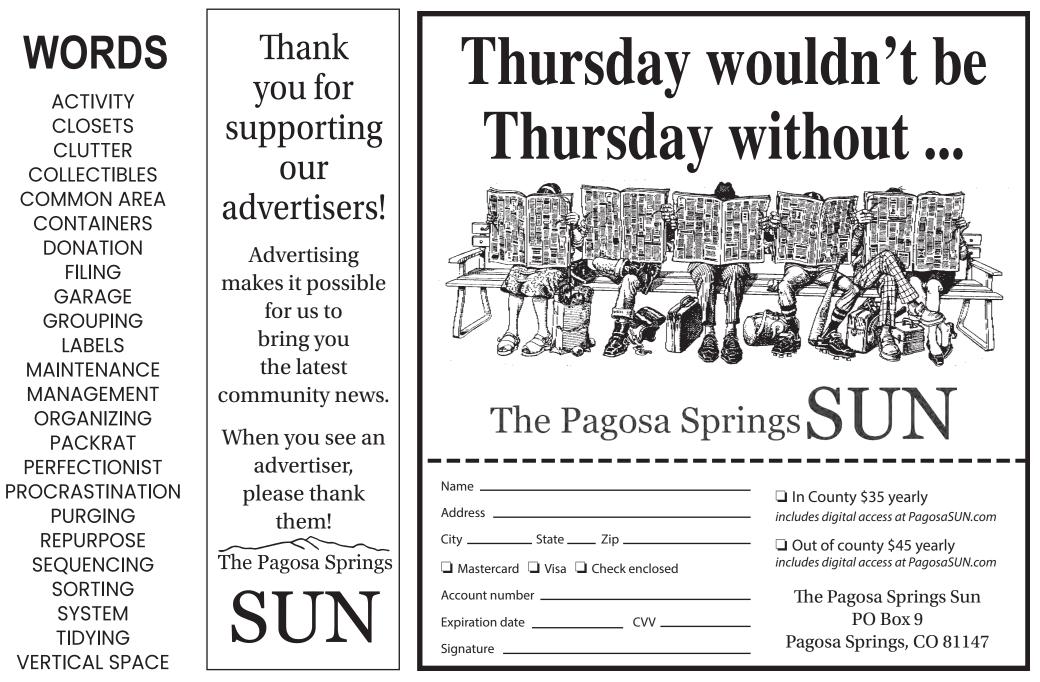
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Plenty of food in the pantry

By Betty Slade PREVIEW Columnist

"Don't open your Christmas card until I tell you what's on my mind." I passed out a card to each of the 12 members of the family. I wondered how they would react when they opened them.

The family sat quietly holding the cards.

"Your dad and I have an expiration date. We don't have many more years of shelf life left, but we have plenty of food in the pantry: knowledge, wisdom, understanding and how to live successfully in this life."

I had their attention. I unashamedly said, "Each of you are getting the same amount of money in your envelope. I'm asking you to take us to lunch and spend the afternoon with us. Your gift will be well spent."

I looked around the room, expecting their eyes to roll, a snide remark, and a lot of, "Oh, Mother. It's always about you." This is one of those moments when someone would say, "Throw mother from the train, a kiss, a kiss." Then the family would laugh and another would say, "I think it's time for Shady Pines."

Shocked and pleasantly surprised by their speechless reaction, I waited. Maybe it was the near-fatal accident when we all realized by God's goodness we are still here. Nothing was said. Maybe it was because they were holding their gift and didn't know the amount of money inside.

I continued, "You will regret it after it's too late if you don't spend time with us. We don't care where you take us. A couple of hours some afternoon where we can talk. Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches on a spread blanket by a stream, or a picnic table in the park, anything will be wonderful. It doesn't matter. You pick the spot and you make the plans. I'm not initiating this time."

Still holding the sealed envelopes, they waited.

I was building my case. "Your dad and I are quite interesting and we laugh easily. We can talk football with you. We know the latest stats with our favorite teams and players. We can talk current news, Bible or Jesus. I've read some interesting books and my Sweet Al keeps up with the People's Magazine each week. He knows who's marrying who, who is on their third divorce and who's in rehab."

I finished. "OK, you can open your envelopes. It's not much, just a little pocket money." I threw in an example. "Last year, one of the most important moments of my life, Creede wanted to spend the day with me. We had read the same book, 'Boys in the Boat.' He drove me to the movie in Durango and we compared our notes about the movie and the book. Creede and I speak on deep-hearted subjects. Afterward, he introduced me to a wonderful place where they serve the best pizza ever. I listened



to his ideas about his career and his walk with the Lord."

One year ago, in one of my articles in The Pagosa SUN, I wrote, "Will they cry for me after I'm gone?" "I want to be enjoyable to my children so they don't see my Sweet Al and me as a burden. I want them to know more about us, listen to our stories, glean from our faith in God and find us fun to be with. A strong relationship with each of my family members is what I want to leave behind. I believe it will give them an anchor to hold firm and know who they are and where they come from."

Spencer was the first to react. He brought out his podcast equipment and set it up. He cleared the room so we had total silence. "I want to interview you and Granddad." When we were all seated, he said, "Tell me how you first met. Granddad, tell me when you fell in love, and how did you know it was love? What are some of your favorite hunting stories?"

"Grandma, I heard you sold fake art and you were going to prison. Did you really sell fake art?"

"Yes, I did. And, no, I didn't go to prison. It's a long story."

After we finished, Spencer said, "Thank you. I wanted to preserve your voices for my nephew and niece."

My grandchildren are in their 20s and early 30s. They are all struggling to have careers, two are married, two are waiting for the right girl to come along. They are consumed by life itself. I was once in my 20s and I thought life would wait for me. My whole family has passed on and I only have bits and pieces of my history. I had no idea what my mother was thinking and she would probably be too embarrassed to speak on heart things. Who knows?

Final brushstroke: I'm looking forward to a few luncheon dates and get-to-know-you kind of talk this next year. It will be interesting to see who will step up and who has already forgotten my request.

Reader comments

"Stay True to Yourself. I love your article. So precious! And it's true we can still stay true to ourselves even with a little influx from time to time. Pagosa truly has been able to keep her charm through the ages. And we do change and grow as humans, thankfully. I like how your style gives way to grace and it reminds me of aging gracefully. And although we were never meant to suffer, grow old, and die when we know God's purpose for us as human beings we can still joyfully endure the influx til He brings an end to the wickedness and ushers in the brightness. Thank you, Big Christian Love, Michelle H. Pagsosa Springs"

Send your comment to bettyslade. author@gmail.com.

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Radon Risks in Archuleta County: 34 percent of homes exceed safe levels

By Daniel Pacheco CU Cancer Center

Radon gas is the leading cause of lung cancer among nonsmokers, responsible for approximately 500 deaths each year in Colorado.

If you smoke, exposure to radon can further increase your risk for lung cancer. You can't see, smell, or taste it, but radon can harm your health.

Radon is a gas found in soil and moves into the air through cracks in home foundations and walls.

About half of the homes in Colorado have high radon levels, putting you and your family at risk of harm by radon gas. Testing your home is easy with a simple do-it-yourself radon test kit.

From 2005-2023, 921 do-it-yourself radon test kits were used in Archuleta County. There are an estimated 6,133 homes in Archuleta County, so more homes should be tested for radon.

About 34 percent of homes tested for radon in Archuleta County have radon levels above the Environmental Protection Agency action level of 4 pCi/L, meaning those homes should take measures to reduce dangerous radon levels. Don't delay; order your free radon test today.

The CU Cancer Center Office of Community Outreach and Engage-

ment, with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), are offering free radon test kits to Colorado residents.

These kits are available while supplies last. Visit https://bit.ly/ COERadon to order a free test kit. If your home has elevated radon levels, the CDPHE has a low-income radon mitigation program for those who need assistance.

Visit www.ColoradoRadon.info to learn more about radon, find a radon mitigation professional or explore mitigation assistance options.

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Man 2 Man Prostate Cancer Support Group to meet virtually Feb. 4

By Dion Hollenbeck

Man 2 Man Prostate Cancer Support Group of Durango

The Man 2 Man Prostate Cancer Support Group will meet at 7 p.m. on Feb. 4 via Zoom.

Our group consists of survivors of prostate cancer and men who have

been diagnosed with prostate issues, including BPH and cancer.

We discuss experiences with resources, diagnosis and treatments for the disease. Anyone is welcome.

For more information and a Zoom invite, please contact prostategroupdro@gmail.com. Your source for community news and event information. The Pagosa Springs SUN 264-2100

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A look at food insecurity

Special to The PREVIEW

Hunger is a feeling most people can relate to. At one point or another, just about everyone has felt a hunger pang so strong it can feel like it's been ages since they've eaten so much as a morsel of food. Hunger is not a part of daily life for many people, while for others it's an everyday occurrence marked by uncertainty about when and where a next meal may come from.

Food insecurity is a legitimate concern for millions of individuals across the globe. The accessibility and availability of food may make it seem as though individuals in developed countries like the United States are unlikely to go to bed hungry at night, but nothing could be further from the truth.

In fact, Feeding America notes that 47 million people in the United States, including children, experience food insecurity annually. Greater recognition of food insecurity may compel action that can ultimately ensure no one goes to bed hungry at night.

What is food insecurity?

Feeding America notes food insecurity occurs when people don't have enough to eat and don't know where their next meal will come from.

How common is food insecurity?

Feeding America reports food insecurity is a major problem in the United States, where the group notes 47 million people, including 14 million children, experience it each year. Statistics Canada reports that just

under 17 percent of Canadians were food insecure in 2022.

And the issue of food insecurity in North America is just part of the problem, as the World Health Organization notes that 2.33 billion people globally faced moderate or severe food insecurity in 2023.

What causes food insecurity?

There's no single culprit behind food insecurity, though Statistics Canada notes that prices of food purchased from stores increased by 9.8 percent between 2021 and 2022.

Though it's important to avoid identifying inflation as the lone cause of food insecurity, that spike in prices undoubtedly had something to do with the 4 percent spike in Canadians who were food insecure in 2022 compared to 2021, when 12.9 percent of individuals living in Canada were food insecure.

Rising food prices undoubtedly contribute to food insecurity, but a report from Feeding America identifies additional variables that have made the issue a systemic problem and global concern:

• Poverty and unemployment: People who live in poverty cannot afford to buy food regularly, and many live in places where the accessibility of affordable, healthy food is lacking.

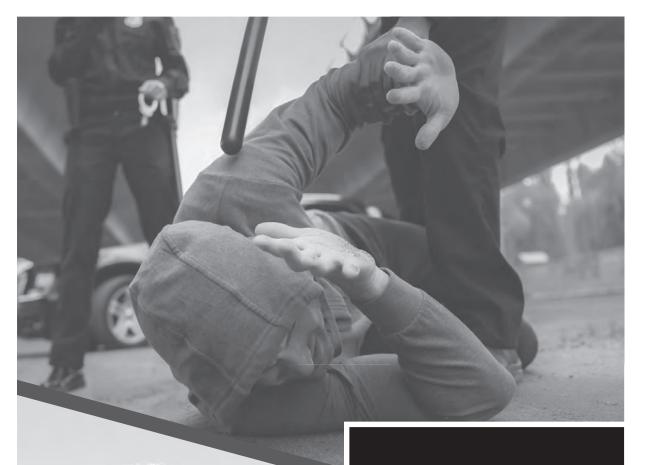
• Lack of affordable housing: Individuals who are paying exorbitant costs for housing may not have enough left over to pay for food, even if they are careful with their money and good at saving.

• Chronic health conditions: Individuals with long-term health problems may struggle to maintain a job that enables them to purchase food. In addition, medical bills associated with chronic health conditions can be expensive depending on where a person lives, leaving little money to buy food.

• Racism and discrimination: Feeding America notes that individuals who are members of marginalized communities, including LGBTQ individuals, people of color and those with disabilities, are at greater risk of food insecurity due to systemic discrimination and poverty.

Food insecurity is a significant issue across the globe. More information about food insecurity and what can be done to combat it is available at feedingamerica.org.





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It's cold — and dangerous — outside for those with Alzheimer's

Alzheimer's Association

Winter weather conditions colder temperatures, snow, ice and early darkness — are potentially dangerous and even life-threatening for the 91,000 Coloradans with Alzheimer's or other dementia.

For their 177,000 unpaid family caregivers, the stress and challenges of keeping loved ones safe during this time can be overwhelming. By preparing in advance, caregivers can anticipate and avoid the risks posed by winter weather.

"People living with Alzheimer's and other dementia can be vulnerable during winter weather because their judgment may be impaired and they may be unable to communicate discomfort," said Jim Hammelev, executive director for the Alzheimer's Association of Colorado. "It's really important to take extra precautions with these individuals when there is severe winter weather, snow or ice, particularly if they are at risk for wandering."

To help anticipate the challenges posed by winter weather, the Al-

zheimer's Association offers these tips:

• Take advantage of the daylight. Winter months bring decreased sunlight and shorter days. Visual perception can be a challenge for those living with Alzheimer's or other dementias, and can cause increased confusion or disorientation in dark or shadowy environments both inside and out.

• Prevent wandering. Wandering is one of the most frequent and challenging problems that caregivers face and can be extremely dangerous in colder conditions. Shorter days during winter months can also increase the risk of "sundowning." Monitor closely for agitation or restlessness as day transitions into night. The Alzheimer's Association offers tips to combat sundowning: https:// www.alz.org/help-support/caregiving/stages-behaviors/sleep-issuessundowning.

• Bundle up. Help the person living with Alzheimer's dress warmly for winter weather conditions by wearing dry, loose-fitting layers and covering exposed skin.

• Buddy up. In an Alzheimer's

Association survey, a whopping 84 percent of caregivers said they would like more support in providing care for someone with Alzheimer's or another form of dementia, especially from their family. It can be hard for caregivers to find time to complete simple tasks outside of the home. Don't hesitate to ask others for help with errands, grocery shopping or snow/ice removal.

• Prevent slips. Balance and mobility can be a challenge for a person living with Alzheimer's or dementia. Assume all surfaces are slick. Assist the person by taking smaller steps and slowing down so they can match gait and speed to a safer level.

• Be prepared. Winter storms can be dangerous. Check weather conditions regularly and have emergency plans in place.

More safety tips can be found at www.alz.org. The Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Helpline also provides reliable information and support to all those who need assistance. Call the Helpline toll-free 24 hours per day at (800) 272-3900.





The impact of reading on cognitive decline

Special to The PREVIEW

Aging and change go hand in hand. Although some may bemoan the gray hairs that start to arrive or stiffness in the knees that seems to sneak up on a person in middle age, such concerns are not necessarily enough to lose sleep over. However, many people 50 or older are nervous about the potential for cognitive issues like dementia as they grow older.

The Alzheimer's Association estimates that 6.7 million people have Alzheimer's disease in the United States.

Alzheimer's disease and other dementias can rob people of their memories, personalities and abilities to live satisfying, independent lives. While it may not be impossible to prevent all cognitive issues completely, there is reason to believe that reading could be an ally in cognitive care.

The American Academy of Neurology states that reading stimulates the brain and has been shown to slow down cognitive decline in old age. Reading also may help slow down memory loss.

The powers of reading were no-

ticed more than 10 years ago when a 2013 study from researchers at Emory University measured readers' MRI scans as they read books. They found the deeper readers went into a story, the more areas of their brains were activated. This activity remained elevated for several days after participants finished their books. The more a person reads, the stronger complex networks in the brain become.

Additional evidence that reading can help the brain was noted by researchers at the Texas A&M School of Public Health. A 2024 study suggests that older people with mild cognitive impairment who engage in high levels of activities like reading, hobbies and word games have better memory, working memory, attention and processing speed than those who do not take part in such endeavors.

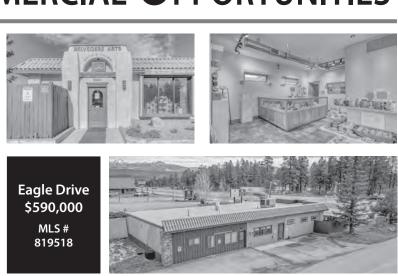
Furthermore, a 2021 study published in Neurology found that high levels of cognitive activity, like reading and writing letters, can delay the onset of Alzheimer's disease by five years among those age 80 and over.

Reading can keep brains functioning optimally and potentially delay age-related cognitive decline.

COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

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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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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'.

.68 acre, 1440 square foot

commercial building. There is



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The moral code of the Lone Ranger

By Shanna Robb **PREVIEW** Columnist

"The Lone Ranger" was first aired by WXYZ radio station in Detroit, Mich., on Jan. 31, 1933.

Over the past 92 years, while opinions vary as to whether the leading character was based on a real person or not, the consensus is that the "good triumphing evil" theme is one of the key reasons the classic western is considered an enduring icon of American culture.

The main character and storyline have sparked a television series and left a trail of novels, toys, films and comic books. Considered one of the most popular children's television shows of all times, millions of children have tuned in to watch good overcome evil.

Born at the end of the baby boomer generation, I recall watching television reruns that unfolded Hol-



lywood's version of the Wild West and the enthusiastic, "Hi ho (or yo), Silver, away."

While learning more about the Lone Ranger, I stumbled across a moral code that caught my attention. The code was written by the creators of the popular series.

To my surprise, the closing statement of the code is "In my Creator, my country and fellow man."

As I unveiled the moral code of "The Lone Ranger," I discovered many Christian undertones. For instance, "God put the firewood there, but that every man must gather and light it himself" and "That all things

change but truth, and truth alone lives on forever."

Researching the story behind the story, I wondered if the writers were influenced by scripture found in the Bible. Were they aware of Romans 12:21 that states, "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" or John 14:6 that clarifies the truth?

In my research I could not find proof of what or who the writers of "The Lone Ranger" referenced. One can only hope that they aimed to create a hero and a storyline that was aligned with their own upbringing based on "religion, history, culture, or a mix of those sources."

As for our own story, unlike "The Lone Ranger," we are encouraged to shed our masks and be reassured by Isaiah 41:10 that we are not alone.

And when it comes to living according to a moral code, the good news is that it is clearly outlined in the Ten Commandments found in the best-selling book of all time, the Holy Bible.

This column may include both fiction and nonfiction, and views expressed do not necessarily represent those of The SUN. Submissions can be sent to editor@pagosasun.com.

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Unitarian Universalists to focus on acts of service Sunday

By De Anna Hoyle Pagosa Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

On Monday we honored the legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., often as a day of service. In 1994, the King Holiday and Service Act was signed into law, as then Congressman John Lewis and former Sen. Harris Wofford proposed the legislation to encourage Americans to find common causes to improve their communities.

As stated on the website of the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the MLK holiday is "a day on, not a day off."

Since then, many take the day to do acts of service toward building community.

The Pagosa Unitarian Universalist (UU) Fellowship is gathering the fourth Sunday of the month in its upcoming programming to do acts of service. We have committed to a Share-the-Plate, which will donate to causes in line with our values centered in love.

This Sunday, Jan. 26, we will be putting together care kits that we will offer to those who may be supported

by them.

The conversation we will introduce as we work on the care bags will include the idea of mutual aid. This focuses on understanding and acknowledging our shared humanity and to not make assumptions about others. We want to be in partnership with those affected, and the UU Fellowship is committed to lifelong learning as we confront the issues that affect the marginalized people in our community and the wider world.

Join us for Action Sunday as we make friends, grow our spirits and do good works.

Pagosa UU Fellowship in-person services are normally on the first and third Sundays of the month at 10:30 a.m. The second Sunday is the Going Deeper Sharing Circle, also at 10:30 a.m.

Find us in Unit B-15 of the Greenbriar Plaza, 301 N. Pagosa Blvd., on the north side facing Pagosa Peak.

We welcome diversity and invite everyone to share in our faith community.

Visit our website, www.pagosauu. org, to find our current newsletter.



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONCERNED ABOUT ANOTHER'S DRINK-ING? Pagosa Springs Al-anon Family Group meets Tuesdays 6-7p.m., Pagosa Bible Church. Questions? Call/ text (303)815-8569. www.al-anon.org.

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

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ics 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,

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Chadd Carnley, owner

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Time to get real about plastic recycling

By Karen Mockler **PREVIEW** Columnist

I'm a dedicated recycler. I fret when I see people throwing garbage in with soda cans and empty water bottles. I've even been known to rescue recyclables from the trash — at my house, for sure, but also in public places if I think nobody's looking.

Granted, the success of recycling plastic is abysmal — the U.S. rate is roughly 7 percent — but in theory it can be done. So, I was delighted when I learned that Tucson, Ariz., where I live, was starting a pilot program to deal with hard-to-recycle plastics.

These aren't the containers that we can recycle curbside, numbers 1, 2 and 5, or even the bags we can take to stores for recycling. Hard-to-recycle plastics are everything else: caps and lids, food packaging, straws, all those little pieces of plastic too small for machines to deal with and all those other numbers that curbside and stores don't take.

Tucson's pilot program would take all of it, and a company called ByFusion would use steam and compression to press it into blocks - ugly blocks, in my opinion, but useful for making benches, counters, even tiny houses

The blocks would avoid tons of marine debris and carbon dioxide along the way. Count me in.

Within months, participation in the pilot program exceeded expectations.

ByFusion couldn't handle all the plastic that was coming in. The city began storing the excess plastic and brought a second company into the loop: Hefty, a plastic bag manufacturer.

Suddenly, the rules changed. The Hefty ReNew program was a collaboration between Reynolds Consumer Products, a manufacturer of various plastic products, and Dow Chemical Company. Now participants were asked to buy orange Hefty bags to collect their hard-to-recycle plastics. And what would Hefty do with all the plastic that ByFusion couldn't handle?

Hefty was doing different things with plastic waste in different cities making plastic lumber in Omaha, burning it for cement kiln fuel and "advanced recycling" in Atlanta. But when I asked a city official about Tucson's plan, I got no response about the fate of our plastic waste.

Meanwhile, the more I learned about advanced recycling - aka pyrolysis - the less I liked it. Pyrolysis burns plastic to make fuel, and a 2023 report by two nonprofit environmental advocacy groups, Beyond Plastics and the International Pollutants Elimination Network, found that the pyrolysis process was "inefficient, energy-intensive and contributes to climate change,"

Yet Kevin Greene of the nonprofit Sustainable Tucson said there's a good chance a portion of our plastic waste will end up at a pyrolysis plant under



yours if you want them.

Karen Mockler is a contributor to Writers on the Range, writersontherange.org, an independent nonprofit dedicated to spurring lively conversation about Western issues. She is a writer in Tucson, Ariz. Views expressed do not necessarily represent those of The SUN.

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Meanwhile, many pro-recycling people are calling plastic recycling in all of its forms a "false solution" that mainly serves to relieve consumer guilt.

construction in Eloy, a small town halfway between Tucson and Phoenix.

Meanwhile, many pro-recycling people are calling plastic recycling in all of its forms a "false solution" that mainly serves to relieve consumer guilt. In September, the California attorney general followed environmental groups in suing ExxonMobil for its "campaign of deception" around plastic recycling - one that has led people to buy more singleuse plastics.

ExxonMobil has since countersued. There's a growing realization that plastic is not so much a waste problem as it is a problem at its source. It creates health impacts in the low-income communities where the plastics are made, along with communities where those plastics are burned.

Until I learned more about pyrolysis, I, too, had felt relieved of guilt. So relieved, in fact, that in recent months I'd noticed myself making different, though small, consumer choices that left me using more plastic than before, each time thinking, "I can orange-bag this."

It turns out that I'm not alone. A 2016 behavioral economics study found that when consumers think their waste might be recycled, they worry less about the amount of trash they generate and produce more of it.

Ideally, we'd do it all: reduce the flow of virgin plastic and deal responsibly with the glut of plastic waste, including pervasive microplastics that we humans have already choked the planet with.

But we don't seem to have the mental bandwidth to do that. Like a growing number of folks, I've concluded that instead of recycling plastic, we need to focus on phasing out its use everywhere we can.

For now, I've got a boxful of orange Hefty bags under my sink -

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