



PAGOSA SPRINGS, ARCHULETA COUNTY, COLORADO 81147

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SUN photo/Derek Kutzer

The Pagosa Springs Town Council and Town of Pagosa Springs staff members pose for a picture on April 1 after staff was recognized for earning a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its annual comprehensive financial report for the 2023 fiscal year from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). The report was judged by an impartial panel, and the award is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, according to the GFOA.

County looks at community meetings for new admin building

By Clayton Chaney
Staff Writer

The Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) is looking to organize public meetings to provide the community with more information on plans and associated costs for the new administration building to be built at 2901 Cornerstone Drive.

The BoCC discussed the matter during a work session on Tuesday, April 1, with County Manager Jack Harper stating that staff is looking for some direction on what the commissioners are wanting, “so we can get those set to begin moving forward.”

Commissioner John Ranson stated that he’d like to have a meeting take place before the county gets too far into planning. Harper indicated that he has a

meeting scheduled this week for the purpose of coming up with building plans and costs.

Harper also encouraged having a similar format to the meetings held in regard to possible properties the BoCC was considering before deciding on the Cornerstone property.

In response to Harper, Commissioner Warren Brown stated that’d like to see at least two public meetings take place no later than the last BoCC meeting in May.

“We need to get on this,” he said, explaining that he’d like the chance to hear direct public input.

Brown also noted that the county is up against timetables, referring to the lease at the old county building located at 449 San Juan St., which is now owned by Ronnie Urbanczyk.

Brown mentioned that the county
■ See Meetings A8

Town opts for entirety of downtown rehabilitation project to coincide with CDOT construction

By Derek Kutzer
Staff Writer

On April 1, the Pagosa Springs Town Council authorized town staff to enter into a contract with WW Clyde to perform the work for its downtown rehabilitation project, coinciding with Colorado Department of Transportation’s (CDOT’s) U.S. 160 reconstruction project.

The town’s scope of work in downtown Pagosa Springs includes the installation of new street lamps, new sidewalk sections, culvert repairs, side road repairs and replacements, electrical conduit, new street trees, and an irrigation system for the new trees and flower baskets.

WW Clyde is also performing the

work for CDOT’s U.S. 160 reconstruction project through downtown, with Pagosa Springs Development Director James Dickhoff explaining that it is a “critical time” to get this work done while the highway construction was ongoing.

The grand total cost for WW Clyde to complete the entire scope of work that the town is requesting came in at \$7,724,472, which includes a 15 percent contingency.

Town Manager David Harris explained that he realized that this price tag is “sobering,” expressing his reluctance to use the town’s reserve funds to pay for it, but also noted that the general feeling of the council was, “If we’re gonna do it, we should do

■ See Downtown A8

BoCC approves letter supporting Secure Rural Schools funding

By Clayton Chaney
Staff Writer

On Tuesday, April 1, the Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) unanimously approved a letter to Sen. John Hickenlooper encouraging him to co-sponsor S. 356, the Secure Rural Schools (SRS) Reauthorization Act of 2025.

The letter was approved as part of the meeting’s consent agenda.

Earlier in the day, Commissioner Warren Brown explained that SRS monies come from federal lands that the county cannot collect taxes on.

According to the letter, the current SRS is expired and, as of Jan. 21, “forest counties will not receive critical SRS payments in spring.”

The letter also notes the last time SRS lapsed in 2016, federal forest payments to counties decreased by more than 80 percent on average.

For context, the letter indicates that SRS payments to Routt County school districts in 2024 totaled approximately \$101,180.

Brown also explained that the SRS is tied to the payment in lieu of taxes (PILT) program, indicating that
■ See Funding A8

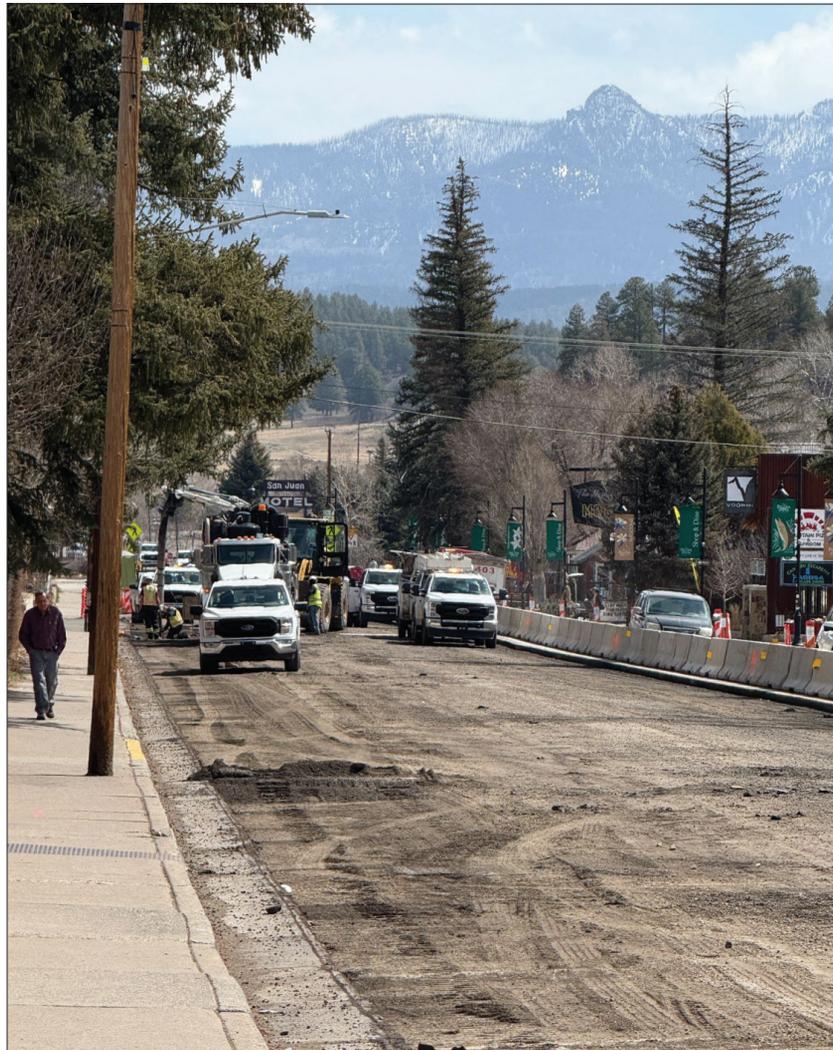


Photo courtesy Colorado Department of Transportation

Concrete barrier placement and milling the asphalt in the work zone on U.S. 160 has been completed. For more information on the current and upcoming work on the project, see page A3.

Special districts cancel elections, candidates declared elected

By Randi Pierce
Staff Writer

The Upper San Juan Health Service District, which operates Pagosa Springs Medical Center, is one of several local districts to cancel its May 6 election and deem candidates elected due to not having more candidates than positions available.

The district had six positions available — four four-year terms and two two-year terms.

Current board directors declared elected for another term are Kate Alfred for a four-year term ending in May 2029, Mark Floyd for a two-year term ending in May 2027 and Kathy Campbell for a two-year term ending in May 2027.

Joining the board for four year-terms lasting until May 2029 are Wayne Hooper, Erik Foss and Ashley Wilson.

Pagosa Fire Protection District

The Pagosa Fire Protection District canceled its spring election due to a lack of candidates, with individuals anticipated to be appointed to fill the vacant offices.

Aspen Springs Metro District

The Aspen Springs Metro District also had no more candidates than director positions available and canceled its May 6 election.

Chris deVries and Eric Freudenberger were each elected for four-year terms.

San Juan River Village Metropolitan District

■ See Elections A8

BoCC discusses process for hiring new county attorney

By Clayton Chaney
Staff Writer

The Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) discussed the possibility of hiring a headhunter to assist in filling the county attorney position during a work session held Tuesday, April 1.

The current county attorney, Todd Weaver, submitted a resignation letter on March 20, with the letter stating that his last day of employment will be April 9.

County Manager Jack Harper explained that “staff is just looking for

direction from the commissioners on how you’d like the recruitment process to go.”

Commissioner Warren Brown indicated that he could be in support of using a service to assist in finding a candidate, “in light of the importance of the position,” he said.

Brown noted that he is aware of the associated costs, but stated the county may end up saving money.

“The last thing I want to do is for us to hire an attorney who’s here for one year and then gone,” Brown said, adding that there is no way to guarantee that won’t happen, but expressed

the importance of finding a candidate that has “genuine interest and the financial resources to be here.”

Brown went on to note the county is advertising online and locally for the position.

“I’m not sure if that’s where the greatest draw for that talent could come from,” he said, mentioning that he’s “not married” to the idea of using a hiring service.

Commissioner Veronica Medina commented that she consulted with Human Resources (HR) Director Mitzi Bowman, who indicated that the cost of hiring a recruiter in the

past ranged from \$20,000 to \$25,000.

Medina also commented that the county needs someone that knows government and Colorado law, noting that some candidates may have issues with the reciprocity of their licenses transferring from other states.

“So, I don’t know if it’d be in our best interest,” she said, also noting that she doesn’t “hate” the idea.

Medina then mentioned that the assistant county attorney position job posting needs to be taken down until a new county attorney is hired, suggesting the county may need to re-
■ See Attorney A8

Index

| | | | |
|--|----|--|-----|
| Opinion | A2 | Outdoors | A13 |
| Letters | A3 | Community outdoor recreation survey open | |
| Obituaries | A5 | | |
| Nancy Burke | | PREVIEW | |
| Bradly Alan Mael | | Live Performers | 2 |
| Bruce B. Stuart | | PREVIEW Calendar | 17 |
| Business | A6 | | |
| Building Business Excellence Conference set for April 29 | | | |
| Sports | 11 | | |
| Pirates log seven firsts at Bayfield meet | | | |



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Opinion

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(970) 264-2100
PagosaSUN.com
Physical: 457 Lewis Street
Mailing: PO Box 9, Pagosa Springs, CO 81147

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HOT MINERAL SPRINGS"



SUN STAFF

Owner, CEO
Jim O'Rourke, jorourke@orourkemediagroup.com
Publisher, Advertising, Circulation
Shari Pierce, shari@pagosasun.com
Editor
Randi Pierce, editor@pagosasun.com
Reporters
Josh Pike, josh@pagosasun.com
Derek Kutzer, derek@pagosasun.com
Clayton Chaney, clayton@pagosasun.com
Classified Advertising/Front Office
Cristin Flanagan, classads@pagosasun.com
Head Pressroom Robert Penton
Assistant Press Operator Matt McKinnon
Mailroom William Thomas

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OUR VIEW

Opinions are like belly buttons

Opinions, they say, are like belly buttons. Everyone has one, but that doesn't mean they're useful, and they don't all look the same.

We've heard from a few people lately who are unhappy with The SUN's letters to the editor, primarily because the majority of the letters don't align with their personal beliefs or politics.

While we occasionally hear from people unhappy with an aspect of The SUN's contents they don't agree with, reactions to the letters to the editor have picked up pace lately, just like reactions to national happenings are increasing in the letters.

To those who have reached out: We're sorry you're unhappy with what you're seeing, and we thank you for your input.

But, don't stop at being unhappy, telling us about it and deciding you may not pick up another copy of The SUN.

If you're unhappy with it, help change it. Send us a letter with your point of view; add your thoughts and experiences to the conversation. We've all lived through different experiences, and have somewhat different knowledge bases and skills. That's

not a weakness; that's a strength.

The SUN values and welcomes diversity of opinion and aims to provide an open forum for discussion of issues that are important to those in our community and who care about our community.

We don't need to be mad that others have different opinions than us, and we don't need to stick our heads in the sand or our fingers in our ears to avoid hearing them. Instead, we should be willing to understand how others feel. We might learn something, or we might just agree to disagree but have a little more understanding about how they feel.

If you decide to share a letter to the editor, be sure to follow a few guidelines so that we can print it:

Letters must be 500 words or fewer. Everyone is held to the same standard.

Your letter must include your actual first and last name. No anonymous letters will be accepted.

Submit your letter with your phone number and your address. While we won't print this information, it allows for verification and a way to contact you if we have a question.

Letters must be submitted by noon on Tuesday for that Thursday's issue of The SUN. Letters should be sent to editor@pagosasun.com or submitted via www.PagosaSUN.com. When emailing letters, please make the subject line "letter to the editor" to ensure we don't lose it among the seemingly endless spam and other emails we get. Please submit it in a format that can be copied and pasted.

Letters are limited to two per month per letter writer. 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.

Letters quoting other people must contain proper attribution.

Letters in the form of poetry will not be accepted.

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

Also, as a reminder, there is no guarantee letters will be published. The SUN generally does not edit letters, but reserves the right to do so.

Randi Pierce

LEGACIES

By Shari Pierce

100 years ago

Taken from SUN files of
April 3, 1925

Upon complaint made by a neighbor's wife, Sheriff Geo. A. Dutton, Undersheriff John H. Lattin, and Deputies Wm. McComas, Price Kenney and C.P. McKinley journeyed to a ranch home a few miles southeast of town Wednesday morning. They were armed with a search warrant and were in quest of illicit liquor.

Their efforts were immediately rewarded, the occupant himself escorting the officers to the second-story of the house, where a still was in operation at the time. Besides the still, about one gallon of liquor and considerable mash were confiscated and brought to town, together with the offender.

Charges were preferred in Justice J.T. Morgan's court and a hearing held the same afternoon, the defendant pleading guilty to the charges of illegal possession of the mash and illicit liquor, and a still for the purpose of manufacture for sale. He was fined \$100 and costs and sentenced to thirty days in the county jail, the minimum sentence for the offenses committed.

Owing to the extenuating financial and physical circumstances of the defendant, Justice Morgan suspended the jail sentence pending good behavior, and friends have come to the rescue of the accused, paying the fine and costs in full. The still and liquor have been destroyed under order of the court.

75 years ago

Taken from SUN files of
March 31, 1950

At a meeting on Monday night of the new School District 50 Board, Mrs. Wynona C. Eaklor was named president, Wayne Farrow as treasurer and Talbot Rudolph as secretary. The new board will be the governing board for all schools in Archuleta County and the Upper Piedra section of Hinsdale County. Excepted will be the small district just west of Yellow Jacket Pass and the Arboles district.

At their initial meeting the new school board announced that they would take over the active management of all schools in the district and asked that the secretaries of the old districts turn their records in to the County Superintendent of Schools prior to Monday, April 3.

The local district is one of the first districts to complete reorganization under the reorganization bill and will be faced with many difficult problems in its initial year.

50 years ago

Taken from SUN files of
April 3, 1975

It was good news to the community last week that the opening of San Juan Lumber Co.'s local mill would be soon. It was not only good news that the mill will open but the background information showing that San Juan Lumber Co. is making an effort, and a big one, to make the mill a better operation was most welcome.

Certainly the company is demonstrating its desire to make the mill more efficient, more of an asset to the community, and an even bigger force in the economy of the community. The improvements being made there are ample demonstrations of the desire to better the mill operations.

While the opening date does depend on weather and other conditions just the fact that it will open in the not too distant future has raised the spirits of those in the community. This has been a bad time for the local economy. The payroll at San Juan is the bread and butter for many of the working people in this area.

Local residents can now look forward to an upswing in employment, the economy in general, and continued operation of San Juan's local mill.

25 years ago

Taken from SUN files of
March 30, 2000

The sale of \$2.95 million in revenue bonds by the Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation District was closed March 23.

Proceeds from the sale will be used to renovate and enlarge the Vista sewage treatment plant which serves most of the Fairfield Pagosa subdivisions.

"I believe the 5.45 percent interest rate we received on the bonds is very favorable," said Carrie S. Campbell, general manager of the water and sewer facility.

Engineering for the project is expected to require most of the coming summer, Campbell said. Consequently, construction is not likely to begin before fall. Even though it is the subject of the renovation, the existing plant will continue to serve as before.

The proposed scope of work will update the existing plant, replace worn parts, and enlarge the plant's ability to cope with demands for several years to come.



From the April 2, 1970, Pagosa SUN — HEAVY SNOW — The chain station at the west side of Wolf Creek Pass was a busy place this week. At almost any time several vehicles were parked there. Drivers put on chains and the trucks prepare for the snowy trip over Wolf Creek Pass. Truckers seldom complain about the chain requirement. Their experience shows that chains do pay off.

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Archuleta County Commissioners | | |
| Veronica Medina, Chair veronica.medina@archuletacounty.org • (970) 264-8305 | John Ranson jranson@archuletacounty.org • (970) 264-8307 | Warren Brown warren.brown@archuletacounty.org • (970) 264-8304 |
| Pagosa Springs Town Council | | |
| Pagosa Springs Mayor Shari Pierce spierce@pagosasprings.co.gov | Mat deGraaf mdegraaf@pagosasprings.co.gov | Leonard Martinez lmartinez@pagosasprings.co.gov |
| Matt DeGuisse mdeguise@pagosasprings.co.gov | Brooks Lindner blindner@pagosasprings.co.gov | Gary Williams gwilliams@pagosasprings.co.gov |
| Madeline Bergon mbergon@pagosasprings.co.gov | | |



Weather data

| Date | High | Low | Precipitation | | |
|------|------|-----|---------------|------|----------|
| | | | Depth | Type | Moisture |
| 3/18 | 69 | 27 | NA | NA | NA |
| 3/19 | 68 | 28 | NA | NA | NA |
| 3/20 | 67 | 28 | NA | NA | NA |
| 3/21 | 61 | 29 | NA | NA | NA |
| 3/22 | 51 | 26 | NA | NA | NA |
| 3/23 | 46 | 24 | NA | NA | NA |
| 3/24 | 55 | 20 | NA | NA | NA |



Letters

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

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

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

Pagosa West

Dear Editor:
Pagosa Springs' chief assets are the gorgeous mountains, lush forests, unique hot springs, and small town character. People attending the March 25 hearing regarding the "Pagosa West" proposed development made this abundantly clear and I think the community at large would echo this sentiment. Many of those commenting indicated they had left dime a dozen towns with rundown suburban franchise strips precisely to surround themselves with the natural beauty and calm Southwest Colorado is known for.

Rather than follow headlong into the standard suburban strip model that seems inevitably to turn "seedy" over time, I think Pagosa Springs should think carefully about preserving the qualities that make it unique, beautiful, and ensures a comfortable, peaceful, quality of life.

No development will succeed if the businesses brought in are not desired or supported by the residents. Destroying beautiful natural beauty (think mature trees) to accomplish this can cancel the very qualities that attract new residents to the town, draw tourists to visit and spend, and maintain property values.

Planting trees and incorporating landscaping will not ensure an attractive community if these enhancements are not maintained. Consider the developments already approved and in place (Country Center, Walmart, Cornerstone) where the trees and plantings have died, the sidewalks heaved, the roads filled with potholes, dirt and gravel accumulated on the walkways, and junk left along the roadsides. Town management must take an active role in ensuring what's put in stays beautiful.

Existing businesses along Highway 160 that clutter adjacent land with junk, debris, and unnecessarily chock-a-block messes do nothing to attract new residents, visitors, or quality businesses. Once an area becomes rundown and ugly, no one wants to come in, rip it out, and put something better in. They would rather move to the perimeter of town, bulldoze everything, and put in cheap, high-profit, development that leads to an "everytown" look that everyone came here to avoid. Thus sprawl. We have to think beyond what looks good short term and aim instead for the beauty, character, and preservation that results in a town that people take pride in long after the developers have left town.

A development may start out as private property, but the end result belongs to the community. It is OUR TOWN and the people should have a voice in saying how they want the town to develop taking a long view both to preserve its present beauty and longevity into the future.

Evelyn Ausen

National Day of Action

Dear Editor:
Saturday, April 5th Pagosa Springs will see a mobilization of resistance to the current administration's overreach and disregard for the separation of powers fundamental to the structure of our government. Supporters will gather at the Community Garden in Centennial Park at noon and will begin the sidewalk march at the corner of 6th Street and Highway 160 turning east to loop through downtown and Town Park to return to Centennial Park. Parking is available at both the gathering and starting points.

Organizers invite sympathizers to show up with signs of their own design expressing their own individual objections to the current administration's policies whether health care, women's rights, trans rights, public land, veterans, etc. Unity is considered critical to achieving the triad goals - Remove - corrupt politicians; Reverse - the damage; Reclaim - our Democracy. Bull horns and other noise producing equipment is encouraged and there will be signs available for those who do not have one.

This local demonstration is part of a well-orchestrated Colorado-wide movement that will include Pine

River Valley, Durango, Alamosa, Saguache, Telluride, Cortez, Gunnison, Montrose, Salida, Buena Vista, Westcliff, Paonia, Canyon City, Edwards, Bailey, Fairplay, Grand Junction, Glenwood Springs, Colorado Springs, Denver, Boulder, Steamboat Springs, Lyons, Longmont, Loveland, Fort Collins.

The Colorado events are part of more than 600 events planned across all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and multiple international cities. The organizations creating this opposition movement, to name only a few, include 50501, Equality, Hands OFF, Indivisible; Third Act; Political Revolution, No Voice Unheard, Voices of Florida, Build Resistance, People's Veto Day, Women's March, etc.

Domestically, the actions of the administration and Republican legislators to gut essential program like healthcare, Social Security, public education, environmental protections and civil rights protections have sparked nationwide outrage which has found expression in many forms in addition to the marches - rallies, town halls, and digital and telephone campaigns.

The Crowd Counting Consortium reported over 2,085 protests nationwide in February 2025, a sharp rise from the 937 recorded in February 2017 during the first Trump administration. During a recent week-long congressional recess, more than 500 events were held across the country, often in districts where elected officials avoided meeting constituents or had to deal with outrage.

Internationally, in London, for example, demonstrators from around the world will gather in Trafalgar Square from 3 to 5 pm motivated by the administration's stated intentions to annex Canada, and take over Greenland and the Panama Canal.

Across all locations and different types of protest organized by a myriad of different organizations focusing on unique objections - the one unifying message is that protest shall be peaceful. Organizers realize the importance of not providing reason for authorities to exert force and dismiss the protests as "terrorist" activities. The clear message is that the people are making their outrage known, peacefully.

Pauline Benetti

Fire hydrants

Dear Editor:
Initially, much was uncovered concerning the complete lack of knowledge as to whether the 1,140 PAWDS fire hydrants are working. Now, based on the Pagosa Sun newspaper story of last week, nothing that indicates the dire need to test and repair the hydrants NOW has happened. The Pagosa Sun reported the week before that 6 to 12 hydrants a year are tested, now PAWDS is committing to 10 to 20% testing a year - that's 100 to 200 approximately a year which will take 5 or more years to finish. No information has been provided at all that speaks to the need to repair them if they are not working or working properly. Checking does not mean there will be water coming out of the hydrants if there

is a wildfire. Only repairing does. We are in a dire state outside with a minimal snow pack this winter and temperatures this week to be 15 to 20% warmer than normal. The first lighting storm will show just how bad it is. We cannot wait 5 or more years to know that the fire hydrants have been checked and repaired if needed. This is a critical need no one is really addressing. We cannot even figure out who is responsible for or owns the hydrants. So, are we going to continue just talking about it or get this job done? This is our local government and authorities completely stuck, not making the hard decisions of what needs to be done.

My ask for PLPOA help - I am guessing most of the hydrants are within the 27 subdivisions of the PLPOA. I suggest that the same hard work, time, staffing, funding and commitment shown to build a gym be redirected to having the PLPOA staff immediately learn how to test all of the hydrants so repairs can begin immediately. I believe PLPOA residents have the most to lose if the hydrants do not work. I also believe that there are long-time, committed, outstanding PLPOA staff that can do this work. Then, who is responsible for the repairs?

Let's not be another small western town that burns up because we did not do everything we could to prevent that from happening. Test all hydrants in 30 days and repair in another 30 days is what is needed and even that may be well into our fire season.

Thank you,

Beverly Compton

Not the time

Dear Editor:
As with anything in life, timing is everything and with the economic climate and the devastating wildfires that have occurred in Maui (2023) and most recently in Southern California, this is not the time to develop the property located on Highway 160.

The United States imports construction materials from Canada, Mexico, China, India, Japan, Germany and South Korea. The major US suppliers are Canada, Mexico and China.

Pursuant to the National Association of Home Builders, in 2024 the United States imported nearly 72% of

See Letters A4

U.S. 160 reconstruction information

Week of April 7-12

Important safety reminder

For the safety of the traveling public, unauthorized drone flights are prohibited over state highway property. Operating a drone over a highway right of way requires a Colorado Department of Transportation permit. Additionally, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has strict regulations for pilots operating drones over people and moving vehicles: www.faa.gov/uas/commercial_operators/operations_over_people.

Work activity

- Pedestrian fencing will be installed to keep people from walking through the work zone. This is to provide a safer experience for both pedestrians and the project team in and around the construction zone.

- The 2nd and 4th street intersections on the north side of U.S. 160 will remain closed until utility and drainage work is complete. The pedestrian crosswalk to cross U.S. 160 (Pagosa Street) at 2nd Street is currently open.

- Pedestrian crosswalks will be open at 1st, 3rd and 4th streets. Mid-block crossings between 4th and 5th will be closed, but the crosswalk at 5th Street will remain open.

- Utility potholing (small, drilled holes to locate utilities) continues in the work zone.

- No night work is currently scheduled. It's anticipated to begin again after April 19.

- Mountain Express Transit shared this important information about bus stops: The River Center stop #18 has moved to 1st Street and U.S. 160 in front of the museum. Bus stop #19, 2nd Street and U.S. 160, has moved to 2nd Street and Lewis Street.

Upcoming work

- Removal of existing sidewalk, and curb and gutter on the north side.

- Access to local businesses will be maintained throughout this operation and businesses will be notified of work taking place around their location.

Please be alert when you are traveling through the new traffic configuration or visiting the downtown businesses as heavy equipment will be frequently moving throughout the project limits.

Safety tips for pedestrians

- Watch where you are going. Do not enter the work zone or climb over work zone safety barriers.

Construction work may be fascinating, but always prioritize navigating the work zone as safely as you can.

- Pay attention to posted signs in the project area and follow all workers' instructions. Cross streets at open crosswalks or intersections; walk on sidewalks whenever they are available.

- Be alert for moving construction vehicles and other unexpected hazards, which often move suddenly and quickly. Stay off your phone when crossing the street or walking near the work zone.

- Look out for traffic before crossing the street make eye contact with drivers so you know they see you.

Safety tips for drivers

- Look out for pedestrians and bicyclists everywhere, at all times, and especially in areas near schools, parks, shopping areas and transit stops.

- Slow down as you approach the work zone. Give workers extra room and be prepared to stop.

- Stop before a crosswalk, not in it.

- The traffic signals are operational and must be obeyed.

Traffic impacts

- Motorists could expect up to 15-minute delays at various times through the work zone as equipment may need to be moved. There will be two-way traffic flowing in the eastbound lanes of U.S. 160 through the first season of operations.

- 10-foot width and 75-foot length restrictions will remain in place 24/7 through Dec. 1.

- During inclement weather, project engineers will assess the roadway and work location to make determinations on work continuing depending on safety concerns for workers and commuters.

- Working hours are Monday through Saturday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., and subject to change.

Stay informed and connect with the project

- Call the project information line: (970) 335-9230.

- Email the project team: Pagosa160reconstruction@gmail.com.

- Visit the project website: www.codot.gov/projects/us160pagosapings.

- Subscribe to project updates: subscription.codot.org.

Information provided by Colorado Department of Transportation

www.PagosaSUN.com

Letters

The SUN welcomes letters from readers.

Please submit your letter electronically in a format that can be copied and pasted to editor@pagosahun.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)

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



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SALE \$5.80 ACE REWARDS EXCLUSIVE*

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Limit 60 at this price.

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\$3.33 each

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Limit 60 each at this price.

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\$749.99

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8090127
• Tiltable Patio Umbrella, 8090175. SALE \$139.99

SALE \$27.99 ACE REWARDS EXCLUSIVE*

\$22.99

Roundup® Ready-to-Use Weed & Grass Killer, 1 Gal. 7028605 Limit 5 at this price.
Concentrate, 35.2 Oz., 7029018. SALE \$29.99 - \$5.00 Ace Rewards Exclusive.*
You Pay \$24.99. Limit 5 at this price.

SALE \$36.99 ACE REWARDS EXCLUSIVE*

\$32.99

Roundup® Dual Action Weed & Grass Killer Plus 4 Month Preventer, 1 Gal. 7016356 Limit 5 at this price.

ACE REWARDS EXCLUSIVE* SAVE \$5 INSTANTLY

Scotts® EZ Seed®, 3.75 Lb. 7206428, 7229412
Limit 5 each.

\$449.00

TORO Recycler® Self-Propelled High Wheel Gas Mower
• 22" steel cutting deck
• 150cc engine
• Mulch, side discharge (optional) or bag
• No oil change needed - just check and top off
• 3-year guaranteed-to-start engine warranty 7053286

ACE REWARDS EXCLUSIVE* SAVE \$30 INSTANTLY

CRAFTSMAN® 21" Variable-Speed Self-Propelled High Wheel FWD Gas Mower, 7040525. Ace Rewards Exclusive*. SAVE \$30.00 INSTANTLY

21" Variable-Speed Self-Propelled FWD Gas Mower, 7040525. Ace Rewards Exclusive*. SAVE \$30.00 INSTANTLY

\$24.99

Deluxe Resin Adirondack Chair Assorted colors. #106207, #106208, #106209, #106210, #106211, #106212, #106213, #106214, #106215, #106216, #106217, #106218, #106219, #106220, #106221, #106222, #106223, #106224, #106225, #106226, #106227, #106228, #106229, #106230, #106231, #106232, #106233, #106234, #106235, #106236, #106237, #106238, #106239, #106240, #106241, #106242, #106243, #106244, #106245, #106246, #106247, #106248, #106249, #106250, #106251, #106252, #106253, #106254, #106255, #106256, #106257, #106258, #106259, #106260, #106261, #106262, #106263, #106264, #106265, #106266, #106267, #106268, #106269, #106270, #106271, #106272, #106273, #106274, #106275, #106276, #106277, #106278, #106279, #106280, #106281, #106282, #106283, #106284, #106285, #106286, #106287, #106288, #106289, #106290, #106291, #106292, #106293, #106294, #106295, #106296, #106297, #106298, #106299, #106300, #106301, #106302, #106303, #106304, #106305, #106306, #106307, #106308, #106309, #106310, #106311, #106312, 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Letters

Continued from A3
its wood products from Canada and 74% of its lime and gypsum products from Mexico, both essential materials in construction. China supplies steel and aluminum, as well as other raw materials.

Robert Dietz, Chief Economist for the National Association of Home Builders, estimates the new tariffs imposed by President Trump could increase builders' costs anywhere from \$7,500 to \$10,000 per home.

The overall effect of these tariffs on construction is an increase in the project budget, delays, cancellations and overruns.

In 2023, the Maui wildfires destroyed more than 2,200 structures. Damages are estimated at \$5.5 billion and rebuilding has barely begun.

More recently, it is estimated that the wildfires in Southern California caused structural damage to 20,000 properties. Damages are estimated at \$28 to \$54 billion.

Where do you think the construction materials are most needed?

It is only my opinion but with the current economic environment and construction materials needed elsewhere, the citizens of Pagosa Springs would be setting course for the "Perfect Storm," that the developer will walk away and leave the project unfinished and the natural beauty of the property destroyed.

I would ask the City Council members to seriously consider holding a special election to allow the citizens of Pagosa Springs to vote on this development.

Patricia Cooney

LPEA power deal

Dear Editor:

LPEA's CEO says the co-op is set to leave Tri-State and has signed a new power deal with Mercuria. That might sound exciting, but as one of the 44,000 members who own this co-op, I'm left wondering: what does this really mean for us?

We're a year away from a \$209 million buyout, but we haven't seen the plan to pay for it. Will we take out a big loan? For how long? What happens if we can't pay it back - do we lose ownership of our equipment, like substations or buildings? And here's the kicker: even after paying off Tri-State, we'll still buy 40% of our power from them. That doesn't feel like the freedom we're being promised.

Then there's the Mercuria deal. What's in it? How much will we pay? Is it truly clean energy? What if they can't deliver? We don't even know if they have the resources to back it up. There is much we don't know and LPEA remains largely close-lipped.

As a co-op, LPEA is supposed to be about us - its member/owners - working together. But keeping us in the dark about this huge decision goes against what a co-op stands for. We're not just customers; we're owners. We deserve straight answers, not vague promises. LPEA needs to share the contract details, the financial plan, and the risks - openly and soon - meanwhile, it appears we're stuck with something we didn't agree to.

David Cuyler

Disrespect

Dear Editor:

After reading last week's BoCC article I came away with the troubling sense of male disrespect being displayed against Chair Veronica by the two remaining-season males of that

Panel that now apparently are siding against her.

So Vice Chair usurped Chair in a great big hurry demonstrating his oft repeated mantra now sole negotiator of a past goodwill sentiment he holds of charging a lesser price in that IGA agreement recently, obstinately without taking into account the current higher cost of living in our county. Without regard to Parliamentary procedure and in secret between he and the new male member of the panel without Veronica present that (later) anxiously voiced wanting to have been a part of the vote after having recusing herself once again, for something else, trying to cross all her T's probably, forcing voiceless Chair to conceding to Vice Chair machinations.

In the same article the new swollen with importance co-conspirer, wherein had voiced his conviction that "two million for a five acre piece was a good price investment for the County in buying a space for the Administration building." All this after his own admission of being a previous excellent prosperous Realtor here but without prejudice to the proceeding, yet wasn't that the very thing similar to what Veronica was so wrongly accused of?

Our people in office owe to self and this community to be the voice of reason shore up bolster reinforce support and to stay abreast of and secure the best low price not the best high price, of any property for our community and like town council did agreeing to pay for a same five acre piece downtown east complete with an operative building for seven hundred and fifty thousand.

Ranson apparently thinking to use The Deep pockets of the county to off-the-cuff-pay exorbitant amounts never before heard of here except for the exorbitant wage of any new comer administrators post here lately but that for too low a wage lost the County attorney, (that narrative was in the same article).

Let fairness prevail. Let the Chair sister gain her bearings already! Reeling from all the previous chicken pecking's.

A woman that in my opinion has previously represented her BoCC rather well and proven herself the better person for this community that she adopted as her own, Chair Veronica been dodging lots of arrows lately, trying to remain pretty, upbeat unscathed and politically correct amidst the rubble of crumbling concrete around her that must surely feel like she's in a white out and being buried alive in a snow storm...with a lot of yellow in it!

Those dudes need to back off, themselves seemingly afloat without a paddle and falling apart in all their own importance.

Serious stress can affect a woman getting pecked at all the time but what is the male excuse, ineptitude? And their male bullying is only making it worse. Back off already locos. As Chair, Veronica leads that brotherhood, wait your turn like you agreed.

Carmen Ferguson

Where do things stand now?

Dear Editor:

Many American voters took a chance on Donald Trump last November, assuming he would be good for the economy and lulled by his promises to protect Social Security

and reject Project 2025.

Where do things stand now?

Gas and egg prices are still high. Inflation is heading up, and consumer confidence is down. The stock market is volatile, building stress instead of investment savings. Tariffs will push car prices up - Trump said he "couldn't care less." Watch for unemployment to rise, the combined effect of federal firings and effects of funding freezes and cuts throughout the broader economy.

Social Security: Musk managed to get some living people dropped from rolls as being dead. Phone support is ending. (Old school.) Anyone who needs help must contact the agency online or go to a Social Security office, many of which are being closed. It's death by a thousand cuts, which hurt plenty of seniors but are not an ax to benefits Trump would have to admit is a "cut."

Project 2025 is a 900+ page summary of plans to dismantle the federal government. Despite disavowing it, Trump made its architect his Budget Director. Director Vought and the Heritage Foundation spent 4 years writing the executive orders and blueprints for putting Project 2025 in motion starting Day One. The barrage continues.

Trump is running interference. He appointed ill-equipped billionaires, TV personalities, and RFK to run federal executive departments. Ignorance of policy and programs combined with big egos and arrogance make it easy for Project 2025 minions to roll over the figureheads. Even if they cared, they don't know enough to ask good questions about the consequences of orders and the mechanics of government.

Who would they ask? Trump started his term by firing department lawyers who often act as guardrails. Trump also fired inspectors general, the watchdogs who sit in departments for independent oversight. He's targeted science. Don't like climate change; slash the budgets for NOAA and the National Weather Service.

Trump is a disengaged leader, which has dangerous consequences. Read the transcript of his national security team's Signal thread. Ask a veteran if they would have gotten a pass from discipline for that kind of leak. Yet, no decisive "You're Fired" from the boss. Trump told reporters he didn't know if the thread was classified. Pitiful excuses for incompetence.

Congressional Republicans are letting Project 2025 happen. They're in a self-imposed exile from performing their Constitutional duties for reasons they don't show up to explain.

That leaves us, we the people, to stand up for ourselves. It looks like Trump's forgotten his votes were for a strong economy, not trade and culture wars, his personal vendettas, and graft for his financial benefactor Elon.

People across the country and here in Pagosa are gathering this Saturday to protest policies we didn't vote for that are hurting Americans. Community Garden at Centennial Park, 12-2 on April 5.

Candace Jones

Not a handout

Dear Editor:

Social security isn't a handout—it's a promise that millions of us Older Americans have paid into with every paycheck. This administration is dismantling an essential program, closing offices, cutting hotlines, and spreading misinformation to justify these attacks. As an elder we deserve dignity, not broken promises. We deserve to be heard!

Josie Milan

Community news.

The Pagosa Springs SUN
970-264-2100

Water bill

Dear Editor:

This month, when I received my water bill, I noticed a new 'surcharge' for 'affordable housing water' that was not there before. Well, normally I pay through the banks, in cash, but because I felt it necessary to get an answer, as to what this was about, I decided to go to the actual water company on Lyn Street, and ask them about it. Unbeknownst to me that this time, they had a locked gate, and a 'call button'. So I pushed the button, and let them know my concerns, and the woman that originally took the call, transferred me to another woman, who then explained that the new surcharge was added by the board of directors and they took a vote on it, approved it as a MANDATORY addition. I even went as far as to ask her if this new 'surcharge' was a tax,...and she said, "No, but it was mandatory... and voted on by the board".

Below the bill is a volunteer spot for the 'Pagosa Outreach Community'....and a spot for you to volunteer how much money you'd like to donate....no problem with that, but the other one is 'MANDATORY'...and included as part of the bill. ...WRONG !! ...and considering all the news, in regards to unexplained 'taxes' that we are being charged, and to where it's going, I thought that this letter would be appropriate, as to call everyone's attention to this flagrant, unilateral decision by a public company to transfer received money for one thing and transfer it to something else, without even telling the people paying for it...! and let's not 'assume' that these 'officials' of the 'board of directors' are honest people.

Thank you for you reading this, and putting up with my complaints.... seems that IF people were doing this before we wouldn't be hearing all the stuff we're hearing about in the 'news', in regards to people just getting used to being ripped off....here a little and there a little....like not raising the rate of the taxes, in regards to property (TABOR)....so, they just raised the value of the property....or the jail hat was voted down twice but still got built, or the funding for the sidewalk...which was diverted from the COVID money by the BOCC.... gosh how did that get out..??

Corruption can not be tolerated for any reason at any level.

Daniel Norton

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YOU'RE INVITED!

Easter Sunday

Whether you're a longtime member or visiting for the first time, we'd love to have you with us as we celebrate the true meaning of Easter.

Date: Sunday, April 20th
Time: 10:00 AM
Location: 264 Village Drive

Bring the whole family for a morning of worship, hope, and fun! After the service, children are invited to participate in our Easter egg hunt. Don't forget your baskets!

WWW.RESTORATIONFELLOWSHIP.NET

Come celebrate

EASTER

with us!

9:30am | April 20

at the Pagosa High School Auditorium

Kids Easter Egg Hunt

directly following the service!

+

+

+

Grace

to enter the children's coloring contest and for more information please visit graceinpagosa.org

Town to hold meeting on updated cemetery rules and regulations

Town of Pagosa Springs

The Town of Pagosa Springs is seeking public input regarding proposed updated rules and regulations for the operation of Hilltop Cemetery on April 7 from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers.

A copy of the current rules can be found at the town website, www.pagosasprings.co.gov.

At the same meeting, town staff will provide a briefing regarding the annual cleanup of the cemetery to take place from May 19 through June 2.

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Obituaries

Nancy Burke

Nancy Burke, age 73, passed from life to heaven on March 26, 2025, after a battle with Alzheimer's disease. Her life was a beautiful example of loving people of all races, ages and beliefs. She never met a stranger and her special love was children. Nancy's smile lit up a room. She was a friend to many. She set an example of how to live life to the fullest.



Nancy led Operation Christmas Child (shoe box ministry) for many years. She also took part in Christian ministry in Kenya, Uganda and locally in Native American pueblos.

She was quite an athlete: hiker, biker, skier, wind surfer, pickleball player and marathon runner, and inspired many people of all ages to participate.

Nancy was married to Edmund "Buzz" Burke and mother to Colin Burke. She was one of four sisters: Cindy, Carolyn, Nancy and Betsy. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

Bradly Alan Mael

In loving memory: Bradly Alan Mael went home to be with the Lord on Wednesday, March 12, 2025, surrounded by his wife Teresa and two sons, Tyler and Darin Mael.

Brad was born on April 5, 1966, in Moscow, Idaho, to Ron and Jimmie

Kaye Mael. He was the youngest of three — his sisters are Teri Lea Neumayer and Traci Bezona.



Brad grew up in Bovill, Idaho, and graduated from Elk River, Idaho, in 1984. Brad went on to meet his wife, Teresa, when he came to Colorado to log on Bandit Peak Ranch. Brad and Teresa were married on Dec. 27, 1987, and were married for 38 years. They moved to Brad's hometown and resided there for 10 years, then together with their sons they made their way back to Colorado for the remaining 28 years of his life.

Brad was an amazing man who was beyond generous and not afraid of hard work, giving his all and best to whatever was set before him.

Brad followed in his dad's and granddad's footsteps in the logging industry for many years, then after moving to Pagosa Springs, Colo., Brad did small engine repair for several years. Then Brad was introduced to building custom homes, which was one of his greatest passions, working with timber to create one-of-a-kind masterpieces.

Brad was skilled at many things including woodworking, welding, and working and restoring his Camero. He loved the outdoors, going camping, riding the Razor, hiking and looking for rocks. We all loved to see who would find the biggest and best. Brad's ultimate love was his family

and his grandsons, who he cherished deeply.

Brad is survived by his wife, Teresa Mael; and sons Tyler Mael and wife Courtney Mael and grandchildren Wyatt and Colter Mael, Darin and wife Shelby Mael; mother Jimmie Kaye Mael; sisters Teri Lea Neumayer and husband Joe Neumayer, and Traci Bezona and husband Doug Bezona.

Brad is preceded in death by his grandparents, Terry and Bea Carlin, Harold and Mertle Mael, and his dad, Ronald Mael.

There will be a celebration of life held in Bovill, Idaho, at the Community Center on May 10, 2025, from 1 to 4 p.m.

Bruce B. Stuart

Bruce B. Stuart, 83, of Pagosa Springs, Colo., passed away peacefully at home on March 17 after a long and courageous battle with cancer.



Born on Feb. 21, 1942, in Glendale, Calif., to John and Margaret Stuart, Bruce embraced life with a sharp mind, a generous spirit and an adventurous heart. He is survived by his beloved wife of 34 years, Carol — affectionately known as CiCi — four cherished grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; and many dear cousins, aunts and uncles.

Bruce thrived on challenges. Whether raising a record-breaking amount for his high school fundrais-

er, driving his RV across the country for six years, mastering computer solitaire or pioneering early accounting software for businesses, he tackled each endeavor with humor and determination. His keen analytical skills made him a sought-after consultant, known for untangling financial and production issues with ease. He had an insatiable curiosity and rarely took the same road twice.

A man of many passions, Bruce had a special fondness for the raccoons that visited his home — especially the one that gently took peanuts from his hand. In Pagosa Springs, he took on a personal mission to fix the potholes from McDonald's to City Market after Carol's tire blew out in one of them, researching solutions with his signature persistence.

Genealogy was another of Bruce's great pursuits. His dedication to uncovering family history recently led him to Pennsylvania, where he met newly discovered cousins and formed treasured new friendships.

Bruce was deeply committed to the communities he called home. In northern California, he served as a commissioner for the Nevada Theatre for 21 years, playing a vital role in its preservation. In Pagosa Springs, he was proud to be involved with his HOAs, the Community Development Corporation and the Pagosa Rotary. His leadership and contributions left a lasting impact.

Bruce will be profoundly missed by all who knew him. His influence, humor and unwavering support will be remembered for years to come.

A gathering to celebrate his life will be held later this summer.

29TH ANNUAL KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS



LENTEN FISH FRY

STARTS MARCH 7

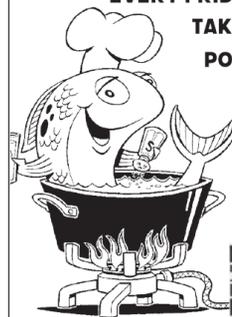
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Saturday, April 5th
Maxwell Miller

Tuesday, April 8th
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Public Meetings

The following meetings are subject to change.

Thursday, April 3

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

Friday, April 4

Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation District Board of Directors special meeting. 3 p.m., 100 Lyn Ave. or via Zoom. Visit pawsd.org for more information.

Tuesday, April 8

Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners work session. 8:30 a.m., Archuleta County administration building, commissioners' meeting room, 398 Lewis St. View Zoom meeting at: <https://zoom.us/j/91609048375?pwd=d1FFV0J1cGVKa1NHWHFsa2taeGxtZz09>, meeting ID: 916 0904 8375, passcode: 4141885. For more information, visit <http://archuleta-county.org/agendacenter>.

Archuleta School District Board of Education meeting. 6 p.m., Pagosa Springs Middle School, 309 Lewis St. Visit www.mypagosaschools.com for more information.

Wednesday, April 9

Archuleta County Fair Board meeting. 6 p.m., CSU Extension office, 344 U.S. 84. For more information, visit <http://archuleta-county.org/agendacenter>.

Thursday, April 10

Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation

District Board of Directors meeting. 5 p.m., 100 Lyn Ave. or via Zoom. Visit pawsd.org for more information.

Monday, April 14

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

Pagosa Springs Town Council and Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners work session. 5 p.m., Town Hall, 551 Hot Springs Blvd. See town website for participation information: <https://pagosaspings.civicweb.net/portal/>.

Tuesday, April 15

Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners work session. 8:30 a.m., Archuleta County administration building, commissioners' meeting room, 398 Lewis St. View Zoom meeting at: <https://zoom.us/j/91609048375?pwd=d1FFV0J1cGVKa1NHWHFsa2taeGxtZz09>, meeting ID: 916 0904 8375, passcode: 4141885. For more information, visit <http://archuleta-county.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=d1FFV0J1cGVKa1NHWHFsa2taeGxtZz09>, meeting ID: 916 0904 8375, passcode: 4141885. For more information, visit <http://archuleta-county.org/agendacenter>.

Pagosa Springs Town Council meeting. 5 p.m., Town Hall, 551 Hot

Springs Blvd. See town website for participation information: <https://pagosaspings.civicweb.net/portal/>.

Wednesday, April 16

Pagosa Peak Open School Board of Directors meeting. 5 p.m., 3133 Cornerstone Drive. For more information, visit: <https://pagosa-peakopenschool.org>.

Upper San Juan Library District meeting. 4 p.m., virtual. The Zoom link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83398449146> with meeting ID: 833 9844 9146.

Pagosa Springs Public Arts Committee meeting. 5 p.m., Town Hall council chambers, 551 Hot Springs Blvd. See town website for participation information: <https://pagosaspings.civicweb.net/portal/>.

Thursday, April 17

Main Street Advisory Board meeting. 3 p.m., Town Hall, 551 Hot Springs Blvd. See town website for participation information: <https://pagosaspings.civicweb.net/portal/>.

Friday, April 18

San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership meeting. 9 a.m., Archuleta County administration building, commissioners' meeting room, 398 Lewis St. View on Zoom using meeting ID 836 9543 6522 and password 146408.

Monday, April 21

Informative.

The Pagosa Springs SUN
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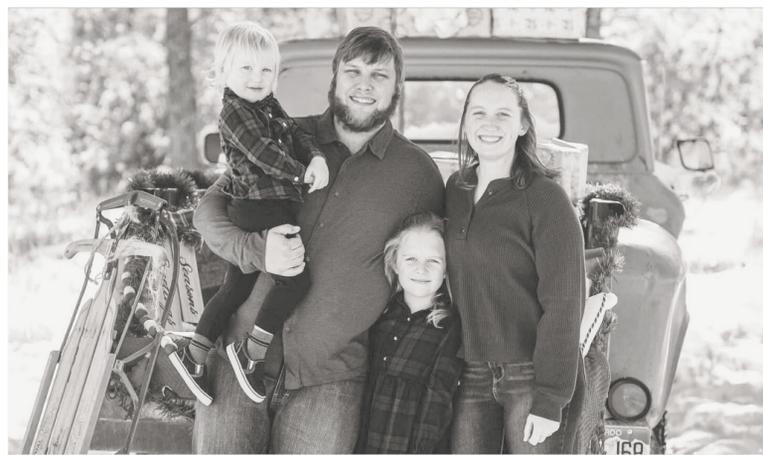
Archuleta School District Master Plan Advisory Committee meeting. 5:30 p.m., Pagosa Springs Middle School Library, 309 Lewis St.

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

I'm Alex Bohmer, currently serving on the PAWSD Board of Directors and running for re-election.

I'm a 2012 Pagosa Springs High School graduate, husband, father, and former volunteer firefighter.

I'm passionate about protecting your family budget and our water security.



OPPOSE LARGE RATE HIKES

Every dollar of rate hikes must be challenged and justified. This year, as a new Board member, elected to be Board Treasurer, I opposed a planned 30% sewer rate increase — and we lowered it to 10%. Not low enough, but a good start.

COMPREHENSIVE FIRE PLAN

STEP ONE: Test every fire hydrant in the district — in cooperation with the County and Fire District if possible — or by PAWSD alone, if necessary. No excuses. Starting immediately.

STEP TWO: Develop a collaborative Fire District, County and PAWSD action plan to use our reservoirs to directly attack wildland fires threatening our homes. We must plan for the large fires which threaten entire neighborhoods — and not merely react.

FINALLY STOP DRY GULCH

The unjustifiable and reckless Dry Gulch Reservoir is a \$400 million disaster which threatens to impose a \$65,000 second mortgage on every Pagosa family and business. We can triple our water supply by finally connecting the reservoirs we already have, at less than 1% of that \$400 million cost.

FIX THE LEAKS

Water losses are threatening to get worse as our water infrastructure ages — and repairing and replacing pipes is expensive. It's time to sell the \$10 million Dry Gulch property and invest that money to fix the leaks. Any other approach to water loss will hike rates higher.

Ballots will be mailed in mid-April. If re-elected, I promise to protect your family budget... and our water future.

Learn more at: www.AlexForPAWSD.com

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Business

Building Business Excellence Conference set for April 29

By Mary Jo Coulehan

Pagosa Springs Area Chamber of Commerce

Are you trying to start a business, get more exposure to your business or expand your business? This conference is for you.

Are you trying to find financing to accomplish any of these actions? This conference is for you.

Have you thought of selling your business? This conference is for you.

Would you like to work smarter using software that could help you with scheduling appointments online, using AI in a variety of applications, using a payroll system that meets your small business needs better, using software to help you with your social media needs? This conference is for you.

Why are you doing what you're doing or working in the job you are working at? How do you take a confident leadership role? This conference

is for you.

Yes, this conference is for anybody in business. You will walk away with valuable tools for self-improvement and better business savvy.

On April 29 from 1 to 6 p.m., the Chamber will bring to Pagosa Springs a half-day conference to help you gain confidence, leadership skills and business knowledge, all while interacting with other business owners and leaders. The conference will be held at the Pagosa Lakes Property Owners Association Clubhouse.

It will kick off with keynote speaker Dale Wilsher, author of "Your Authentic Personality" and other books. Wilsher is a well-respected and motivational speaker who focuses on successful professional development.

Attendees will appreciate her use of humor and real-life stories to drive home her point of utilizing authentic leadership skills.

The next few hours of the conference will be divided into two two-

session breakouts.

The first two breakouts will focus on "Building Your Business for Value and Profit" with Chief Financial Officer Terryl Peterson and "Working Smarter not Harder with Digital Tools" with a talented panel of presenters.

After a short break, the next two sessions will feature Sherry Waner, chief development officer for 1st Southwest Bank speaking on "Funding and Financing Your Business" and Wilsher leading a breakout on "Leveraging Your Why: Finding Success Through Your Purpose."

The day will end with a networking reception with beverages, delicious appetizers, and lots of meeting and greeting.

Tickets for the conference are on sale via the Chamber's website, www.pagosachamber.com. Click on the Building Business Excellence graphic on the home page, which will take you to the registration site.

Tickets are only \$35 for Chamber

members and \$45 for nonmembers. This price includes all of the activities for the afternoon, including a beverage ticket for the networking reception.

This is the time to invest in yourself and your business. Since there are multiple breakout sessions, bring multiple people from your organization so that you can cover all of the sessions.

The Chamber has been listening to the topics that many of our businesses have expressed they would like more information and help on. Now is the time for you to gain some knowledge, meet other business leaders and set a course for improvement or even initial movement.

Should you have any questions about the conference or you would be interested in being an event partner, please contact Ava Carter at the Chamber at (970) 264-2360. Don't miss the opportunity to receive this high-caliber training at this very affordable cost.

Town, county discuss tourism board roles, terms and responsibilities

By Clayton Chaney

Staff Writer

The Pagosa Springs Town Council and Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) recently discussed the roles and responsibilities of the Pagosa Springs Area Tourism Board, along with board member term lengths.

"Before we start on this topic, I want to make it very clear to everyone that this is me," Pagosa Springs Mayor Shari Pierce stated, explaining that the discussion was not due to any complaints about board members or the executive director of tourism, Jennifer Green.

She added, "This is me wanting to review the [intergovernmental agreement] and make sure that its functioning in a good manner."

Pierce noted that the intergovernmental agreement (IGA) between the town and county was updated about a year ago and asked for feedback from other council and BoCC members, noting that she and Commissioner Veronica Medina "had a conversation" with thoughts and ideas about how to update the IGA to "make it a little more clear."

Commissioner John Ranson, the current BoCC representative on the tourism board, explained that through the three meetings he has been a part of, "It seems to be, in my opinion, working well," with no "glaring" issues, adding that it is a "very thoughtful group" with members who are in tune with what's going on in the community.

Council member Gary Williams is the town's representative on the tourism board and explained that board members have expressed interest in having longer terms. He noted that terms are currently two years, and that some board members feel that isn't enough time to be as helpful with it taking a year or longer to get fully up to speed on how the board operates.

Williams suggested that board members may want to extend terms from two years to three or possibly four years.

Williams also noted a section of the IGA that states that the tourism director is to report to the board, which is supervised by the town manager, stating that "seems kind of unusual," given the board is a citizen advisory group.

"That's a really good point," Pierce stated.

Council member Madeline Ber-

gon indicated that she would be in support of tourism board members having three- or four-year terms.

"I know that they're a lot of people that want to be involved in this board," Commissioner Warren Brown said, adding that it is one of the boards "where community participation and desire is still alive and well."

Brown stated that he could support three-year terms for board members, but noted he'd push back against four-year terms in order to maintain community interest.

Green mentioned that two years is about the timeframe board members typically take to get up to speed on board "norms" and historical decisions, adding that she does not have a strong preference for three- or four-year terms.

She explained that seven out of nine seats on the tourism board are designated for specific groups, organizations or industries within the community.

"There will be turnover naturally," Green said, explaining that someone from a specific industry might change their career and leave the board before completing a term.

Pierce also acknowledged Williams' comments on how the IGA states that Green reports to the board, suggesting the wording could be changed so that Green reports to the town manager instead.

Medina commented that Green's title may also need to be more clearly defined, noting that it appears as "executive director of tourism," and tourism director" throughout the IGA.

Pierce indicated that the title most appropriate for Green's position would be "executive director of tourism."

Green mentioned that she feels obligated to report to 19 people, naming the members of the town council, BoCC and tourism board.

Pierce stated that she did not feel it was necessary for Green to feel obligated to report to 19 different individuals, noting that the town manager is also responsible for coordinating and communicating with board members.

"I do feel like tourism is a unique department in the community," Green said, explaining she has been in her position for more than 15 years.

"I just want to empower you to do your job," Pierce added.

Pagosa Springs Town Manager David Harris commented that the tourism board is an advisory board,

adding that the board chair can also help Green in addressing different projects or inquiries from the community.

Brown also commented on another section of the IGA that defines the duty of the board as a "citizens advisory committee" whose sole purpose is to make recommendations to the county and town relative to expenditures of town and county lodging tax.

"That is their function, as this reads," Brown added.

Ranson added that he would like to see some language more clearly defining the advisory role of the board.

Pierce then asked for volunteers from the town council and BoCC to refine the IGA and include suggested changes from the joint work session.

Medina and Bergon were nominated by their peers to refine the IGA, with Pierce suggesting that Green and the tourism board chair to also go through the document.

Event funding

Earlier in the day, the tourism board held a special meeting at which a total of \$23,500 was approved to be awarded to seven different events in the community for 2025 and one event in 2026.

The tourism board reviewed the first round of event applications at its February meeting and approved \$50,750 for nine different events.

According to Green's agenda brief, the tourism board has \$100,000 in its budget for event funding in 2025, though she explained in a later interview that town council approved an additional \$40,000 to the tourism budget for 2025.

During the meeting, Green indicated that the tourism board has approved \$121,720 in expenditures for the year out of the available \$140,000.

She explained that those expenditures include the cost of events the tourism board is responsible for, such as the Fourth of July event, Halloween Hootenanny, Old Fashioned Christmas and holiday lighting contest. The tourism board has also allocated \$8,045 for trash and recycling services, as well as providing aluminum reusable cups for events in 2025.

Green's brief also notes that there are already eight new events applying for event funding in 2025 compared to 2024.

Green explained that there is just

Four nonprofits to benefit from 19th Hole Concerts

By Rachel Rosenthal

Community Foundation serving Southwest Colorado

The Community Foundation serving Southwest Colorado has selected the four local nonprofits that will benefit from this summer's 10th annual 19th Hole Concerts at the Pagosa Springs Golf Club.

Each organization represents a different sector addressing the needs of the community and will be highlighted at one of the concerts held in June.

This year's recipients are Archuleta Seniors Inc. (ASI), Build Pagosa, Project Sanctuary and the San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership.

The 19th Hole Concerts are community fundraisers that feature local musicians and local nonprofits each Thursday evening in June, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., at the Pagosa Springs Golf Club.

The cover charge is a \$10 donation which supports the four nonprofits. Corporate sponsors cover event expenses, allowing all proceeds at the end of the series to be pooled and distributed equally to the featured organizations. The collaborative approach to concerts is vital to their success. Last year's concerts raised \$2,500 for each participating organization.

ASI provides support for more than 1,000 individuals ages 55 and up annually, helping these community members live healthy, vibrant and independent lives. Services also benefit families and caregivers to help them remain resilient and connected, driven by the deeply held value that older adults have an important role in the community.

Build Pagosa supports training and education in skilled trades and careers through hands-on learning opportunities. It provides volunteer

opportunities and fosters collaboration between trades, businesses and residents. Its capital campaign will provide funds to construct a state-of-the-art regional workforce center at Pagosa Springs High School. It also provides financial support for teachers and students to give them the tools they need to succeed.

Project Sanctuary programs provide critical support and services to at-risk military families, addressing their specific needs for mental health, healing and growth. Archuleta County has one of the largest veteran populations in the state, comprising 10.2 percent of the local population. Project Sanctuary is proud to call Pagosa Springs its home base and work with the local veteran and military community.

The San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership works to provide a forum to share stakeholder per-

■ See Concerts A7

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

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Unemployment rate rises in January, February

By Randi Pierce
Staff Writer

Archuleta County's unemployment rate ticked up to 5.1 percent in January and 5.4 percent in February from 4.4 percent in December 2024, according to recent reports from the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE).

January employment situation

Archuleta County's rate of 5.1 percent in January compares to 4.3 percent in January 2024, according to the January report.

Colorado's unemployment rate for January was 4.7 percent, up from the revised rate of 4.6 percent in December 2024.

"The number of unemployed individuals grew by 2,600 over the same time period to 152,800," the report states. "The national unemployment rate decreased one-tenth of a percentage point to 4.0 percent from December to January."

In Archuleta County, the labor force numbered 6,767 in January, down from 6,870 in December 2024.

The unemployment data shows Costilla County with the state's highest unemployment rate in January at 9.4 percent. Huerfano County follows at 9.0 percent, with Las Animas at 8.1 percent.

Regionally, the data shows La Plata County with a 5.1 percent unemployment rate in January, San Juan County at 4.3 percent, Mineral County at 6.6 percent, Rio Grande County at 6.6 percent and Conejos County at 5.5 percent.

At the state level, the report explains, "The number of individuals employed in Colorado increased by 2,200 in January to 3,131,800, which represents 64.8 percent of the state's 16+ population. Colorado's employment-population ratio of 64.8 in January was unchanged compared to the December rate."

It adds, "The national employment-population ratio increased one-tenth of a percentage point in

January to 60.1 percent."

Employers in Colorado added 500 nonfarm payroll jobs from December 2024 to January for a total of 2,977,600 jobs, according to the survey of business establishments and the CDLE's February report. Private-sector payroll jobs grew by 1,800, while government rose by 2,100 jobs.

Nonfarm payroll jobs measure the number of workers excluding farmers and are based on a survey of business establishments and government agencies. The estimates are intended to measure the number of jobs, not the number of people employed.

"The business establishment survey covers about seven times the number of households surveyed and is therefore considered a more reliable indicator of economic conditions," the report explains. "Because the estimates are based on two separate surveys, one measuring jobs by worksite and the other measuring persons employed and unemployed by household, estimates based on these surveys may provide seemingly conflicting results."

According to the CDLE, private-industry sectors with significant job gains in January were educational and health services at about 2,500, professional and business services at about 1,100 and manufacturing at about 1,100.

Significant over-the-month private-sector job loss occurred in construction at about 2,400, and leisure and hospitality at about 1,000.

"Since January 2024, the report states, "nonfarm payroll jobs have increased 22,600, with the private sector growing by 7,600 and government adding 15,000 jobs."

The largest private-sector job gains were in educational and health services at about 5,900; trade, transportation and utilities at about 4,400; leisure and hospitality at about 3,400; and manufacturing at about 1,400.

During that same period, payroll job declines were seen in professional and business services at about 4,000, information at about 3,200 and financial activities at about 2,000.

Colorado's rate of job growth over the past year is 0.8 percent, behind the U.S. rate of 1.3 percent.

The report also notes the average workweek for all Colorado employees on private nonfarm payrolls declined from 32.7 to 32.6 hours, while average hourly earnings grew from \$37.42 to \$39.80 — \$3.93 more than the national average hourly earnings of \$35.87.

February employment situation

Archuleta County's rate of 5.4 percent in February compares to 4.6 percent in February 2024.

Colorado's unemployment rate remained at 4.7 percent for the month, though the CDLE notes that there was strike activity at a major grocery company that lasted for the duration of the February reference week.

It adds, "These workers are not counted in payroll job estimates in the establishment survey for February."

According to the survey of households, the number of unemployed individuals increased by 2,500 to 155,300 from January to February.

The national unemployment rate increased one-tenth of a percentage point to 4.1 percent from January to February, the report states.

In Archuleta County, the labor force numbered 6,731.

Costilla County continued to have the highest unemployment rate in the state in February at 9.6 percent, with Huerfano following at 9.1 percent.

Regionally, the data shows La Plata County with a 5.3 percent unemployment rate in February, San Juan County at 5.6 percent, Mineral County at 7.0 percent, Rio Grande County at 6.5 percent and Conejos County at 5.7 percent.

"The number of individuals employed in Colorado decreased by 4,000 in February to 3,127,800, which represents 64.7 percent of the state's 16+ population," the report states. "Colorado's employment-population ratio of 64.7 in February decreased one-tenth of a percentage point

from the month prior. The national employment-population ratio decreased two-tenths of a percentage point to 59.9 percent from January to February."

Employers in Colorado lost 8,900 nonfarm payroll jobs from January to February for a total of 2,968,700 jobs, according to the survey of business establishments. Private-sector payroll jobs decreased by 10,300, while government added 1,400 jobs.

The private-industry sector with significant over-the-month job gains in February was education and health services at about 1,100.

The private-industry sectors with significant over-the-month job losses were trade, transportation and utilities at about 11,000, and other services at about 1,000.

The report explains, "Strike activity at a major retail grocery company in the Denver, Boulder, and Pueblo Metropolitan Statistical Areas contributed to the declines in trade, transportation, and utilities in February."

Since February 2024, nonfarm payroll jobs have increased 500, with the private sector declining by 14,700 and government adding 15,200 jobs.

The largest private-sector job gains were in educational and health services at about 4,800, and leisure and hospitality at about 4,400.

During that same period, payroll jobs declined in professional and business services by about 9,100; trade, transportation and utilities by about 8,500; information by about 2,600; construction by about 1,900; and financial activities by about 1,500.

"Colorado's rate of job growth over the past year is 0.0 percent, below the U.S. rate of 1.2 percent," it notes.

Over the year, the average workweek for all Colorado employees on private nonfarm payrolls increased from 33.0 to 33.4 hours, while average hourly earnings grew from \$37.42 to \$40.31 — \$4.38 more than the national average hourly earnings of \$35.93.

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La Plata Electric Association announces agreement for bridge power

La Plata Electric Association

On March 26, La Plata Electric Association (LPEA) board members unanimously approved an agreement with Mercuria Energy America LLC — one of the world's largest independent energy and commodity groups — securing reliable, cost-effective electricity for LPEA members through the 2026-2028 bridge period.

This agreement gives the cooperative a diversified and flexible power portfolio and, when combined with LPEA's other power purchase agreements, will lower the blended cost of power by more than 10 percent starting in 2026 — compared to current wholesale rates. The blended cost of power refers to the cost of the electricity plus the cost of transmis-

sion of the electricity to customers.

"With this agreement, we're already seeing the benefits of our board's decision to pursue new power supply options, and we're incredibly grateful for their leadership and vision," said Chris Hansen, CEO of LPEA. "Securing all the power we need for the bridge at a cost more than 10 percent lower than our previous provider is a major win for our members."

This marks the third power supply agreement LPEA has signed since the cooperative announced its departure from its contract with Tri-State Generation and Transmission Inc. on April 1, 2026.

Mercuria will supply the capacity needed to meet all of LPEA's resource adequacy requirements, providing reliable energy while giving the co-

operative the flexibility to adapt to evolving energy needs. Importantly, the agreement ensures fixed pricing, so members won't experience the volatility that can come with market fluctuations.

"As we approach the one-year mark until our departure from our Tri-State contract, we continue to be pleased with the opportunities this transition is creating," Hansen added. "We're excited about what we're able to deliver for our members today and the flexibility we have to explore more affordable, local generation as we shape our future energy portfolio."

While a portion of LPEA's energy needs will continue to be met through previously secured power purchase agreements — providing approximately 30 percent of its supply — the

Mercuria agreement and LPEA's clean, local, self-generation fills the remaining gap, offering price certainty and reliability for members.

"We're pleased to partner with La Plata Electric Association as we work together to deliver practical, forward-looking energy solutions," said Cody Moore, president and head of U.S. gas and power trading at Mercuria. "This collaboration reflects our shared commitment to innovation, sustainability and building a resilient energy future for the communities we serve."

Looking ahead, LPEA will issue a request for proposals (RFP) for new energy generation projects to begin supplying power as early as Jan. 1, 2028. With the removal of previous limitations, LPEA now has full flexibility to determine its long-term energy portfolio, including increased opportunities for local and regional generation.

For more information on LPEA's energy transition, visit lpea.coop.

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Black Hills Energy announces new lower natural gas costs beginning April 1

By Jason Auslander
Black Hills Energy

Black Hills Energy filed the 2025 second-quarter gas cost adjustment (GCA) recently with the Colorado Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and the change was approved on March 26.

The GCA is filed quarterly with the CPUC to reflect the most recent and projected cost of natural gas for the next three months, starting April 1. This filing reflects the changing natural gas cost in all three different base rate areas in Colorado.

Depending on where customers are in Colorado, average monthly residential bills will decrease from an average of 3.4 percent to 23 percent.

For Base Rate Area 2, which includes Pagosa Springs, the previous average monthly bill was \$124.02, with the proposed average monthly bill beginning April 1 being \$119.39, for a decrease of \$4.63, or 3.73 percent. That is for a listed average usage of 66.

The price of natural gas is known as a "pass-through cost," meaning Black Hills Energy makes no money on it and our customers pay market

rates and no more.

This filing reflects the move to just two gas cost adjustment rates across the state. They will be broken down by eastern and western Colorado.

Black Hills Energy understands that some customers may struggle to pay their bill, and the company has multiple programs to help, including extended payment arrangements, budget billing and payment assistance.

Please visit <https://www.blackhillsenergy.com/billing-and-payments/energy-assistance-programs> for more information.

Archuleta County Republican Women meeting set for April 9

By Karen Griggs

Archuleta County Republican Women

Join the Archuleta County Republican Women meeting on Wednesday, April 9.

The guest speaker will be Nicole Cotts, executive director of Aspire Medical Services.

There will be social time and or-

dering lunch from a special menu from 11:30 a.m. to noon.

The meeting will be from noon to 1 p.m. at Victor's Sushi, 118 N. Pagosa Blvd.

Concerts

Continued from A8

spectives to develop science-based collaborative priorities for the management and monitoring of forests in the Pagosa Ranger District of the San Juan National Forest and on private and tribal land in Southwestern Colorado. It works to address forest health, wildfire risk mitigation and increase public outreach around environmental issues impacting the community.

"The Archuleta Committee is proud to have been active in supporting Archuleta County's nonprofits for

10 years now," said Susan Buchner, current chair of the Archuleta Committee. "We raised a total of \$75,000 for local nonprofits in the first nine seasons, which we could not have done without the support of our faithful concert attendees and corporate sponsors."

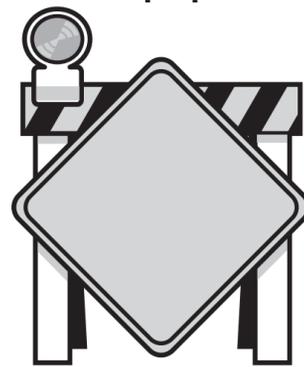
As a community facilitator, the Community Foundation works to increase resilience and success for nonprofits, while maximizing effective grantmaking for philanthropists to make Southwest Colorado a better place to live.

Concert schedule

Concerts are from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Thursdays in June at the Pagosa Springs Golf Club.

- June 5: ASI, Bob Hemenger — Dixieland, jazz, blues, soul and pop.
- June 12: Project Sanctuary, Jackson Mountain Ramblers — country, folk and pop.
- June 19: Build Pagosa, Bo DePeña — Americana and country.
- June 26: San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership, Max Miller — jazz.

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CDOT has begun road construction in downtown Pagosa Springs, which may impact your route to PSMC.



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We care about you and our community—stay safe and see you soon!

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Meetings

Continued from front

needs to get rough estimates and costs, “so we can try to get our community the best estimate that we have.”

Medina commented that it is difficult to set the meetings before having the information the community wants to see.

She referenced the meeting held in regard to potential properties, explaining she received feedback that “we really didn’t have much to offer the public.”

Medina also addressed the timeframe concerns, saying, “Yes, we do have a timeframe, if you will,” but explained that it was stated in a previous meeting that Urbanczyk may be willing to extend the county’s lease,

under different terms.

Medina went on to state that she has not yet spoken with Urbanczyk and that she was waiting for him to get back in town.

Harper indicated that a letter had been sent to Urbanczyk, and Weaver explained the letter was sent to his local representative.

“I have not received any response other than, ‘Thank you, I’ll be back in touch,’ so,” Weaver said.

Medina went on to state that the matter of a new county administration building has been discussed since before her time as a commissioner.

“I just think if, truly, the push is to have conversations with the community but not really go to a vote and

just do the [certificate of participation (COP)], I think that’s the better conversation to have so that way we can give real direction to staff,” Medina said.

She explained that it’s “not fair” to have staff do a bunch of “legwork” in preparing for a vote if the commissioners ultimately opt for a COP.

“Because I’ve been hearing different things in the community,” she said, adding that a “real” conversation is needed about the “true intentions of commissioners.”

Medina then asked for the thoughts of the other commissioners, with Ranson replying that he stated during his campaign that he wouldn’t support a COP “until we have substantial public input.”

Downtown

Continued from front

it right.”

“Nobody likes it when the road is torn up twice,” Harris said, referring to the likelihood that needed road work through downtown streets would happen within the next few years, causing further disruption after the CDOT project is completed.

He added that he realized it was “a very high-cost environment right now,” but explained that with pending economic uncertainty, prices for the work could be even higher in the future if the council decided to wait to perform this work.

Public Works Director Karl Johnson was asked about his opinion on the town’s portion of the project, with Johnson saying, “It’s a large amount of money, but to do it as a tag-along with the CDOT project, it makes more sense to do it now.”

Dickhoff noted that WW Clyde’s work for the town would not prolong the CDOT project in any way, adding that it would not “impact their workdays with CDOT.”

During Dickhoff’s presentation, he broke the project down into high-priority items and other lower-priority items that could be executed at a later date by the town.

Having WW Clyde do only the town’s highest-priority items would save the town about \$1,762,460, he explained.

Mayor Shari Pierce asked if the council needed to make a decision about the priority versus non-priority items “tonight,” with Dickhoff replying, “generally, yes,” because WW Clyde would need to order the materials right away to get these prices “locked in.”

There was some concern that the national economic climate around

tariffs could impact the price of the project if the town waited too long.

There emerged a general appetite among the council to do the project in totality in order to coincide with the ongoing CDOT project.

Council member Matt DeGuise said, “We should go for the whole thing,” citing that road surfaces on the streets on the south side of the highway would be “due” to be repaired or replaced in the “next few years, so do it now” to minimize disruption to the neighborhoods.

Council member Leonard Martinez expressed that he agreed that the town should complete this project in its entirety while CDOT already has downtown torn up.

With the council in agreement that it favored doing the project in totality, the discussion then turned to how to pay for it.

Town Clerk April Hessman pointed to the reserves in the capital and general funds, totaling about \$4.9 million, with Harris saying that maybe the town could “dip into savings” to help fund the project.

Pierce noted that she did not like the idea of spending out of reserves.

Earlier in the meeting, the council passed a resolution enabling the town to reimburse itself from bond proceeds for the costs incurred for the downtown project before bonds are issued, if it chose that option down the road.

Hessman explained that there is also the pending town-only sales tax increase election, and urged the council to consider the option of broadening the ballot language to include capital projects such as the downtown rehabilitation project, not just the sewer system overhaul.

She suggested that without bring-

ing in more revenues through the sales tax increase, there was “not a lot” leftover in the budget for capital improvement projects.

However, a majority of the council members expressed that they wanted the sales-tax ballot language to stay focused only on the sewer system overhaul.

Council member Brooks Lindner noted that the sales tax increase would be “doomed” to fail at the ballot box if the council decided to broaden the language beyond needed sewer repairs.

Martinez also expressed a desire for the sales-tax ballot language to stay focused on the sewer system, but suggested that he also thought that a portion of the downtown project could be categorized as sewer repairs.

Pierce agreed that a small portion of the project could be categorized as related to the sewer system, and thus the sales tax increase could help pay for it, but thought it was a smaller amount than Martinez suggested.

She warned that whether or not “we get the sales tax” increase is a “big unknown,” and the council should plan to fund the downtown rehabilitation project as if the sales tax election were not a factor.

Lindner agreed, saying, “We should be very cautious” and should budget for this project without the sales tax election in mind.

When a motion was made to approve the work items to complete the entirety of the downtown project, coinciding with CDOT’s project, and for the town manager to enter into a contract with WW Clyde for the work, it was passed unanimously by the council.

derek@pagosasun.com

Funding

Continued from front

Archuleta County typically receives approximately \$670,000 annually from SRS payments and has historically been able to allocate all of those monies to the school district.

He also explained there is a component within the SRS that would allow for up to 25 percent of those monies to be spent on roads or “other

specific” projects in the county.

Brown went on to mention that Hickenlooper has not yet signed on to the SRS Reauthorization Act, but indicated that he “is very supportive.”

Brown explained that he brought the matter to the BoCC to ask if the board wanted to send its own letter, sign on to a letter from the Colorado

Counties Inc. or do both.

Brown commented, “I couldn’t imagine why you wouldn’t,” support the SRS.

Commissioners Veronica Medina and John Ranson indicated they would like to do both.

“I appreciate you doing this,” Ranson said.

clayton@pagosasun.com

Elections

Continued from front

The San Juan River Village Metropolitan District canceled its May 6 election and declared three candidates elected.

Steve Wilkins, Lori Mohan and Jeff Greer were each elected to four-year terms.

Piedra Park Metropolitan

District

The Piedra Park Metropolitan District declared four candidates elected and canceled its May 6 election.

Milly Risinger and RC Caveness were elected to two-year terms. Kristeen Reeve and Jay Holliday were elected to four-year terms.

Loma Linda Metropolitan

District

The Loma Linda Metropolitan District declared three candidates elected and canceled its May 6 election.

Al Myatt, Rick Sautel and Matt Fischer were each elected to four-year terms.

randi@pagosasun.com

Colorado’s hands-free law drives 135 percent increase in distracted driving citations

Colorado Department of Transportation

Following the start of Colorado’s new distracted driving law, the Colorado State Patrol (CSP) has issued 94 citations to Colorado drivers who were using their cellphones or mobile devices while behind the wheel — more than half of the total number of citations issued in 2024.

This accounts for a 135 percent increase in citations compared to the same time period last year. The counties with the highest number of citations so far this year are Jefferson, El Paso, Weld, Douglas and Adams.

The new law is resulting in safer driving behaviors.

A recent finding from Cambridge Mobile Telematics (CMT) found a 3.3 percent reduction in cellphone use while driving among Coloradans since the hands-free law took effect.

CMT estimates that 88 crashes and 49 injuries caused by distracted driv-

ing have been prevented, indicating a positive effect of the legislation. These estimates are based on data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s “The Economic and Societal Impact of Motor Vehicle Crashes” report and distracted driving-related crashes.

As Distracted Driving Awareness Month began April 1, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) is urging every Coloradan to keep their eyes on the road and their hands on the wheel.

Effective Jan. 1, using a cellphone or other mobile device for any reason while driving is illegal in Colorado unless a hands-free accessory is used. The law prohibits touching or handling your cellphone or mobile device — including when at a stoplight or in traffic — when you’re behind the wheel.

According to CDOT’s Problem Identification Report, distracted driv-

ing is the third leading cause of traffic crashes in Colorado.

Prior to Colorado’s hands-free law, Colorado saw a 9 percent increase in cellphone usage while driving between 2022 and 2024, according to CDOT’s Driver Behavior Survey.

“Distracted driving causes far too many crashes and fatalities on our roads. The message is simple — always drive distraction-free,” said Col. Matthew C. Packard, chief of the CSP. “The new ‘hands-free’ law allows law enforcement to address reckless behaviors and is expected to help reduce distracted-related crashes in our state. Now is the time to stop using your mobile devices and pay attention to the road.”

According to CDOT’s 2024 Driver Behavior Report, 77 percent of Colorado drivers admitted to using their phones while driving, up from 75 percent in 2023, with 45 percent saying a

See Citations A9

He added, “I’m comfortable with that route unless everybody comes out and raises Cain.”

Ranson also brought up how other major projects are happening in the community, with Archuleta School District considering a bond election and the Town of Pagosa Springs considering a sales tax increase ballot question to address wastewater infrastructure concerns.

Ranson added that the BoCC’s job is to get to a point where a plan can be presented to the public “on how this can fit into our budget, so that, ‘Yes we can pay for this on our own’ and we’re not asking them for additional resources.”

He explained that the county needs more detailed information because, “right now, we don’t have anything to even present.”

Ranson added, “I do believe that people will support a COP if we’ve done our homework,” adding that it is a long process that needs to get started.

Medina replied, explaining the county has started the process with

the property under contract and Harper working on getting numbers this week.

“It’s not fast ... this is Pagosa,” she added.

Brown also spoke on how other projects in the community are happening, stating, “I don’t know that I’d like to see the county compete for the voters’ vote.”

He went on to explain that these are “all big issues,” but that it is hard to say one is more important than the other.

Brown also commented that the county has progressed in the same way as the community in putting off things that should’ve been addressed that couldn’t be afforded.

“But, our infrastructure does seem to be all crashing about the same time,” he said.

Brown noted that he would be “hesitant” to support one option over the other without more information, noting the county has three years left in its lease at the San Juan Street building.

He also commented that the

county at one point was paying a \$500,000 annual note on a lien against that building that was taken out to repair a road.

“There are a lot of nuances here and I don’t want to jump the gun,” Brown said.

He added, “We’re responsible for making the best decision for us, as a county.”

Medina then informed the BoCC that she had received an unsolicited proposal from a company offering to facilitate public “stakeholder meetings.”

She spoke more about how there was feedback from the community about the previous property meeting that constituents were “not happy about how we conducted the meeting,” adding that “no, we didn’t have any information” and that it was more of the BoCC trying to let people “vent.”

Medina then asked Harper if he had any questions on his direction on the matter, to which Harper replied, “not as of now.”

“Just get it done,” Ranson added. clayton@pagosasun.com

Attorney

Continued from front

evaluate the pay scale of the position.

The current salary range posted for the county attorney position is \$138,881 to \$185,693. The position was initially posted with a salary range of \$117,060 to \$163,872, according to Bowman.

Medina added that the county’s salary range is “a little on the low side for a county attorney with expertise that we’re really looking for,” noting those were comments received by Commissioner John Ranson.

Weaver addressed Medina’s comments on candidates potentially having trouble getting their license transferred from out of state, stating, “I don’t think it’s an extremely difficult process,” adding the county may need a “supervising attorney” while licenses are transferred.

Ranson turned to Bowman, asking for her advice on using a headhunter.

“It might be a good idea,” Bowman replied, explaining the position has been advertised to a list of county attorneys in Colorado.

Bowman also commented that adjusting the pay scale may help recruit qualified candidates.

“I think it would help,” she said.

Ranson then asked Weaver how Archuleta County’s pay scale compares to others around the state.

Weaver mentioned that Chaffee County is currently looking for an attorney as well, and initially posted a salary range capping around \$160,000, and have received comments that its pay scale is on the low end.

“It is gonna be a struggle to get someone with ... 10 plus years of experience at that pay range,” he said, adding that there are trade-offs when comparing salaries of private practice, but, “I think it’s gonna be a struggle.”

“I think [\$160,000] is way too

high,” Medina said, noting that other benefits can make up for a lower salary when compared to a private practice salary.

Ranson went on to comment that when the county gets to the point of interviewing candidates, he’d like to have other elected and county officials involved in that process, specifically noting Sheriff Mike Le Roux and Bowman.

Bowman noted that she was involved in the hiring process of the current county manager.

Weaver indicated that his interview process consisted of only BoCC members, suggesting that other elected officials should be included.

“I think at least at minimum the other electeds should be involved,” he said.

Medina commented that she “always” advocates for HR to be involved.

Bowman then explained that the county has received a couple applications already, noting one received did not meet any of the qualifications attached to the position.

Medina mentioned that she’d like to see applications as they come in so that the BoCC has the chance to reply to candidates in a timely manner indicating if they are invited to the next step in the process or not.

“I feel like, overall, we as a county don’t respond in a timely manner to applicants,” she added, noting the

county should respond quickly when possible.

“I don’t think that’s a bad process,” Brown said, with Ranson also agreeing.

Medina also explained she’d like to see all applications unless no qualifications are met, saying, “The whole story is never told on the application.”

She went on to explain that, in the meantime, the county has an attorney on retainer and is also reaching out to surrounding county attorneys to see if they have availability to provide Archuleta County with coverage.

“I think we have a couple of different options,” Medina said.

Brown mentioned that La Plata County Attorney Sheryl Rogers may be available, pending approval from the La Plata County commissioners. “She’s very competent,” he said, explaining he has previously worked with Rogers.

“We have a pretty good relationship with La Plata county overall,” Brown added.

“I’m not as concerned as I know others are in the void,” Ranson said, adding it’s “nice to know we have an interim situation worked out.”

Ranson explained that he’d rather have a void in the short-term and wait to get the right person for the position, rather than rushing to fill the position and making “rash decisions.”

clayton@pagosasun.com

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Archuleta County Public Health Department to celebrate National Public Health Week

By Ashley Springer
Archuleta County

The Archuleta County Public Health Department (ACPHD) is proud to join communities nationwide in celebrating National Public Health Week April 7-13.

This year's theme, "It Starts Here," underscores the critical role public health plays in ensuring the well-being of our community.

The ACPHD is committed to providing a wide range of essential services to Archuleta County residents, including: birth and death certificates; community and family services; clinic services which

provide testing for sexually transmitted diseases, tuberculosis and pregnancy; immunizations; food safety program; health insurance assistance; communicable disease and rabies information; Nurse-Family Partnership and Women, Infants and Children services; SafeCare in-home visit program; Women's Wellness Connection; and forensic nurse exams.

These programs were built in year one, with further program expansion in 2025 and 2026.

"Public health focuses on the science and art of protecting and improving the health of our community, but our staff cannot do it without you," commented Executive Director Ashley Wilson. "Public health starts with you. Your health and the

health of your family starts with prevention; starts with healthy movement, healthy food and healthy habits. It starts here; it starts now."

The ACPHD encourages everyone to join in celebrating National Public Health Week and learning more about the vital role public health plays in our community.

The ACPHD will host an open house on Thursday, April 10, from 4 to 6 p.m. at its offices, 502 S. 8th St. This is a great opportunity to learn more about ACPHD services, meet the team and discover how the department works to keep Archuleta County healthy. The open house is free and open to the public. Come ready with curiosity and questions.

County amends land use regs addressing commercial kitchens, natural medicines

By Clayton Chaney
Staff Writer

On April 1, the Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) unanimously approved Resolution 2025-23, approving amendments to three different sections of the Archuleta County Land Use Regulations (LUR).

The amended sections include Section 3-Zoning, Section 5-Development Standards and Section 11-Definitions.

Development Director Pamela Flowers explained that the resolution accomplishes two things, with the "primary purpose" being to institute regulations related to the time, place and manner of how natural medicines are regulated in the county. The secondary item in the resolution institutes the use of commercial kitchens.

Flowers explained that before approving the resolution, the LUR did not include a commercial kitchen in its use by zoning district table, adding that there are individuals in the county interested in having a commercial kitchen as part of their home business.

She noted that she was proposing a simpler process compared to a board conditional use permit in order to allow for commercial kitchen use in a home business.

Flowers explained that the terms "kitchenette," "commercial kitchen" and "residential kitchen" were being added to Section 11.

Commissioner Veronica Medina interjected, stating that things seemed out of place and that it sounded like two separate changes were being grouped together.

"It feels like we're cooking marijuana," Medina said, explaining she understood why the additional definitions were being added in regard to kitchen uses.

Flowers explained that the definitions were "not that specific" and the two changes are not linked to one another.

Commissioner Warren Brown explained that the definitions section of the LUR is to be able to reference those words when they appear in any other section of the LUR.

"If I were the creator, I would not have created it this way," Brown added.

Flowers went on to explain that "medical marijuana caregiver" and

"natural medicine" were also added.

Other terms added in regard to natural medicine include natural medicine business, natural medicine healing center, natural medicine caregiver facility, natural medicine product manufacturer, natural medicine testing facility, natural medicine facilitator, natural medicine product, natural medicine services, preparation session, administration session, integration session and regulated natural medicine.

Flowers indicated that the definitions for those terms were pulled from the state statute regulating natural medicine use and that the addition of natural medicine regulations mirrors the county's regulations for marijuana.

According to the approved amendments, natural medicine "includes natural forms of psilocybin, psilocin, dimethyltryptamine, ibogaine, mescaline, not including synthetic or synthetic analogs of these substances, and not including peyote pursuant to C.R.S. 44-50-103(13)."

Commissioner John Ranson asked his fellow commissioners if there was any interest in grouping churches with schools and child care facilities in having natural medicine businesses and retail marijuana stores not located within 1,000 feet of any of those property boundaries.

"Do we want these next door to a church?" Ranson asked, noting that it wasn't a "big deal," but that he wanted to see if it was something the BoCC would consider.

Neither Brown nor Medina replied in favor or against Ranson's suggestion.

Churches were not included in the final approved amendments.

One public comment on the matter was received from Dana Tysconyey StarByrd, who expressed interest in establishing a spiritually based holistic integrative retreat center in Archuleta County that would offer services to veterans who would stay for anywhere between three days to one year on the property.

"The way your rules are written right now for the natural medicine would not allow me to do the project I would like to bring to your area there," she said.

She explained that she has worked with veterans out of Gallup, N.M., who have expressed that the spiritual aspect of care is missing for veterans. "So, I'm working on creating that

for our veterans," she added.

She went on to explain that she is seeking a property in a natural environment where commercial zoning would not allow for that, also noting that traditional food farming will also be occurring on the property.

Flowers explained that the issue is that StarByrd is looking for a property that is likely zoned as agricultural ranching, which in the current zoning use table does not allow for a retreat center.

Flowers noted that a "wilderness lodge permit" could be a way for StarByrd to run her retreat center, which would have to go to the BoCC for final approval.

Brown commented that he would like the county to approach this "in a cautious way" and see how it plays out in the community before committing to any big zoning changes, stating that replacing agricultural land with natural medicine "will bring strong opinions from the community."

He added, "I think this is a pretty significant step that we're taking today."

Medina turned to county attorney Todd Weaver for his thoughts on the matter, with Weaver indicating that StarByrd's proposed plan could potentially fall under personal use, though that would limit her to growing natural medicine in an enclosed and locked 12-foot-by-12-foot space.

Weaver also indicated that advertising natural medicine use could not occur under personal use definitions.

Before voting to approve the changes, Ranson commented that it's not necessarily a "no" to StarByrd's request.

He encouraged her to stay in contact with the Planning Department.

The changes were initially introduced during an Archuleta County Planning Commission meeting held on Feb. 27, with the planning commission unanimously recommending them for approval.

Some of the concerns brought up by planning commissioners included the language around commercial kitchen use in residential areas, with planning commissioner David Pribble expressing that there are multiple businesses in the county that operate on a "pantry license."

Pribble explained that businesses operating on a pantry license may not necessarily be in a commercial kitchen type of space, and that the proposed changes would require a

commercial kitchen space.

Flowers mentioned that the wording could be changed to state that any home occupation preparing food must be conducted in a commercial kitchen when required by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, the county's public health department and adopted fire codes.

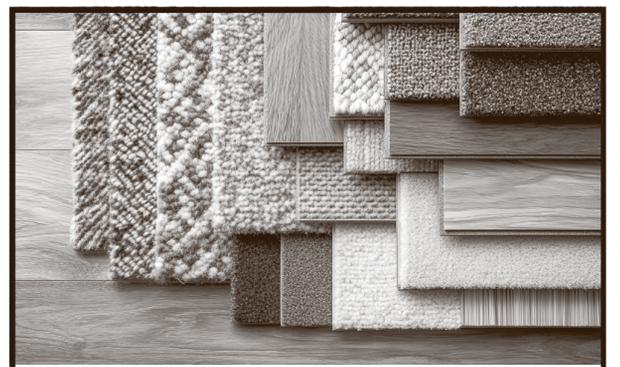
She explained that pantry licenses are issued through the health department and that it would be a separate category, so that as long as the public health department requirements are met, businesses will be able to continue operating with a pantry license.

Planning commissioner Andrei Redstone also expressed concerns on the lack of "off-gassing" regulation with marijuana and natural medicine cultivation centers, stating, "It's a problem."

Flowers explained that marijuana and natural medicine cultivation facilities have to be permitted by the state and that the county does not have the resources to do any off-gassing testing.

She noted that the county can report an issue to the state and the state has the ability to come out and test off-gassing at a property.

"We don't have means of being able to measure that," Flowers said. clayton@pagosahun.com



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Citation

Continued from front
hands-free feature in their car would stop them from using their phone. Of this group, 42 percent reported picking up their phone while driving to make or receive a call.

In addition to cellphone use, drivers reported doing a range of distracting activities behind the wheel each week, including eating, texting and using social media.

The survey also found that drivers who engaged in distracting behaviors also were more likely to speed or not wear a seat belt while driving.

"When drivers divert their attention away from the road — taking a bite of food, changing the radio

station or answering a phone call — they risk the lives of everyone around them," said CDOT's Office of Transportation Safety Director Darrell Lingk. "That doesn't just include other motorists, either. A distracted driver could hit pedestrians, bicyclists, children playing outside or people sitting on restaurant patios, for example. That's a risk no one should feel comfortable taking."

CDOT urges all drivers to acquire hands-free accessories such as dashboard mounts and car speakerphone systems to comply with the new law.

The law includes exemptions for individuals reporting emergencies, utility workers, code enforcement

officers, animal protection officers, first responders and individuals in parked vehicles. These exceptions ensure that critical communications are not hindered in emergency or essential service situations.

Penalties for violating the new law start with a \$75 fine and two license suspension points for the first offense. First-time violators can have the charge dismissed if they provide proof of purchasing a hands-free accessory. Repeat offenders face higher fines and more license suspension points.

For more information on the hands-free law, visit codot.gov/handsfreeco.

Play hard, Pirates!



'Wizard of Oz'

Photos courtesy Pagosa Springs High School Theater Department
Pagosa Springs High School students work to ready the Theater Department's production of "The Wizard of Oz." Shows are set for 7 p.m. April 9-12 with a 2 p.m. matinee performance set for April 12. Regular tickets are \$15, and tickets for students and seniors are \$12.



Commissioners approve matching funds for housing action plan, talk of creating energy task force

By Clayton Chaney
 Staff Writer

Archuleta County and The Town of Pagosa Springs, along with the Pagosa Springs Community Development Corporation, have organized and participated in a housing needs assessment that will provide an analysis of the county's housing market. Initial results of that assessment were shared last month, and final results will be presented to both the Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) and town council on April 15 for adoption, according to Development Director Pamela Flowers.

During a regular meeting held by the BoCC on Tuesday, April 1, Flowers explained that since the community began the housing assessment process, the state finalized a bill requiring "everyone" to have an assessment and a housing action plan developed from that assessment.

Flowers explained that the county is applying for a grant through the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) for \$75,000 to pay for

the development of a regional housing action plan, which requires a 25 percent match of \$18,750.

She also explained that the matter would be presented to the Pagosa Springs Town Council and, if approved, the town and county would split the \$18,750 cost, but DOLA needs to see a commitment from the county that the entire 25 percent amount would be paid, even if the town decides not to approve the funds.

Commissioner Warren Brown asked where the matching funds would come from, given the item is not included in the 2025 county budget.

County Manager Jack Harper explained that Finance Director Chad Eaton identified savings from Flowers' travel and training budget, along with monies available in the commissioners' discretionary income and administration discretionary income.

Flowers added that she anticipates the town approving funds to go toward the required matching amount, noting the plan is a regional plan that will provide useful information

specific to the town.

The matter was unanimously approved by the BoCC.

Energy task force

Earlier in the day during a work session held by the BoCC, Commissioner John Ranson introduced the topic of having an energy task force created.

Ranson indicated the matter was first brought up over a month ago, explaining that he was looking for direction from Harper as to how to move forward in creating the task force.

"Do we need to start talking to potential people?" he asked.

Ranson also explained that La Plata Electric Association (LPEA) CEO Chris Hansen is planning to meet with the county due to what Ranson described as "misinformation."

He added, "This is not anything against LPEA, this is looking out for the best interest of Archuleta County and where we wanna be 10, 15, 20 years from now."

He also noted that based on "everything transpiring," he thought it'd be a good idea for the county to create

an energy task force.

Ranson then emphasized again that "this has nothing to do with LPEA or the vote or anything like that. This is more taking care of Archuleta County."

Commissioner Warren Brown expressed support, stating, "I actually think this is a good idea, John."

Harper mentioned that he'd like to work with Ranson on getting some things "drilled down," such as expectations of the group and the time commitment expected.

Commissioner Veronica Medina suggested that this could be an opportunity for the county's "strategic champions" to be involved.

Medina also explained that this topic has stemmed from the power outages the county has experienced in the past couple of years, noting they are happening "more frequently."

Brown also suggested the task force could focus on the need of getting more power available in order to develop industrial areas in the county.

clayton@pagosahun.com

Pagosa Springs High School student earns Daniels Scholarship

Daniels Fund

The Daniels Fund announced on April 2 its 2025 class of Daniels Scholarship Program recipients, which includes Pagosa Springs High School's Jesse Beck.

The Fund selected 230 high school seniors from Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming — including 156 students from Colorado.

As part of the Daniels Fund's 25th anniversary celebration, 25 additional young men and women received a Daniels Scholarship this year.

Over its 25-year history, the fund has awarded more than \$275 million in scholarships to over 5,400 students.

The Daniels Scholarship is one of the most selective and sought-after scholarships in the United States.

"It's an honor to award 230 four-year college scholarships to young men and women who are excellent students and who demonstrated their ambition to lead successful lives of character and service," said Hanna Skandera, Daniels Fund president and CEO. "All of us who had the pleasure of interviewing these new Daniels Scholars were inspired by this rising generation of Americans."

As part of the interview process, 180 top business and community leaders from the Daniels Fund's four-state region interviewed prospective scholars.

Students are selected for their strength of character, leadership potential, commitment to serving the community, academic potential and financial need. As the living legacy of Daniels Fund founder Bill Daniels, Daniels Scholars embody the values he most cherished.

Daniels Scholars may use their scholarship at any accredited non-profit college or university in the United States. They have their full cost of attendance covered at partner schools and up to \$100,000 over four years if they choose to attend another school.

At any given time, around 900 Daniels Scholars are attending approximately 200 colleges and universities throughout the United States.

Motivated high school seniors graduating in 2026 are encouraged to visit DanielsFund.org this September to apply online for the Daniels Scholarship Program.

About the Daniels Scholarship Program

The Daniels Scholarship Program provides a four-year college scholarship for graduating high school seniors with great potential, strong character, and big dreams. Daniels Scholars receive full cost of attendance at partner schools, or up to \$100,000 at other schools across the United States.

More than just a financial resource making college possible, the Daniels Scholarship gives recipients access to intensive development, coaching and engagement opportunities to prepare them as highly sought-after employees and leaders ready to give back to their communities and positively influence American life.

Through the scholarship, Daniels scholars receive the tools and support to achieve their highest goals, resulting in generationally transformative impacts for their families and communities.

About the Daniels Fund

Established by cable television pioneer Bill Daniels, the Daniels

Fund is a private charitable foundation dedicated to improving American life, with particular focus on Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming. In addition to the Daniels Scholarship program, the fund invests in nonprofits through its grants program and sponsors an ethics initiative. It is celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2025.

Visit DanielsFund.org to learn more.

Card of Thanks

Pagosa Springs Rotary clubs

The Pagosa Springs Rotary clubs would like to share our gratitude to all the organizations, families and individuals for contributions of food, money, storage space and time to make our Feed Our Children program so successful in its 13th year. Your generous support has allowed us to provide weekend food for the children in 41 families in the program.

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Sports

BASKETBALL



SUN photo/Randi Pierce

Four Lady Pirate basketball players were recently recognized by the Intermountain League for their work on the court during the winter season. From left, Kylie Ketchum was named to the all-conference team, Karsyn Shahan was named to the all-conference team and was the league's player of the year, Elizabeth Currier was named to the all-conference team, and Amber Snarr earned an honorable mention.

TRACK

Pirates log seven firsts at Bayfield meet

By Randi Pierce
Staff Writer

A limited number of Pagosa Springs High School Pirate track and field team competed at the Bayfield Invite 2 on March 29.

Coach Connie O'Donnell indicates in an email to The SUN not many competed due to the meet being over spring break.

But, regardless of the numbers, O'Donnell indicates Sienna Rose, Abi Nehring and Colton Lucero stood out, with all three taking first in multiple events.

Rose won the 100-, 200- and 400-meter dash events. She ran a time of 13.36 seconds in the 100, 27.57 seconds in the 200 and one minute, 3.8 seconds in the 400.

O'Donnell notes Rose "significantly bettered her time in the 400 meter. She is currently ranked 9th in

the event in the state in 3A."

Nehring took first in both the discus and shot put.

In the discus, Nehring threw a distance of 126 feet, 10 inches. She led in the shot put with a distance of 33-7.50.

"Abi was able to win both throwing events. She is still ranked 1st in the state in 3A for discus. She improved her shot and is now ranked 7th in the state," O'Donnell wrote. "Abi's leadership with the rest of the throwers is making a difference too. All of our throwers seem to be improving daily."

In the discus, Malorie Morton finished second with a throw of 101-6, with Liana Vega taking fifth with a distance of 79-9.

In the shot put, Morton finished third with a distance of 28-2.25 and Vega took eighth with a throw of 25-2.50.

Madisen Stretton competed in the triple jump at the invite, taking eighth with a jump of 24-6.50.

On the boys' side, Lucero took first in both the 100 and 200, with O'Donnell noting he improved his times in both races.

Lucero ran the 100 in 11.14 seconds and the 200 in 22.93 seconds. "He improved both his 100 and 200 meter times," O'Donnell highlights. "He is ranked 5th in the state in the 100 and 11th in the 200."

Three other Pirates also competed in the 100, with Gavin Carter running a time of 12.12 seconds to finish eighth, Jonathan Rodriguez taking 35th with a time of 13.32 seconds and Connor Kirkham taking 55th with a time of 14.51 seconds.

Four other Pirates competed in the 200. Carter ran a time of 24.78 to finish fourth, Jonathan Baker finished 15th in 25.89 seconds, Rodriguez finished 32nd in 27.89 seconds and Jerry Su finished 3th in 28.49 seconds.

Trevor Faber took 12th in the 400, running a time of 59.19 seconds.

Weston Sweet garnered 10th in the 800-meter run with a time of 2:35.71.

Sweet took 14th in the 1,600-meter run with a time of 6:08.74, with Eli Nehring following in 15th in 6:10.80.

Eli Nehring garnered fourth in the 3,200-meter run with a time of 13:09.25.

Jeremiah Jones was the sole Pirate to take part in several events.

In the 110-meter hurdles, Jones took second with a time of 17.74 seconds.

"Jeremiah Jones keeps improving his hurdle times," the coach highlights. "If he can get down into the 16s in the 110 hurdles, there is a good

chance that he could make it to state in the event."

Jones took fourth in the 300-meter hurdles with a time of 46.59 seconds. He also took fourth in the high jump with a height of 6 feet.

With a distance of 37-3.50, Jones took third in the triple jump.

Four Pirates took part in the long jump, with Lucero taking second with a jump of 19-2. Baker took sixth with a distance of 17-2. Vincent Fish followed in ninth with a jump of 16-10.5. Kirkham notched 25th with a jump of 13-10.5.

In discus, Emile Schneider led the Pirates with a throw of 116-0 to take second. Aidan Vega finished fourth with a throw of 106-0. Davian Coss finished 15th with a throw of 67-5.

Schneider took sixth in shot put with a throw of 33-7.00. Vega followed in 10th with a distance of 29-7.75. Lincoln Butler finished 13th with a throw of 28-10.00. Coss notched 20th with a throw of 25-4.00.

This week, the Pirate varsity squad will head to Pueblo for the John Tate Invitational, which is slated to kick off at 9 a.m. on Friday, April 4, weather permitting.

"We are excited to see some different competition on Friday in Pueblo," O'Donnell wrote. "The meet is at Dutch Clark Stadium which hosted the 3A state track meet for years before the event included all classifications together in Denver. There will still be 2 schools from our conference, Alamosa and Centauri. As excited as we are about the competition, we are a bit worried about the weather."

According to the National Weather Service, Pueblo is likely to see rain and snow Friday.

randi@pagosasun.com

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SOCCER

Lady Pirates to host Montezuma-Cortez for Saturday matchup

By Clayton Chaney
Staff Writer

The Pagosa Springs High School Lady Pirate soccer team will return to action this weekend after a two-week spring break hiatus.

The Lady Pirates' season resumes this Saturday, April 5, as the team hosts its first Intermountain League (IML) game of the year against the Montezuma-Cortez Panthers at 11 a.m. at Golden Peaks Stadium.

Action will continue for the Lady Pirates on Tuesday, April 8, as the team heads to Del Norte to take on the Del Norte Tigers at 4 p.m.

Coach Trevor Gian explained the team is "trying to get back in the

swing of things" after spring break.

He explained the Lady Pirates are focusing on "situational training" in practice and looking how to develop more of a "tactical approach," along with preparing to play in some nasty weather this weekend with the forecast predicting cold, wet and windy conditions.

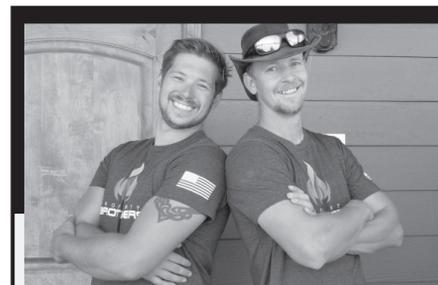
Gian also spoke about the importance of IML matchups, noting that the results of those games will heavily influence the Lady Pirates' chances of making it into the playoffs.

He explained the team is focusing on being more aggressive in its attacking play and planning on "really trying to go after 'em" to create more scoring opportunities.

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BASKETBALL



SUN photo/Randi Pierce

A pair of Pirate basketball players were recently recognized by the Intermountain League for their work on the court during the winter season. Seth Zeigler, left, earned an honorable mention, and Colt Lewis was named to the all-conference team.

BASEBALL

Pirates return to action following break

By Randi Pierce
Staff Writer

The Pagosa Springs High School Pirate baseball team returned to action on Wednesday, April 2, following spring break.

While the team was not originally scheduled to return to action until April 8, coach Ben Garcia noted that the team was able to add a game against the 2A Trinidad Miners.

"We had all those games canceled early on," Garcia said, noting there has been an attempt to see if the school could arrange more games for the team.

That, he indicated, has been "kind of crazy."

On Monday, Trinidad was available, but no neutral field was available for the teams to meet at. On Tuesday, no officials were available.

The team was finally able to play in Monte Vista Wednesday afternoon. "Monte Vista really helped us out," Garcia said.

The Pirates entered the game with a 3-0 record, with the Miners owning an 0-1 record.

Garcia explained Tuesday he was

hoping the team would respond well after not having played since March 18.

"I'm hoping that we are able to respond better than we did last year," he said, adding the team was sluggish after the break last year and was not prepared.

The emphasis heading into the break, he indicated, was to come back better than when they left if possible.

"I think we were doing some really good things prior to the break," the coach said. "So, I'm excited to see how we come out."

While several of the team's varsity players were gone for all of break, Garcia indicated, 12-15 players continued to work locally at open practices.

He added he's interested in seeing what some of the freshmen who were at practices over break can do.

"I'm really excited to see some of our freshmen that have, you know, responded and look pretty good," he said, adding they'll be given an opportunity. "It's a great time to see what they can do, and it only makes us deeper if they're capable."

He added he hopes to see them catch the balls hit to them, make

routine plays, swing the bat and be aggressive at the plate within reason.

"They've been doing a good job of that," he said, adding that, more than anything, he's excited for the team to play.

Results of the matchup were not available by press time Wednesday and will be included in the April 10 issue of The SUN.

Following the game against the Miners, the Pirates will travel to Sanford on Tuesday, April 8, to face the 20 Mustangs beginning at 3 p.m.

The Mustangs held a 2-1 record heading into a Wednesday doubleheader against the Centauri Falcons.

Garcia noted Sanford is "always a very good team" and is athletic in all sports.

He added the game will be another good test as the team gets back in the swing of things.

In each of the games, the coach noted, the Pirates will be playing against themselves and working to continue getting better.

They'll also be looking to see who the team's No. 2 and No. 3 starters are behind Cooper Ralston.

randi@pagosasun.com

Public Notices

FOR PLANNING COMMISSION HEARING ON APRIL 24, 2025

LES FAUST has applied for a WAREHOUSE AND MINI STORAGE, CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT on the Parcel of SEC 20, T2N 35, R1W 2W, in the Pagosa Village Service Commercial Subdivision at 513 Park Avenue, Pagosa Springs, CO (PLN-CUP-25-025). The property is zoned COMMERCIAL (C).

Comments regarding this case may be submitted to Archuleta County Development Services-Planning Department, P.O. Box 1507, Pagosa Springs, CO 81147-1507, telephone: (970) 264-1390 or to Planning@archuletacounty.org prior to the public hearing by the Archuleta County Planning Commission on April 24, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in the County Commissioners Meeting Room, 398 Lewis Street, Pagosa Springs and via Zoom Link.

Published April 3 and 17, 2025 *The Pagosa Springs SUN* (261211)

NOTICE OF CANCELLATION AND CERTIFIED STATEMENT OF RESULTS

§1-13.5-513(6), §2-1-104, 1-11-103(3) C.R.S. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN the Upper San Juan Health Service District db/a/ Pagosa Springs Medical Center, Archuleta and portions of Hinsdale and Mineral Counties, Colorado, that at the close of business on the sixty-third day before the election, there were not more candidates for director than offices to be filled, including candidates filing affidavits of intent to be write-in candidates; therefore, the election to be held on May 6, 2025 is hereby canceled pursuant to section 1-13.5-513(6) C.R.S.

The following candidates are hereby declared elected: Kate Alfred - Four (4) year term until May, 2029 Wayne Hooper - Four (4) year term until May, 2029 Erik Foss - Four (4) year term until May, 2029 Ashley Wilson - Four (4) year term until May, 2029 Mark Floyd - Two (2) year term until May, 2027 Kathy Campbell - Two (2) year term until May, 2027 Antonette Martinez Designated Election Official Contact Person for the District: Antonette Martinez, DEO Telephone Number of the District: (970) 507-3814 Address of the District: 95 S. Pagosa Blvd., Pagosa Springs, CO 81147 District Email: DEO@PSMedicalCenter.org Published April 3, 2025 in *The Pagosa Springs SUN*. (261199)

PUBLIC NOTICE OF PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME

Public Notice is given on March 20, 2025 that a Petition for a Change of Name of an Adult has been filed with the Archuleta Combined Court. The Petition requests that the name of Eric Carl Winter-Tamkin be changed to Eric Carl Winter. By Nancy McBroom, Deputy Clerk. Published March 27 and April 3, 10, 2025 in *The Pagosa Springs Sun*. (260873)

SHAWN TUNNELL AND ANY OTHER INTERESTED PARTY ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and required to appear and defend against the claims of the complaint filed with the court in this action, by filing with the clerk of the court an answer or other response to Civil Action No. 2024CV030074, District Court, Archuleta County, State of Colorado, Plaintiff Michael Maestas V. Defendant Shawn Tunnell, an individual. You are required to file your answer or other response within 35 days after the service of this summons upon you. Service of this

summons shall be complete on the day of the last publication. A copy of the complaint may be obtained from the clerk of the court.

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

This is an action in which Plaintiff is seeking to establish an access easement in their favor and against the named Defendant. The real property at issue is known as 380 Catchpole Dr., Pagosa Springs, CO 81147.

Plaintiff's attorney of record is Lucas P. Schaffer, Atty. Reg. No. 56597, 900 S. Main Street Suite 100, Longmont, CO 80501. Published March 13, 20, 27, April 3, 10, 2025 in *The Pagosa Springs SUN*. (259515)

REAL PROPERTY TAXPAYER REMEDIES (Media Release)

NAME AND ADDRESS OF CONTACT: Sherril Boyce - Hinsdale County Assessor PO Box 28 Lake City, CO 81295 TELEPHONE NUMBER: 970-944-2225 ext. 140 For tax years 2025 and 2026, the county assessor is required by law to appraise all real property at a June 30, 2024 level of value. Notices of Valuation reflecting the 2025 values will be sent to owners of real property by May 1. The information used by the assessor to value your property is available for your review.

From May 2 through June 9, owners of real property may protest the value or the classification established by the assessor. This protest period provides an opportunity for taxpayers to inform the assessor of errors in classification, property description, or other discrepancies that may result in a reduction in value or a change in classification.

Protests to the assessor must be postmarked or presented in person on or before June 9. The assessor must make a decision concerning your protest and mail you a written Notice of Determination on or before the last working day in June.

If you are satisfied with the assessor's determination, the tax bill you receive next January will be based on the value and classification reflected on the Notice of Determination.

If you disagree with the assessor's decision, you may file an appeal with the county board of equalization. An appeal to the county board of equalization must be postmarked or hand-delivered no later than July 15. The county board will notify you by mail of the hearing date, time, and place where you may present evidence to substantiate your case. Evidence includes documentation such as the sale prices of properties similar to yours that sold between January 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024 (or up to 5 years if necessary). The county board will conclude hearings and render decisions by the close of business on August 5. The county board must mail you a decision within five business days of the date of its decision. If you are satisfied with the county board's decision, the tax bill you receive next January will be based on the valuation and classification reflected in the county board's decision.

If you disagree with the county board, you may file an appeal with the State Board of Assessment Appeals or the district court, or you may request a binding arbitration hearing. Your appeal must be made within 30 days of the date of the county board's decision. For additional information regarding the protest and appeal process, contact your county assessor at 970-944-2225 ext. 140. Published April 3, 2025 in *The Pagosa Springs SUN*. (260998)

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.

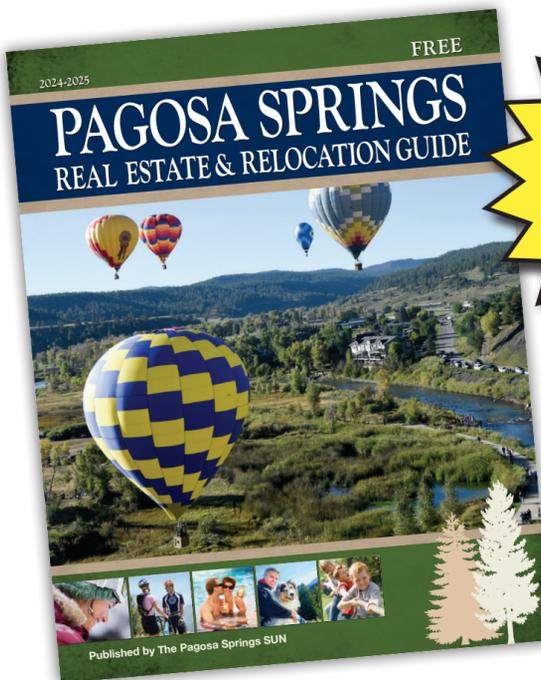
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Outdoors

Community outdoor recreation survey open

Pagosa Area Recreation Coalition

What do you think about the recreation opportunities in the Pagosa Springs area? How should land managers prioritize future management investments?

The Pagosa Area Recreation Coalition (PARC) is conducting a survey

to better understand recreation priorities and explore interest in future projects and funding mechanisms.

Access the survey at PagosaParc.org.

PARC is a local coalition dedicated to supporting the development of a sustainable recreation plan for the study area region, which includes the

Town of Pagosa Springs, Archuleta County, and portions of Mineral and Hinsdale counties.

Representatives from each of the primary land management agencies (county, town, U.S. Forest Service, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and the Pagosa Lakes Property Owners Association) lead this coalition and

ensure thoughtful collaboration and coordination.

Your input will help this coalition better understand the needs and desires of the community and fine-tune future recommendations relating to recreation management.

Visit PagosaParc.org to learn more about PARC.

Wildfire mitigation grants announced

By Kristy Burnett

Colorado State Forest Service

On April 1, Gov. Jared Polis and the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) announced \$7.04 million in wildfire mitigation grants.

In total, the CSFS will award the \$7.04 million to 37 projects in 26 counties across Colorado.

Included in the funding is Wildfire Adapted Partnership for community fuels reduction in Southwest Colorado

Colorado's diverse forests cover more than 24 million acres, and they provide crucial benefits, including clean air and water, habitat for wildlife, outdoor recreation and more.

All of these values that Colorado's forests provide are at risk of wildfire. Since 2018, the state of Colorado has provided funding to assist communities and groups across Colorado to reduce their wildfire risk and promote forest health through the Forest Restoration and Wildfire Risk Mitigation (FRWRM) grant program, administered by the CSFS.

"Preventing wildfires is an all-

hands-on-deck effort in Colorado. Wildfires continue to be a serious threat to Colorado communities, and investing in fire mitigation initiatives and helping communities create defensible spaces helps all Coloradans and firefighters to be better prepared in the event of a fire emergency. This \$7.04 million in wildfire grants will provide the essential resources that are crucial to continue building resilience to wildfires across Colorado," Polis said.

The FRWRM grant program has a matching requirement, either through cash or in-kind contributions.

Award recipients in areas with fewer economic resources, as defined by the social vulnerability index layer within the Colorado Forest Atlas, must match 25 percent of the project total, and all other award recipients must match 50 percent of the total project cost, amounting to nearly \$9 million in match.

With these matching funds included, communities and groups across Colorado will invest about \$16 million in efforts dedicated to forest

restoration and wildfire mitigation. The projects awarded in this funding cycle will also build capacity for wildfire mitigation projects through staffing and equipment purchases.

The funding for this round of FRWRM awards will help Coloradans complete the following activities:

- Build community capacity to address wildfire.
- Reduce the risk of wildfire to people, property and infrastructure.
- Promote forest health and restoration.
- Encourage the use of wood from forest health and fuels reduction projects.

"Addressing forest health and wildfire mitigation at the local level is the most efficient and effective way to make Colorado's forests more resilient," said Matt McCombs, state forester and director of the CSFS. "This funding is crucial each year to protect our homes, critical infrastructure and our way of life."

For the 2024-2025 round of FRWRM grants, the CSFS received 95 eligible applications requesting nearly

\$25 million. Since \$7.04 million was available for this round of grants, 58 projects totaling nearly \$15.4 million could not be funded. In addition, of the 37 awarded projects, the CSFS could only partially fund six of them, leaving about \$2.5 million of their original requests unfunded.

"The Colorado State Forest Services FRWRM grant is a critical element in our overall state efforts to improve forest health and reduce the risk of wildfires on our landscapes, and creating fire-adapted communities," said Dan Gibbs, executive director of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources. "Colorado is one lightning strike and one unattended campfire away from our next wildfire. With about half of all Coloradans living in the wildland-urban interface, these grants provide important capacity for locally and regionally driven wildfire prevention efforts."

The CSFS will announce the next round of funding assistance through the FRWRM grant program in the fall. For information about the program, visit the CSFS website.

Commissioners approve cancellation of taxes on Forest Service property

By Clayton Chaney

Staff Writer

A plot of land located off of County Road 193, near Chimney Rock National Monument, was recently returned to its rightful owner — the U.S. Forest Service (USFS).

The Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) unanimously approved Resolution 2025-24 during a regular meeting on March 18, canceling uncollectable tax assessments on a property located at X County Road 193.

Earlier that day, County Treasurer Elsa White briefed the BoCC on the matter during a work session, explaining that she first noticed the property when she took office in 2019 as it was listed as a "no tax sale" account due to the possibility of the USFS owning the land.

White explained that she consulted with the assessor's office and was unable to find any documentation on the property, though she opted not to take it to tax sale if for some reason the USFS did in fact own the parcel, which is approximately

80 acres.

White then mentioned that in February, someone inquired about the property, explaining she received an email from a USFS employee providing documentation showing the land was acquired by the USFS through a quit claim deed that was initiated in 1907 and finalized in 1908.

According to a notice from the USFS attached in the March 18 BoCC meeting agenda, "Archuleta County, Colorado, erroneously foreclosed upon federal land and sold land

parcels for tax delinquency. Said tax parcels were created in error, and the property therein is not subject to County taxation, nor may said property be foreclosed upon or sold for non-payment of taxes."

White explained that her request to the BoCC was to cancel the collection of taxes from years 2018 to 2022 in the amount of \$9,241.25.

"It rightfully belongs to the Forest Service," White said.

Commissioner Warren Brown asked how a situation like this happens, to which White replied, "They

really do not know how this got past them."

County Attorney Todd Weaver mentioned that this will help "clean up the books."

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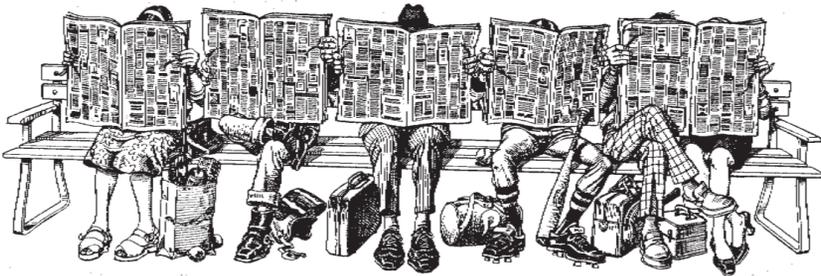
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Photo courtesy Bob Endres

This tom was seen strutting near Eight Mile Mesa earlier this week. Reportedly, the nearby hens were unimpressed and declined to pay the tom any attention.

Report: Outbreaks of forest pests spread during warm year

By Kristy Burnett
Colorado State Forest Service

The annual forest health report, released by the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS), assesses the condition of Colorado's forests during another warm, dry year for the state.

Following a wet and cool year in 2023, the shift back to near-record temperatures and below-average precipitation in Colorado last year stressed trees needing several years of mild conditions to build defenses against attack from forest pests.

Bark beetles and other insects are building populations in forests across the state and changing fuel dynamics for wildfire as they leave dead and dying trees in their wake.

"Trees in Colorado can't catch a break as our climate becomes warmer and dryer in Colorado," said Matt McCombs, state forester and director of the CSFS. "This ongoing trend toward persistent drought and higher temperatures not only makes trees easier prey for insects, but it increases the risk of large and severe wildfires. Couple that with more people living in areas prone to burn and the state faces enormous challenges. The good news is we know Colorado is on the right path to address these challenges and foster forests and communities that are resilient to wildfire and forest pests."

2024 key takeaways

The 2024 report on the health of Colorado's forests details what insects and diseases remain the most prevalent forest health issues and where they are increasing their footprints, as well as the science behind the management actions taken to promote wildfire-resilient forests and healthy watersheds.

• **Insects and diseases:** Western spruce budworm remains the most widespread forest pest in Colorado, according to aerial survey data from

the CSFS and U.S. Forest Service Rocky Mountain Region. Data from the aerial survey also indicate mountain pine beetle continues to build populations along the Front Range, in Gunnison County and in parts of southwest Colorado; acres of trees killed by Douglas-fir beetle surpassed a level not seen in nearly a decade; and western balsam bark beetle remains the deadliest forest pest in Colorado for the third year in a row. This year's report contains interactive maps and data for the public and land managers to see where insects are impacting forests.

• **Wildfire-resilient forests:** The CSFS and its partners take a science-based approach to managing forests so they are resilient to wildfire. In this year's report, the CSFS cites peer-reviewed research that underpins the principles of forest management, because active management is critical to help keep wildfires at a low severity and protect the many benefits that forests provide.

• **Healthy watersheds:** Colorado's forested watersheds are vital to the nation's fresh water supply. With a dry climate, frequent droughts in Colorado and growing demand for water, protecting this water supply is a high priority for the CSFS and its partners. This year's report details how high-severity wildfire can impact water quality, provides examples of costly wildfires that degraded water infrastructure, and describes actions the CSFS and water providers take to promote healthy watersheds.

Regional forest health issues

The 2024 forest health report gives an update on the most prevalent forest pests on a regional level:

• **Northeast Colorado:** Mountain pine beetle is making a comeback along the Front Range after devastating 80 percent of pine forests in Colorado from 1996-2014. In addition,

emerald ash borer continues its spread across the northern Front Range with Fort Collins, Loveland, Lakewood and Centennial all reporting detections of this deadly, non-native insect.

• **Southeast Colorado:** Western spruce budworm remains widespread in this part of the state, infesting 26,000 acres of forests in Park County alone last year. Spruce beetle is making a notable impact in forests in Costilla, Custer, Huerfano and Park counties, while mountain pine beetle continues to infest pine trees along the margins of the 2013 Black Forest Fire burn scar in El Paso County.

• **Southwest Colorado:** Western spruce budworm, Douglas-fir beetle and spruce beetle are prominent issues in many counties across southwest Colorado. The roundheaded pine beetle complex expanded its footprint in the Glade area of the San Juan National Forest northwest of Dolores, as well as the Naturita Canyon and Iron Spring Mesa areas of San Miguel County.

• **Northwest Colorado:** Across higher elevations in northwest Colorado, subalpine fir trees continue to succumb to western balsam bark beetle acting alongside fungi that cause root decay. Piñon Ips beetle is attacking piñon pine trees in Garfield, Mesa and Pitkin counties, while Douglas-fir beetle has heavily impacted Douglas-fir forests in those same counties along with Eagle County.

Each year, the forest health report provides information to the Colorado General Assembly and residents of Colorado about the health and condition of forests across the state.

Information for the report comes from an annual aerial forest health survey by the CSFS and U.S. Forest Service Rocky Mountain Region, as well as field inspections, CSFS contacts with forest landowners and special surveys.

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preview

ARTS & LIFE

Brews for Rescues

Noon to 5 p.m. • April 26 • Archuleta County Fairgrounds



Brews for Rescues to offer craft beer, live music and medieval combat for a pawsome cause

By Shane Lucero
Rugby's Rescue House

Get ready for an unforgettable day of craft beer, live music and high-energy entertainment — all for a great cause.

Brews for Rescues is returning to the Archuleta County Fairgrounds, bringing together more than 40 beers from some of the region's best breweries to support Rugby's Rescue House, a local dog rescue dedicated to giving pups a second chance at a happy home.

Brews for Rescues will be from noon to 5 p.m. on April 26 at the Archuleta County Fairgrounds. Admission, which includes unlimited beer tastings, is \$25 online or \$35 at the door.

There will be live music by A-Mac and The Height, offering Denver based genre-blending fusion of reggae, hip-hop, funk and alternative rock with powerful, hook-driven songwriting. Check out their music at <https://amacandtheheight.com/>.

There will also be food trucks with local flavors to keep you fueled for the fun.

Proceeds benefit Rugby's Rescue House. New this year will be the Brewfest Brawls — live armored combat.

Brewfest Brawls will kick off at 1 p.m. on the fairgrounds campus. This full-contact, medieval-inspired combat sport features warriors in historically inspired armor battling it out with blunted weapons in duels, team fights and epic melees.

It's a one-of-a-kind spectacle that will make this spring kickoff event even more legendary.

So, whether you're coming for the beer, the beats or the battles, there's something for everyone at Brews for Rescues. Don't miss out — get your tickets now at brewsforrescues2025.eventbrite.com before they're gone.

About Rugby's Rescue House

Rugby's Rescue House is a nonprofit dedicated to rescuing and rehabilitating dogs in need, ensuring they find loving forever homes. Every sip at Brews for Rescues helps provide medical care, food and shelter to pups waiting for their second chance.

For more information, visit www.rugbysrescue.com.

Earth Day celebration planned for April 19

By Pauline Benetti
Southwest Organization for Sustainability

This is the year to celebrate Earth Day. This is the year for everyone to come out and identify as a stakeholder in the future of our planet.

The date? April 19 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. The place? Centennial Park. The sponsor, the Southwest Organization for Sustainability (SOS), requests that you add that information to your

calendar.

The Early Mindfulness Hour from 9 to 10 a.m. will include the earth blessing, a land acknowledgment, a sound bath, yoga in the park and a wetland tour with the Riverwalk Naturalist Program. Participants will be setting up their displays during this hour and be ready to greet visitor by 10 a.m.

From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., visitors can enjoy a community tea gathering, World Migratory Bird Day, tours of

the Geothermal Greenhouse Partnership's Education Dome and the used clothing swap. For children, there will be chalk art. There will also be food trucks. For the first time there will be a creative open mic slam to which are invited musicians of all stripes, singers and poets.

Everyone who had a booth last year has already received an invitation to this year's celebration. Those

■ See Celebration on next page

Live Performers

- Thursday**
The Pagosa Bar: Karaoke, 7:30 p.m.
- Friday**
The Springs Resort lodge atrium: Jason Rose, 5 p.m.
- Saturday**
The Springs Resort lodge atrium: Maxwell Miller, 5 p.m.
- Tuesday**
The Springs Resort lodge atrium: Dustin Burley, 5 p.m.

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Owner, CEO
Jim O'Rourke, jorouke@orourkemediagroup.com
Publisher, Advertising, Circulation
Shari Pierce, shari@pagosasun.com
Editor
Randi Pierce, editor@pagosasun.com
Reporters
Josh Pike, josh@pagosasun.com
Derek Kutzer, derek@pagosasun.com
Clayton Chaney, clayton@pagosasun.com
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Cristin Flanagan, classads@pagosasun.com
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San Juan Stargazers to see demonstration of star lab April 3

By Joan Mieritz
San Juan Stargazers

The monthly meeting of the San Juan Stargazers will be on April 3. We will meet at the regular time of 6 p.m. for our social time. We will meet at our regular location — the Community United Methodist Church at 434 Lewis St. Please use the convenient parking lot and side door that leads into the kitchen and fellowship hall. We keep the front doors locked.

At 7 p.m. we will walk together one block to Pagosa Springs Middle School for a demonstration of the star lab.

We need to arrive together because the door will not be left open after we are inside, and we will also lock the church while we are gone.

About six years ago, before COVID, the Stargazers contributed \$1,000 as a club, and several individual contributions were made of several more hundred dollars by club members.

The star lab cost around \$50,000 and can be used to teach several different areas of science at various levels of instruction.

It should be a super educational program, as well as being a lot of fun.

Chimney Rock Interpretive Association programs

Last week, the Chimney Rock Interpretive Association (CRIA) team lead-

Kindergarten open house set at Pagosa Springs Elementary School

By Sally Geren
Pagosa Springs Elementary School

Please join us for our kindergarten open house on Wednesday, April 9, from 4 to 6 p.m.

This is an opportunity for you to meet us and learn more about what to expect next school year.

We look forward to seeing you.

Celebration

continued from previous page who are interested for the first time, please consider this an invitation. All you need is a table, something to give away and a willingness to engage visitors as they pass by. To help pay expenses there will be a small fee (\$20 for businesses, \$15 for nonprofits).

For more information or to sign up, contact SOS at sworgsus@gmail.com.

ers of the many educational programs offered at Chimney Rock met to decide how to handle the Forest Service government cuts.

We are basically going to try to do the regular programming as close as possible to what we have done in the past.

We will be doing seven regular night sky programs and two Perseid meteor shower programs in August.

We will use telescopes whenever possible, but rain and especially lightning place necessary restrictions for our safety.

Night sky programs are on Fridays. Following is a list of planned programs:

- May 30: The gate will open at 7:30 p.m. and the program will start at 8:15

■ See Stargazers on next page

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Pagosa Peak Genealogical Society to meet Saturday

By Carolyn Paschal
Pagosa Peak Genealogical Society

The Pagosa Peak Genealogical Society will hold its regular monthly meeting this Saturday, April 5.

We will meet from 10 a.m. to noon at the Community United Methodist Church, 434 Lewis St., in the fellowship hall.

There will be a short business meeting followed by a presentation by Jeanine Angle Dobbins.

Dobbins is a staff genealogist for the national society of the Daughters of the American Revolution. She has been researching her own family history for over 25 years, documenting her family in the United States back to a Jamestowne resident in the 1600s.

She earned her B.A. cum laude in history with a minor in mathematics from California State University, Northridge, and master's degree in history from the same institution. She put her training in research to work as a real estate land title abstractor for the law firm of Whitehead and McCoy, in Natchitoches, La., after her graduation.

tion. She and her late husband, David, retired to Durango in 1993.

In addition to the Daughters of the American Revolution, she has established membership in U.S. Daughters of 1812, Colonial Dames XVII Century, Jamestowne Society, Dames of the Court of Honor, Associated Daughters of Early American Witches, the Order of the Crown of Charlemagne, Daughters of American Colonists, Daughters of the Union 1861-1865, Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Magna Charta Dames and Barons, National Society of New England Women, Order of Descendants of Colonial Cavaliers, Sons and Daughters of Pilgrims, and National Society Women Descendants of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company.

Dobbins lives in Durango, where she is the mother of two feline fur babies, Tommy and Buddy.

The topic of her program is "Full-Text Search: Greatest Innovation Since Sliced Bread."

Familysearch.org launched its full-text search engine about a year

ago. It has enabled genealogists to find records for their ancestors in locations that were unexpected. Stories of finding documents in minutes that researchers had unsuccessfully been searching for are common. Dobbins will take us on a tour of the program and give us tips on how to use it.

The genealogical society meets on the first Saturday of each month. It hosts guest speakers on a wide range of topics relating to genealogy and history, including the rich history of our local area. We are a member of the Colorado Council of Genealogical Societies, where we have access to professional speakers from across the state. Our society has also partnered with the Town of Pagosa Springs in its ongoing efforts to research and improve our local cemeteries.

Visitors are encouraged to attend our meetings, so please join us this Saturday to learn more about this informative topic.

For more information, please contact Carolyn Paschal at carolynpaschal@gmail.com or check out our website, pagosapeaks.org.

Stargazers

■ continued from previous page p.m.

- June 20: The gate will open at 7:30 p.m. and the program will start at 8:15 p.m.

- June 27: The gate will open at 7:30 p.m. and the program will start at 8:15 p.m.

- July 18: The gate will open at 7:30 p.m. and the program will start at 8:15 p.m.

- July 25: The gate will open at 7:30 p.m. and the program will start at 8:15 p.m.

- Perseid meteor showers, Aug. 11 and 12: The gate will open at 7:30 p.m. Parking and viewing locations are assigned for safety reasons. The cost is \$10 per person.

- Aug. 30: The gate will open at 6:30 p.m. and the program will start at 7:15 p.m.

- Sept 19: The gate will open at 6:30 p.m. and the program will start at 7:15 p.m.

Making a reservation through Recreation.gov website or the call

center, (877) 444-6777 is the only way to guarantee a spot for this program.

Walk-ins will be accommodated if space is available and will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis and must be during the specified check-in times before the program begins. Walk-in tickets can be paid for at the gift shop.

Locals should feel that they are always welcome because if you come, we will fit you in.

Upcoming

At our San Juan Stargazer Club meeting on May 1 we will be working on our new club lending library.

Detailed information will be shared at our April meeting. We will also have a film presentation about some of the latest discoveries of the James Webb Space Telescope. You will not want to miss this exciting update.

The June 5 meeting will present Tom Hanchett as our speaker after he attends the official 50-year anniversary

of Apollo 13 program in Houston, Texas. It is NASA's most memorable "successful failure," with the film winning two Academy Awards.

In July, Steve McAllister will be in Pagosa for several days of telescope training.

About the Stargazers

If you would like to join the San Juan Stargazers, you will also receive Reflector Magazine, which is the publication of the National Astronomical League of which you automatically become a member. To join both groups and get an excellent astronomy magazine, annual membership is only \$25 per family.

You can join the club at any of our events or you can join using PayPal on our website, sanjuanstargazers.org.

Check out our continuously changing website with new information and spectacular photos. We can be your helpful connection to exploring our extraordinary universe.

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Making a difference: Build Pagosa grows opportunities and eyes future

By Marie Thatcher
Build Pagosa

Once upon a time — this is how this inspiring story could begin — two local businessmen saw a need in their community and decided to take action.

These two men, Larry Ash and Tor Hessman, both builders, didn't hesitate. They knew it was a struggle for any businesses in the construction field to find qualified workers. There was such a shortage that it made it challenging to provide services in Archuleta County and the surrounding areas.

The solution: to train young people to learn the skills. They decided to approach the high school.

At that time, the school wasn't ready to take on these additional classes, so the nonprofit Build Pagosa was born. The organization offered to pay for the entire program, including the career and technical education (CTE) teachers.

Hessman, who early on was told by his own teacher that he had a gift and should teach, took on the task of creating a program in the building trades for the high school.

His program includes three levels, starting with the first core of basic safety and construction skills to general carpentry (general construction, surveying, electricity, plumbing) and, finally, the option for more specialization.

Hessman, a master in construction science, among many other talents and qualifications, started the program with about 12 to 25 students. Now, after just a few years, the program is so popular the classes fill and a waiting list exists. He has more than 120 students per year and counting.

What followed with this successful program of building trades, woodworking and technical drawing is a strong support from many local

construction businesses who donate money and material, and now provide summer internships.

One of the most beautiful and heartwarming results is the fact that about a third of the students said they stayed in school because of the CTE programs. And, if this wasn't enough, about 80 students earned their National Center for Construction Education and Research certifications through rigorous knowledge and performance assessments. This certification gives students the opportunity of a high-paying job anywhere in the USA.

They also earned their Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) card, a certification in occupational safety, with expenses paid by Build Pagosa. This OSHA certification is required for students participating in area summer internships organized by the Pagosa Springs Community Development Corporation (PSCDC).

But, if this still wasn't enough, three of his former students decided to recently participate in a training for Broadband 101 and fiber splicing. This weeklong event was organized by Emily Lashbrook, executive director of the PSCDC, with some financial assistance from Build Pagosa. Students mastered their new skills so well that two of them were offered a job in this high-demand industry while the third one is already employed by a local IT company.

What an amazing opportunity for these high school students — all from the shared vision and deep passion of two men.

In addition to developing valuable trade skills, students understand the importance of giving back to the community by lending their talents to past projects such as a warming shed for the ice rink, the San Juan Mountain School, a mezzanine for the community domes, dividers for

Town Hall and shade structures at Yamaguchi Park.

Hessman, a talented, caring and dedicated CTE teacher for many years, has shared his considerable knowledge with all his students. His deep-rooted passion along with Ash's and Build Pagosa, has provided many students an extraordinary opportunity to learn, discover and excel in new skills, improving employability and ability to earn a great living. That is making a difference.

His hope is to find someone who will carry on his program when he retires and even add a class specializing in electrical work as the numbers of electricians are in decline. He would also love to see a community college take root in Archuleta County. All this can be possible with community involvement.

There are two upcoming opportunities.

Building Trades students constructed dog houses and birdhouses this year to be auctioned off along with items from the other CTE programs, businesses and individuals. This annual dinner/auction event is set for May 2 at the Ross Aragon Community Center.

Build Pagosa, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, is also planning on building a new regional workforce center to benefit not only the CTE students and businesses, but the entire community.

We would love to hear from you. For auction tickets, donations or more information, please contact cindy@buildpagosa.org or marie@buildpagosa.org.

SpiritFire Inspirational Living Center announces upcoming events

By Shayla McClure
SpiritFire Inspirational Living Center

Save the date for the following activities at the SpiritFire Inspirational Living Center:

- April 5, 11 a.m.: "Soul Medicine, Spring Awakening" Himalayan singing bowl meditation and healing session with Scott Maki, Finnish shaman and artist. The cost is a \$25 donation. Reserve your spot now by texting or calling (970) 510-0309.

- April 12, 11 a.m.: Book sale. We are releasing our Spiritual Library books to find a good home. Self help, Mind expansion, Health & wellness books on sale.

- April 12, 6 p.m.: Full moon pink paschal moon drumming circle. A love donation of \$10 will be accepted.

- April 20, 11 a.m.: Easter celebration and potluck.

- April 26: Playshop with Candace Isenberg on "Creating Your Magic with the Elements of Nature."

- May 7, 14 and 21, 6 p.m.: Tarot classes. Sign up by calling (970) 264-7474.

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 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).

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THE SPRINGS RESORT

Unitarian Universalists announce upcoming services

By De Anna Hoyle

Pagosa Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

For our Sunday service on April 6 at 10:30 a.m., we will hear the story "The Singing Stone" as told by Libby Krause.

"A Medicine Story" is not about the creation of aspirin or the side effects of Ozempic, but rather about the healing of the spirit through story. One can hear the same story three or 30 times and get something different from it each time.

If someone thinks, "Oh, I know this story," that story becomes dead to them and they will get nothing from it. "Medicine Stories" can be found in every culture and on every continent, from the Indigenous persons or the people who hear the stories and feel a calling to learn and share them. The story that will be offered is about the healing of strife through the selfless act of love.

We are blessed to have Krause in our midst. Our presenter first came to Pagosa Springs when she was 25. An artist and storyteller, she found Pagosa to be the perfect location to feed her spirit. Krause and her husband bought their home in 2020, but stated, "My heart has been here for decades. It is wonderful to be home."

Each month on the second Sunday, we offer the Going Deeper Sharing Circle from 10:30 a.m. to noon.

On April 13, we will come together in this small-group setting to share with one another and practice deep listening. We explore themes of recent topics and leave space for reflection and for whatever else is on our hearts.

Come make friends and practice the art of listening with others. Light refreshments will be offered.

On April 20, our third Sunday Service will begin at 10:30 a.m. and will focus on celebrating Earth Day 2025. In a talk entitled "Reimagining Together: Listen, Because Kindness Eases Change," the Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth (UUME) helps us deepen practices that put love at the center of our climate justice work — not to avoid acting, but to prepare and sustain us for action. Our service leader, Joan Ward, will be sharing the words of the UUME service, with music by Dave Pettus.

On April 27, our fourth Sunday offering will be Action Sunday at 10:30 a.m. We look forward to meeting and hearing from Leonard Martinez, lead for Friends and Neighbors in Need, a local faith-based organization to help those in need in our community. Come to learn, grow and do good.

Ongoing meditation practice and dharma talk

A shorter meditation practice is held at 9 a.m. the first and third Sundays.

Meditation practice and dharma talk take place from 9 to 10:15 a.m. on the second and fourth Sundays.

This weekly meditation is led by Dan Dempster, a certified meditation instructor and authorized dharma teacher in the Buddhist tradition. Instruction is reviewed at each gathering, which makes it available to newcomers and experienced practitioners alike.

The Pagosa Unitarian Universalist

Fellowship is located at Unit B-15 of the Greenbriar Plaza, 301 N. Pagosa Blvd., on the north side facing Pagosa Peak. We also offer Zoom services the first and third Sundays of the month.

Find our current newsletter at PagosaUU.org for the link to join and to find our current programs.

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Healthy Archuleta to offer professional cultural competency session in mental health

Healthy Archuleta

Healthy communities require collaboration between health care providers and the community, recognizing diverse perspectives and cultural backgrounds. Ongoing intercultural development, self-reflection and understanding cultural contexts are essential.

Archuleta County's rich culture, especially Hispanic and Latino communities, benefits from this approach.

Cultural humility sees each patient as unique, shaped by experiences like heritage, migration, socio-economic status and family. Active listening, valuing cultural knowledge and collaborative relationships honor traditions. This builds trust, reduces disparities and improves care quality for Latino individuals with mental health challenges. Addressing mental health stigma in the Hispanic and Latino community encourages open discussion and seeking help.

Psychiatrist Dr. Jose Canaca, a board-certified psychiatrist and associate professor at the University of

New Mexico (UNM), will visit Pagosa Springs this April for mental health literacy and cultural competency training for health care providers.

Canaca has extensive experience working in rural communities in Latin America and New Mexico, serving vulnerable populations like Native Americans, Hispanic/Latino communities and immigrants. He leads cultural psychiatry lectures at UNM and has collaborated with COMISCA.

The training will take place on Monday, April 7, at 5 p.m., and two hours of CME credits will be offered to health care professional attendees who maintain CME along with dinner. Space is limited. If you are a health care professional and interested in attending, please RSVP to fs-fearchuleta@gmail.com by Thursday, April 3, to confirm your spot.

To learn more about the efforts of Healthy Archuleta, please visit our website at www.foodcoalition4archuleta.org.

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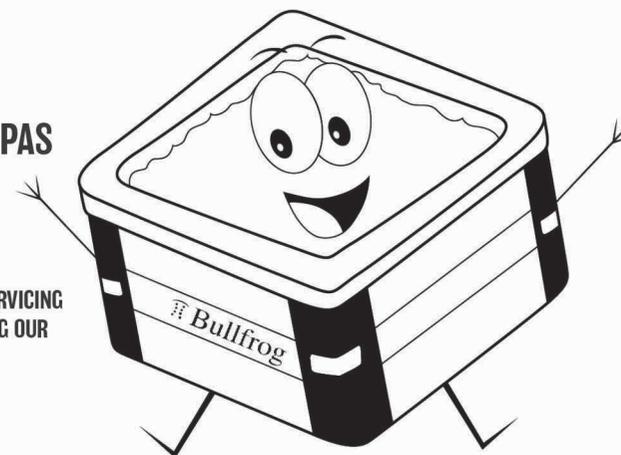
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Photo courtesy Shanna Robb

The Pagosa Springs Catholic Community will have a Blessing of the Easter Baskets at noon on April 19. A short ceremony will be held at Pope John Paul II Catholic Church, located at 353 S. Pagosa Blvd.

Pagosa Springs Catholic Community to hold Blessing of the Easter Baskets on April 19

By Shanna Robb
Pagosa Springs Catholic Community

For centuries, the Eastern European ritual known as “Blessing of the Easter Baskets” has been cherished around the world by Catholics and Orthodox Christians. Rich in symbolism, the beloved Holy Saturday tradition blesses the food that will be eaten on Easter Sunday.

This custom arose from the strict Lenten fasting of the past. With all

fasting ending with Christ’s resurrection, the tradition of blessing food to be eaten on Easter day was created.

Traditional basket contents include bread, lamb or ham, salt, decorated hardboiled eggs, horseradish, wine, butter, sweets and a white candle. Modern basket contents may vary.

Traditional baskets, adorned with colorful ribbons and flowers, are filled with items symbolic of Christ’s

passion and resurrection. This includes a white linen cloth, representing the shroud of Christ, that is laid over the basket contents.

The Pagosa Springs Catholic Community will have a Blessing of the Easter Baskets at noon on April 19. A short ceremony will be held at Pope John Paul II Catholic Church, located at 353 S. Pagosa Blvd.

All are welcome. For the full Easter weekend schedule, visit ihmjp2.org.

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

By Phoebe Schroeder
Rise Above Violence

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM), a powerful time for our community to unite in the movement against sexual violence.

This year’s national theme, “Together We Act, United We Change,” reminds us of our collective strength and potential when we stand together. Each of us has a part to play in creating a community where survivors feel seen, supported and believed.

As part of our local observance, you’ll notice teal ribbons proudly displayed throughout downtown Pagosa Springs, symbolizing our commitment to standing with survivors and raising awareness about sexual violence.

You can also grab a free teal ribbon pin from the pants hanging around select downtown locations later this month for Denim Day. Wearing this ribbon is more than just symbolic — it’s a visible pledge that you stand with survivors, believe them, and are committed to creating a community that supports survivors and actively works to end sexual violence.

What does positive allyship look like?

Being an ally means choosing empathy, kindness and action. It’s about creating safe spaces where survivors are supported and respected.

Here’s how we can all become

effective allies:

- Believe and support survivors. Believing survivors is one of the most powerful acts of allyship. Simply telling someone “I believe you” can provide the strength and validation survivors need on their healing journey. Our compassion creates a ripple effect, making it safer for others to share their stories and find support.

- Listen with compassion. Effective allyship often means offering your presence without judgment. When survivors share their experiences, listening with an open heart — without trying to fix or judge — can make all the difference. Your compassion and presence can help someone regain their voice and sense of dignity.

- Challenge harmful attitudes. True allyship involves respectfully confronting attitudes and conversations that perpetuate sexual violence. By thoughtfully speaking up against victim-blaming or harmful jokes, you help create a safer, more respectful community.

- Support community initiatives. Positive change thrives when communities unite in action. Engage in local events, support educational initiatives or volunteer your time with organizations like Rise Above Violence that address sexual violence. By actively participating, you help strengthen community resources that survivors rely upon.

■ See Awareness on next page



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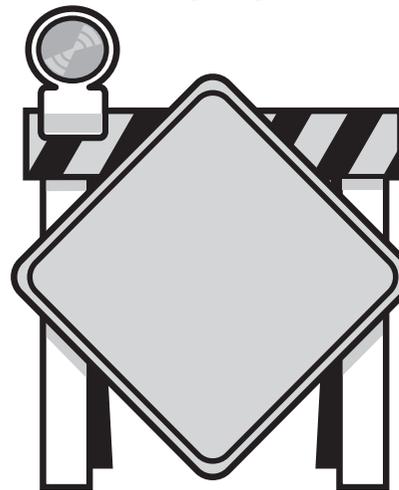


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We know how important it is to make it to your appointments on time, and road construction can make routine trips unpredictable.

Before you head out, check traffic updates from CDOT. Scan the QR code for real-time updates on closures and delays or go to <https://www.codot.gov/projects/us160pagosasprings>.

We care about you and our community—stay safe and see you soon!

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Wildfire preparedness advice today and elementary tutors needed

By Carole Howard
PREVIEW Columnist, and the library staff

Today, Thursday, April 3, at 5:30 p.m., county sheriff and emergency management personnel will be at your library to help you get ready for the wildfire season.

During this free talk they will discuss emergency preparation, fuel mitigation and how their efforts help us all stay alive.

More elementary tutors needed

We are in need of more tutors for our free elementary tutoring sessions for children ages 6-11 on Wednesdays from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. to help them build essential skills in core subjects.

This program has become so popular that we are looking for more tutors to participate. If you have teaching experience in early grades and are interested, please contact Barb Brattin, library director.

Free tax help

Katherine from VITA Tax Help will return to your library next Monday, April 7, from 9 to 5:30 p.m. to help more patrons with face-to-face sessions. But, you need to do some homework before you come if you want to take advantage of her generous offer.

Awareness

continued from previous page

- Promote Respect and Safety: Encouraging conversations about respect, consent and healthy relationships helps shape a community that prioritizes safety and support. Even small actions, like discussing respectful behaviors with friends or family, can make a meaningful difference.

- Get involved. Our collective voice is powerful. Participate in SAAM activities, like our Push-Up Challenge fundraiser on April 23 or our Denim Day March on April 30, and proudly wear your teal ribbon this month. Every action, big or small, moves us closer to a safer community.

Together, we can change the future. Allyship isn't a onetime action; it's a lasting commitment to building a supportive, respectful community. Let's continue our collective effort far beyond April, fostering a community that actively works to prevent sexual violence, support survivors and encourage positive change.

Join us this April.

Wear teal, speak out and take action. Together we act, united we change and together we rise.

To find out more about participating in the Push-Up Challenge and fundraising, as well as Denim Day March details, please visit www.riseaboveviolence.org/saam2025.

Library News

Katherine has left tax packets that must be filled out fully before you make your appointment. Then, once you have completed that important step, appointments must be made in advance by calling her at (970) 553-9150.

We are very grateful to Katherine for generously donating her time and sharing her tax experience and expertise with our patrons free of charge.

Lifelong Learning moves to afternoons

Mark your calendars for the new spring Lifelong Learning lectures beginning April 16 and running through May 21 — and note that they are now happening on Wednesday afternoons from 1 p.m. to 2:15 p.m.

The time change was made from evenings because many patrons said they preferred not to have to drive at night to attend.

As always, the informative and interesting talks will cover a wide variety of topics from astronomy to weather, arborglyphs art to estate planning, and more.

Watch for more details in future "Library News" columns and pick up a brochure at your library with details of all the talks.

Online author talks

Our highly popular free online author talks with New York Times bestselling authors continue in April with two more talks for you to watch live on Zoom or via a recording later.

For details and to register go to <https://libraryc.org/pagosalibrary/upcoming>.

Tuesday, April 8, at noon will focus on "Stories, Science and the History of Trees" with the Smithsonian Institute.

Thursday, April 24, at 5 p.m. will feature "The Thrill of Writing Action, Adventure and Suspense" with Gregg Hurwitz.

Dungeons and Dragons

A community-library partnership is expanding the reach of Dungeons and Dragons for middle school students. They are invited to join friends at the Pagosa Community Initiative (PCI) every Thursday in April from 4 to 5:30 p.m. for a free afterschool adventure.

Registration is required. Participants must be in middle school and registered with the PCI afterschool programs.

This Dungeon and Dragons program will continue until the end of the school year.

Teen/tween takeover tomorrow

We are setting aside the large meeting room and some of the computers for tweens and teens to use and spend time with friends Friday, April 4, from 2 to 4 p.m.

See Library on next page



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Library

■ continued from previous page LEGO Club Saturday

Kids aged 6-11 are invited to the free LEGO Club on Saturday, April 5, from 11 a.m. to noon. Bring your own LEGOs or use ours to free build.

Ageless Grace exercise Monday

In a special community partnership program, Judy, adult services librarian, is leading an Ageless Grace exercise program at the Pagosa Senior Center every Monday in April from 10 to 10:45 a.m.

It is a brain fitness program consisting of 21 simple exercises designed for all ages and abilities, performed while sitting in a chair. The Senior Center location was chosen so participants have more privacy as they exercise.

Music fun Monday

Pagosa Unplugged is free from 4 to 6 p.m. Monday, April 7, for amateur musicians who would like a safe, supportive, non-bar setting to play, sing or both with other people. For information, contact Susan at (970) 946-3396.

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.

Ruby's Book Club

Ruby's Book Club will meet from 2 to 3 p.m. on Tuesday, April 8, to discuss "James: A Novel" by Percival Everett. Copies are available at your library.

This book club is held the second Tuesday of each month, alternating between fiction and nonfiction titles. Anyone is welcome to attend.

Legal clinic

This month's free legal clinic is by appointment Wednesday, April 9, from 2 to 3:40 p.m. Come to the library to meet privately via Zoom with our volunteer civil attorney. To schedule an appointment, phone (970) 264-2209. When you call, let us know if you need a translator. Registration opens the first of the month and is required as space is limited.

Elementary tutoring

Children ages 6-11 are welcome at these free sessions on Wednesdays from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. where they will build essential skills in core subjects. Preregistration is required.

Writers Guild

Every Thursday from 9 to 11 a.m., Ruby's Writers Guild welcomes writers looking for opportunities, support, resources and camaraderie with other writers at this free gathering.

ESL classes

Free in-person evening classes take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays, with 4 to 5 p.m. reserved for be-

ginners, 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.

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

"Who Is Government?" edited by Michael Lewis is a collection of profiles of highly competent but unrecognized people working for the federal government. "Guide to Better Sleep" is a Mayo Clinic book. "The Next Conversation" by Jefferson Fisher offers a framework for arguing less and improving your conversations. "Cabin" by Patrick Hutchison is a memoir of life in an off-the-grid Pacific Northwest cabin. "Growing a Sensational Garden in the Southern Rocky Mountains" by Nan Fischer is a monthly guide for Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Arizona. "Anti-semitism in America: A Warning" is written by Sen. Chuck Schumer, the highest elected Jewish official in U.S. history. "Abundance" by Ezra Klein and Derek Thompson explores laws and institutions that are not working in a time of scarcity in our country.

"The Complete Native American Healing Herbs Encyclopedia" by Hialeah Garcia Navarro explains ancient remedies from Native American apothecary. "Yoga and Osteoporosis" by Dr. Loren Fishman and Carol Ardman is a revised and updated guide. "Bodyweight Workouts for Beginners" by Sean Bartram provides 60 gym-free exercises and 30 workout routines. "Canva for Dummies" by Jesse Stay uses templates to help you create flyers, posters and social media posts. "Reversing Alzheimer's" by Dr. Heather Sandison and Kate Hanley distills research into actionable

steps to help you improve cognition and protect brain health.

Short stories

"The Best Short Stories 2024: The O. Henry Prize Winners" edited by Amor Towles contains 20 stories by an international array of talented

■ See Library on page 11



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I'm Alex Boehmer, currently serving on the PAWSD Board of Directors and running for re-election.

I'm a 2012 Pagosa Springs High School graduate, husband, father, and former volunteer firefighter.

I'm passionate about protecting your family budget and our water security.



OPPOSE LARGE RATE HIKES

Every dollar of rate hikes must be challenged and justified. This year, as a new Board member, elected to be Board Treasurer, I opposed a planned 30% sewer rate increase — and we lowered it to 10%. Not low enough, but a good start.

COMPREHENSIVE FIRE PLAN

STEP ONE: Test every fire hydrant in the district — in cooperation with the County and Fire District if possible — or by PAWSD alone, if necessary. No excuses. Starting immediately.

STEP TWO: Develop a collaborative Fire District, County and PAWSD action plan to use our reservoirs to directly attack wildland fires threatening our homes. We must plan for the large fires which threaten entire neighborhoods — and not merely react.

FINALLY STOP DRY GULCH

The unjustifiable and reckless Dry Gulch Reservoir is a \$400 million disaster which threatens to impose a \$65,000 second mortgage on every Pagosa family and business. We can triple our water supply by finally connecting the reservoirs we already have, at less than 1% of that \$400 million cost.

FIX THE LEAKS

Water losses are threatening to get worse as our water infrastructure ages — and repairing and replacing pipes is expensive. It's time to sell the \$10 million Dry Gulch property and invest that money to fix the leaks. Any other approach to water loss will hike rates higher.

Ballots will be mailed in mid-April. If re-elected, I promise to protect your family budget... and our water future.

Learn more at: www.AlexForPAWSD.com

Paid for by Alex Boehmer

Easter Season Services

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

Thursday, April 3

Lenten Adoration and Benediction. 6-7 p.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church, 353 S. Pagosa Blvd.

Friday, April 4

Stations of the Cross. 7 p.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church, 353 S. Pagosa Blvd.

Wednesday, April 9

Stations of the Cross. Following 4 p.m. rosary, Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church, 455 Lewis St.

Thursday, April 10

Lenten Adoration and Benediction. 6-7 p.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church, 353 S. Pagosa Blvd.

Friday, April 11

Stations of the Cross. 7 p.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church, 353 S. Pagosa Blvd.

Saturday, April 12

Palm Sunday Mass. 4 p.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church, 353 S. Pagosa Blvd.

Sunday, April 13

Palm Sunday Mass. 9 a.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church, 353 S. Pagosa Blvd.

Palm Sunday Service. 9 a.m., Our Savior Lutheran Church, 56 Meadows Drive.

Palm Sunday Mass. 11:15 a.m., Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church, 455 Lewis St.

Thursday, April 17

Maundy Thursday Service. 6 p.m., Community United Methodist Church, 434 Lewis St. Reflections on the Last Supper. Communion will be served.

Holy Thursday Service. 6:30 p.m., Our Savior Lutheran Church, 56 Meadows Drive.

Holy Thursday Mass. 7 p.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church, 353 S. Pagosa Blvd.

Friday, April 18

Good Friday Prayer Stations in the

Sanctuary. 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Community United Methodist Church, 434 Lewis St. Come and go from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m.

Good Friday Chief Service. Noon, Our Savior Lutheran Church, 56 Meadows Drive.

Pilgrimage. 2 p.m., Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church, 455 Lewis St. The pilgrimage will proceed to Pope John Paul II Catholic Church.

Stations of the Cross. 4:30 p.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church prayer garden, 353 S. Pagosa Blvd.

Good Friday Liturgy Service. 5:30 p.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church, 353 S. Pagosa Blvd.

Good Friday Tenebrae Vespers. 6:30 p.m., Our Savior Lutheran Church, 56 Meadows Drive.

Saturday, April 19

Blessing of the Easter Baskets. Noon, Pope John Paul II Catholic Church, 353 S. Pagosa Blvd. Holy Saturday tradition of blessing a basket containing the food that will be eaten on Easter Sunday.

Saturday Easter Vigil. 6:30 p.m., Our Savior Lutheran Church, 56 Meadows Drive.

Easter Vigil. 8 p.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church, 353 S. Pagosa Blvd.

Sunday, April 20

Easter Sunrise Service. 7 a.m., Our Savior Lutheran Church, 56 Meadows Drive.

Easter Sunday Service. 8:15 a.m., Community United Methodist Church, 434 Lewis St.

Easter Mass. 9 a.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church, 353 S. Pagosa Blvd.

Easter Service. 9:30 a.m., Pagosa Springs High School auditorium. Hosted by Grace in Pagosa. A kids' Easter egg hunt will follow the service.

Easter Day Service. 10 a.m., Our Savior Lutheran Church, 56 Meadows Drive.

Easter Sunday Service. 10 a.m., Restoration Fellowship, 264 Village Drive.

Easter Sunday Service. 11 a.m., Community United Methodist Church, 434 Lewis St.

Easter Mass. 11:15 a.m., Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church, 455 Lewis St.

The Weekly Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

- 1 Paisley or Pitt
- 5 Dropped-egg sound
- 10 Phi ___ Kappa
- 14 Go for
- 15 Chessman
- 16 Neck and neck
- 17 Body of bishops
- 19 Rat Pack name
- 20 "Taxi Driver" actor
- 21 Gibberish
- 23 Hosiery mishaps
- 25 Slangy "Of course!"
- 26 Emphasized
- 30 Racing vehicle
- 33 Storage box
- 34 Put off until later
- 36 Scand. land
- 37 Sleep acronym
- 38 Passionate
- 40 MADD concern
- 41 Supped
- 42 N.Y.'s ___ Island
- 43 Feudal lord
- 45 Baby
- 47 Jogged the memory
- 49 Sound loudly
- 51 Orange skin
- 52 Job for a maid
- 55 Grow more intense
- 59 Trumpet, e.g.
- 60 Rush hour speed
- 62 Be an accessory to
- 63 Small weight
- 64 Jogger's pace
- 65 Koppel and Kennedy
- 66 Mali's neighbor
- 67 Barnyard cacklers

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- 2 Ready to be picked
- 3 Similar
- 4 Covets
- 5 Stirring utensils
- 6 Domino dot
- 7 Hamburger grade
- 8 Follow, as a tip
- 9 One between 12 and 20
- 10 Adorn
- 11 Fair
- 12 Afternoon affairs
- 13 Author Rice
- 18 Lobster or crab
- 22 Plots
- 24 Family auto
- 26 Throw out
- 27 Iota preceder
- 28 Looked back on
- 29 Inhibit
- 31 Compact stuff
- 32 Took a shot at
- 35 Entrance area
- 39 The Doors lead singer
- 44 Very detailed
- 46 Buries, as bulbs
- 48 "Beaches" co-star
- 50 Listlessness
- 52 Shoot the breeze
- 53 Piercing place
- 54 Turf controller
- 56 Whittle (down)
- 57 Univ. course
- 58 Brooklyn hoopsters
- 61 Driving danger

Answers to Previous Crossword:

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An email from a friend

By Betty Slade
PREVIEW Columnist

I received an email. The subject line read “Emptiness.” I stopped and re-read the first two lines again. Mark Craine told me his precious wife, Wanda, went home to be with Jesus. He wanted me to know.

Mark worked for Ponderosa Lumber Company for years and served our community. Many of you were in personal contact each day as you purchased building materials and supplies. He was a friend to many in the building world and also in the Christian world. You might not know about the news of his wife, Wanda. He wanted you to know, too.

The doctors found a small bump close to her neck. From her neck to waist she was full of tumors. They promised her four to five weeks to live; she made it two weeks and went peacefully to be with her savior, leaving behind a grieving family.

My writings touched Mark spiritually. He connected with me through Jesus. He retired and moved away, but Pagosa has a way of pulling its residents back. Mark’s friend, West Jackson, purchased a subscription to The SUN newspaper to keep Mark in

Artist’s Lane

touch with the community.

When Mark retired, I invited him to join our writers’ group. He said he liked to write. It wasn’t the right time. Today seems to be the right time.

Mark writes, “My precious and dearest friend, how I wish that I could sit in person and share my heart with you at this time. You may have not heard, so I will share my heart with you.

“You have been such a so very close friend to me so I covet your prayers for this old man in his time of loss. Someone told me that, if I liked, I should read and write down my heart. So I’m going to begin by sending my six-word entries to a friend that I know. Maybe in the future my Savior will give me the wisdom to write further on with subjects that He will give to me.

“When I go to the mailbox, I am eager to see if an issue has come, and look in the second section for your

presence! I read, and then cut them out and have made a BSSB, Betty Slade Scrap Book, where I have saved your printings!

“Thank you, dear friend, how you have blest me in these past years with your writings! You will now have a new student so I hope that I will learn and do well! My newspapers come on various days, as they are mailed from the Sun, but I look eagerly for my copy each day when mail arrives. Say, ‘Hi’ to all in Pagosa, and remember to say, ‘Hi’ to Sweet Al!”

When a friend calls you a friend, there is no bigger compliment. You wonder what you’ve done to be a friend — be there, give them needed encouragement, maybe a smile, or give them a few meaningful words. Most important, you took time for them.

Final brushstroke: Please reach out and send Mark an email or two. You can use my email address below. I will pass along your concerns and encouragement. Emptiness doesn’t fit Mark, who was in the center of Pagosa’s building and growing for 55 years. This is a good day to throw a few flowers. Pagosa is who we are.

Send your comment to bettyslade.author@gmail.com.

Views expressed do not necessarily represent those of The SUN.



YOU'RE INVITED!

Easter Sunday

Whether you're a longtime member or visiting for the first time, we'd love to have you with us as we celebrate the true meaning of Easter.

Date: Sunday, April 20th
Time: 10:00 AM
Location: 264 Village Drive

Bring the whole family for a morning of worship, hope, and fun! After the service, children are invited to participate in our Easter egg hunt. Don't forget your baskets!

WWW.RESTORATIONFELLOWSHIP.NET

www.PagosaSUN.com

Library

■ continued from page 9

writers from Michele Mari and Colin Barrett to Allegra Goodman and Jess Walter.

DVDs

“A Quiet Place” is a thriller set in New York City the day the world went silent. “The Madame Blanc Mysteries” is series two. We have both season one and season two of “The White Lotus.”

Novels

“Another Man in the Street” by Caryl Phillips follows two immigrants in London in the 1960s. “The Road to the Country” by Chigozie Obioma tells of a university student in Lagos living amid the chaos of civil war. “Remember When” by Mary Balogh is a Ravenswood romance. “The River Has Roots” by Amal El-Mohtar is a fairy tale fantasy about two sisters. “Colored Television” by Danzy Senna is a dark comedy about a writer trying to make it in Hollywood.

Thanks to our donors

We are grateful to Andrew Davis and Kimberly Rochester for their generous monetary donations.

Donations guidelines

The Friends of the Library have guidelines for donations to the library.

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.

When the library is 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.

No more than two boxes at a time because of space constraints and all books should be in excellent condition, please.

Quotable quote

“When my dad’s eyesight was failing, one of the great regrets of his life was that he couldn’t read anymore, because he loved his books. So I would read the Psalms to him every morning on the phone. He’d go, ‘Slow down, slow down,’ because he really wanted to take in every word.” — Rosanne Cash, oldest daughter of Johnny Cash and his first wife. Her musical career began when she joined her father on a tour in 1973. A highly successful singer-songwriter herself, her music draws from folk, pop, rock, country and blues.

Website

For more information on library books, services and programs — and to reserve books, e-books, books on CD and DVDs from the comfort of your home — please visit our website at <https://pagosalibrary.org>.

Come celebrate

EASTER

with us!

9:30am | April 20

at the Pagosa High School Auditorium

Kids Easter Egg Hunt

directly following the service!

to enter the children’s coloring contest
and for more information please visit
graceinpagosa.org

Grace
IN PAGOSA



Photo courtesy waterwiseyards.org
A completed pollinator haven in Littleton.

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

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

Want to remove your lawn? Here's how not to kill your trees

By Cindi Galabota and John Murgel
 PREVIEW Columnist

Extension Viewpoints

Thinking of swapping out your front lawn for a new xeriscape? Don't forget to think of the trees. If a tree has been growing in your lawn for decades, you can be sure that it's gotten used to the extra water.

Contrary to common belief, the majority of tree roots are near the soil surface and widely spread. While it's impossible to know exactly where the roots of a tree are without digging them all up, a good rule of thumb is to assume that the vast majority of roots are in the top 2 feet of soil and spread out as wide as the tree is tall.

It's important to consider your tree's roots before, during and after your project. In compact or clay soils, 90 to 95 percent of roots are in the top foot of soil, with 50 percent of roots in the top 4 to 6 inches, and spread up to five times the width of the tree's canopy.

What to do before removing your lawn

Plan ahead. It's all about planning. If you have mature trees, minimize reshaping the landscape as much as possible. This means that berm you were dreaming of may need to be smaller. If you do want to add topography, stay as far from the tree(s) as possible.

After you convert your lawn to a xeriscape, you won't need to replace all the water your sprinkler had been putting down around your tree because your lawn was also using water.

However, it's a good idea to know a number in order to provide a starting point for your estimates.

- Do the math: If you have sprinklers and already know your flow rate, it's a straight-forward arithmetic problem to compute how many inches of irrigation water you're applying.
- Set out catch cans: If you aren't sure how much water you're using,

you can find out by running the irrigation system with several "catch cans" (any set of uniform containers will do).

First, run the sprinklers long enough to get a measurable amount of water in each cup, usually 10 to 15 minutes.

Second, divide the average volume in each container by the number of minutes, then multiply by 60 and you will have the precipitation rate of your system in inches per hour.

Considerations when removing your lawn

During your project, your focus should be on avoiding damaging your trees' roots. Remember, roots can be shallower than you think.

- Minimize digging and keep it as far from the tree as possible.

- Always choose the lightest option for any equipment you use — like sod cutters, tillers, etc. — to prevent soil compaction. This will also make it easier for you to operate the equipment, especially if you haven't done it before. Even better, if something can be done by hand, do it by hand.

- Don't stockpile materials beneath your tree. It's a good idea to establish a "tree protection zone" that is at least as wide as the dripline of the canopy and to keep all construction activity and materials out of the area for the entire duration of the project. Trees operate on a slower time scale than we do; it may take years for damage done during construction to cause visible symptoms.
- Use mulch. Incorporating mulch

- See Viewpoints on next page

SUDOKU

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Level: Intermediate

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

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

ANSWER:

Viewpoints

■ **continued from previous page**
 into your xeriscape plan is a great idea for your tree. Mulch will not only keep weeds down but help to keep water in the soil. Use a 4-inch layer of wood chips or gravel uniformly spread over bare soil.

- Don't use weed barrier. Black plastic (polyethylene) and woven plastic weed barrier fabrics (polypropylene) are not recommended.

What to do after converting to xeriscaping

Compare your new watering plan with the old. Presumably, you're applying less water to the landscape, but this is not always the case. Verify that your xeriscape conversion is actually saving water and make adjustments as needed.

Water the tree's entire root zone. Remember the roots are spread widely, and that roots grow wherever they can find water and oxygen. The broader a tree's roots are, the more resilient the tree will be to stress.

By watering the tree over a wide area, extending well past the dripline in most cases, you are ensuring that your tree keeps its wide root system.

How to water a tree without an irrigation system

Watering with a hose

1. Deep soaking: Place your hose at the base of the tree and let it run on a slow trickle for 20 to 30 minutes, moving it around the root zone every 5 to 10 minutes to ensure even coverage.

2. Soaker hose: If available, lay a soaker hose in a circular pattern around the drip line of the tree (the area directly under the outermost branches) and let it run for an hour or more, depending on soil absorption.

3. Best timing: Water in the early morning or late evening to reduce

evaporation.

Bucket drip irrigation

1. Take a 5-gallon bucket and drill several small holes (about one-eighth of an inch) in the bottom.

2. Fill the bucket with water and place it near the tree's root zone, allowing water to slowly seep into the soil.

3. Use multiple buckets spaced around the tree for even coverage.

4. Refill as needed to provide deep watering.

5. The benefit of this method is you'll know exactly how many gallons of water you're giving your tree.

Watering can

1. Clear your schedule for the afternoon, pick up your most ergonomic watering can, do some shoulder stretches and get to work.

2. But, seriously, this is a tree we're talking about. You're going to want to use a hose.

Figure out how much water you need. This is where things get tricky. Some trees will use just about all the water you give them, even if they don't need it. Others truly need lots of water and could require as much water as you were applying to your lawn beforehand.

Some trees can be gradually weaned to reduced irrigation. Other trees will need ample water throughout their lives, regardless of what's happened to the lawn. These include most oaks and maples, ash, blue spruce, aspen and Ohio buckeye.

Monitor for signs of stress. The only way to know for sure that your tree is getting what it needs is to keep careful track of its condition over the several years following your project.

Poke around in the soil in the tree's rooting area and ask yourself, "Is the soil damp or dry, and how far down?"

If the tree's canopy is thinning or its growth is slowing over years, water more as soon as possible. Because

trees lead slow lives, even a gradually developing growth problem could be the sign of a tree-mergency.

Other signs that your tree is under water stress include brown leaf edges, early fall color and leaf drop, and twig dieback.

Email list

■ See Viewpoints on next page



Trinity Anglican Church

*Leading up to Easter —
The people cheered his coming
and later cheered his death.
Knowing it, he still came!
Come Sunday! 10am.*

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trinityanglicanchurch.org



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Photo courtesy Doug Coombs

An African elephant at sunset in Chobe National Park, Botswana.

Pagosa Springs Photography Club will hear about 'Journey to Africa'

By Andy Butler

Pagosa Springs Photography Club

The next meeting of the Pagosa Springs Photography Club will be held on April 9 at the Community United Methodist Church, 434 Lewis St.

Arrive any time after 6 p.m. for socializing; the program will begin at 6:30 p.m. Please use the side door near the parking lot to enter.

Our program this month will feature local photographer and club member Doug Coombs, who will take us on a "Journey to Africa."

In his presentation, Coombs will be discussing photographs taken in Tanzania, Kenya, South Africa and Botswana on four different safari trips.

His photos will include the big five: elephants, lions, leopards, hippos and Cape buffalo. He will also share images of smaller mammals

and birds, as well as of the Maasai people, and some classic African sunrises and sunsets.

Coombs will also bring some books and literature provided by one of the safari companies, used for two of his adventures, to hand out to the audience. These are great resources if you want to plan your own journey to Africa.

This will be a hybrid meeting, also available on Zoom. The Zoom link will be emailed to members; others who wish to attend remotely may request the link by email to abutler@mac.com.

Photography Club membership

Do you want to improve your photography? Joining the club is a great way to learn how to get the most out of your camera.

The Pagosa Springs Photography

Club promotes educational, social and fun interactions between all who enjoy making and viewing great photos.

Our meeting topics and outings are opportunities to learn about composition, light and technique. Whether you use a smartphone, point-and-shoot, mirrorless or dSLR camera, we can help you get the most out of your gear.

Benefits of membership include our educational programs, image sharing and discussion, photo outings and contests to help each other improve our photography.

Club dues are just \$25 per year (\$35 for a family). A membership form may be downloaded from our website (<https://pagosaspingsphotoclub.org/about/>) and mailed in with your payment (instructions are on the form), or brought to a club meeting.

Viewpoints

■ continued from previous page

Do you want to be added to our email distribution list to learn about upcoming programs and the latest resources? Email cindi.galabota@colostate.edu to be added to our list.

Or, to learn more about the many programs, resources and services offered by Colorado State University (CSU) Extension, visit <https://extension.colostate.edu>.

CPR and first aid classes

CPR and first aid certification

classes are offered every other month at the CSU Extension office, generally on the third Monday and Wednesday from 6 to 10 p.m. The cost for the classes is \$80 for combined CPR/first aid and \$55 for CPR, first aid or recertification. Call the Extension office at (970) 264-5931 to register.

Check out the online option on our website, <https://archuleta.extension.colostate.edu/>.

Field to Freezer Course

Colorado Parks and Wildlife will be holding a Field to Freezer Course on May 16 and 17 at the CSU Extension building located at 344 U.S. 84.

Trained professionals will teach you how to responsibly care for and process the meat from any big game ungulate in Colorado. Participants must be at least 16 years old. Visit <https://forms.gle/owfhB5R8PTpYY-HGGA> to register.

There are limited spots available. Applications are due by May 9.

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Bird of the Week



Photo courtesy Charles Martinez

This week's Bird of the Week, compliments of the Weminuche Audubon Society and Audubon Rockies, is the snow goose.

During late winter, groups of snow geese begin dispersing from their large winter flocks to migrate north. Breeding grounds are located on tundras of Canada and northern Alaska, often above the Arctic Circle. Spring flocks are much smaller than those of fall and may consist of family groups or individuals. Recently, a group of 15 was seen feeding during a stopover here.

Migration from wintering areas begins in February along one of the four major North American flyways. Northerly progress depends on the disappearance of ice and snow to expose vegetation to feed on during their journey. Most snow geese arrive on breeding grounds by mid to late May.

Females feel the pull of the place where they were born and return to their natal colony to nest. Mated pairs stay together for life, with the male following his partner. The female chooses a nest site close to water on a slight rise in the terrain as a vantage point to spy predators.

Chicks grow quickly and leave the nest within one day. In the first three weeks of life, goslings may walk with their parents up to 50 miles to areas with better food sources. They remain with their parents until mate selection during their second or third year.

Snow geese exist in different forms and are most commonly all white with black wingtips. They also exhibit the blue goose morph, dark gray-blue with a white head, and intermediate variations. An identifying trait of the snow goose is its triangular shaped orange-pink bill with a black "grin patch" where the mandibles meet.

Snow geese feed on land and in shallow water for a variety of plants, eating nearly any part, either by grazing or ripping the whole plant from the ground. Some areas of their tundra habitats are suffering from the high numbers of geese both impacting themselves and nesting shore-birds.

In the early 1900s, snow geese numbers had sunk so low that hunting was prohibited, but today management focus has shifted from conservation to regulation due to their high numbers.

For information on events, visit www.weminucheadubon.org and www.facebook.com/weminucheadubon/.



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IS SUGAR TOXIC?

Sugar: It's like that good-looking, engaging, sweet friend/co-worker who acts as if he/she is your friend and has your best interest at heart, but ultimately blind-sides you by wreaking havoc on your life.

If you have a sweet tooth, you may voluntarily extract it after reading today's excerpt.

On May 26, 2009, Robert Lustig gave a lecture called "Sugar: The Bitter Truth," which was posted on YouTube the following July. Since then, it has been viewed well over 800,000 times, gaining new viewers at a rate of about 50,000 per month, fairly remarkable numbers for a 90-minute discussion of the nuances of fructose biochemistry and human physiology.

Lustig is a specialist on pediatric hormone disorders and the leading expert in childhood obesity at the University of California, San Francisco, School of Medicine, which is one of the best medical schools in the country.

He published his first paper on childhood obesity a dozen years ago, and he has been treating patients and doing research on the disorder ever since. It doesn't hurt Lustig's cause that he is a compelling public speaker. His critics argue that what makes him compelling is his practice of taking suggestive evidence and insisting that it's incontrovertible.

Lustig certainly doesn't dabble in shades of gray. Sugar is not just an empty calorie, he says; its effect on us is much more insidious. "It's not about the calories," he says. "It has nothing to do with the calories. It's a poison by itself."

If Lustig is right, then our excessive consumption of sugar is the primary reason that the numbers of obese and diabetic Americans have skyrocketed in the past 30 years. But his argument implies more than that.

If Lustig is right, it would mean that sugar is also the likely dietary cause of several other chronic ailments widely considered to be diseases of Western lifestyles — heart disease, hypertension and many common cancers among them.

Source: "Is Sugar Toxic?" By Gary Taubes. <http://www.nytimes.com>

Bonus Tip: Visit <http://www.AmazingFacts.org> for spiritual refreshment every week!

"My son, eat thou honey, because it is good; and the honeycomb, which is sweet to thy taste" Proverbs 24:13

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Disclaimer: This and all our Nature's Remedies are for health information purposes only. The Seventh Day Adventist Church is not responsible for results.



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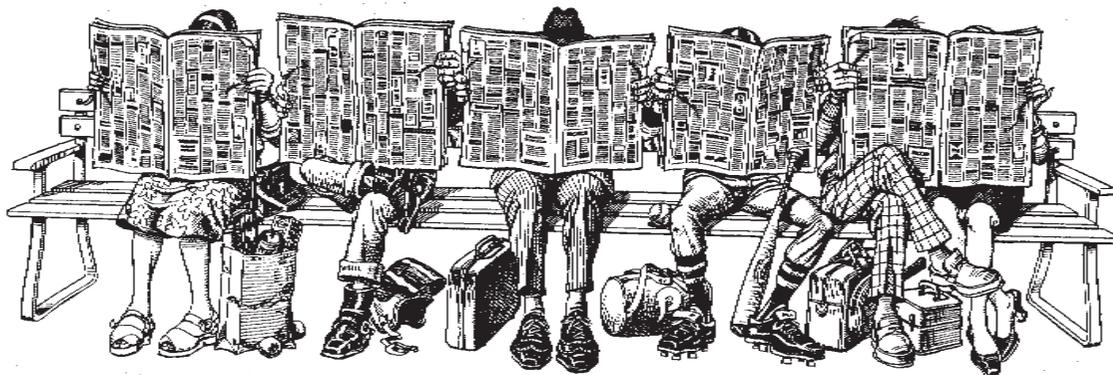
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Preview Calendar

All events listed in The PREVIEW Calendar are free of charge unless otherwise noted.

Thursday, April 3

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.

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.

Emergency Preparedness: Are You Ready? 5:30-6:30 p.m., Sisson Library. Local emergency management personnel will discuss emergency preparation, fuel mitigation and how their efforts help us stay safe.

PALS Adult Education. 5:30-8 p.m., Sisson Library. Pagosa Adult Learning Services, or PALS, can help you with high school equivalency, GED, college prep, financial aid, tutoring and more. Mark can help you develop a plan to achieve your education goals. Call (970) 264-2209 for more information.

San Juan Stargazers. 6 p.m., Community United Methodist Church, 434 Lewis St. Meet for social time at 6 p.m. At 7 p.m., the group will walk to the middle school for a demonstration of the star lab.

Friday, April 4

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 ceflitttlekids@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.

Tween/Teen Takeover. 2-4 p.m., Sisson Library. The large meeting room and some of the computers will be set aside for tweens/teens to use and spend time with friends.

Pagosa Springs Knights of Columbus Lenten Fish Fry. 4-6 p.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic

Church, 353 S. Pagosa Blvd. Both dine-in and drive-through dining will be available. The cost of the meal is \$15 and is a fundraiser for the Pagosa Springs Knights of Columbus.

Saturday, April 5

GriefShare. 10-11:30 a.m., Centerpoint Church, 2750 Cornerstone Drive. A 13-week program to assist with the healing process, regardless of how long it is since your loved one passed. For more information, contact Marie Rasco at marierascoe67@gmail.com or Centerpoint Church at (970) 731-2205. You can also register and learn more at www.griefshare.org.

Pagosa Peak Genealogical Society. 10 a.m.-noon, Community United Methodist Church, 434 Lewis St. Following a short business meeting, Jeanine Angle Dobbins will present "Full-Text Search: Greatest Innovation Since Sliced Bread."

LEGO Play. 11 a.m.-noon, Sisson Library. For kids 6-11 years old. Bring your own or use the library's LEGOs to free build. Contact the library at (970) 264-2209 for further information.

Pagosa Springs Varsity Girls' Soccer. 11 a.m., Golden Peaks Stadium. Pagosa Springs High School vs. Montezuma-Cortez.

National Day of Protest. 11:30 a.m., community garden. Meet at the community garden and be prepared for a peaceful protest/march through the downtown at noon. Bring your own sign or borrow one that's already made. Email pse-qualitymarch@gmail.com for more information.

Monday, April 7

Indoor Pickleball. 8-11:30 a.m., Ross Aragon Community Center.

Women's Fellowship. 9 a.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church classrooms.

VITA Tax Help. 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Registration is required. Pick up a tax packet at the library and complete it before calling Kathy for an appointment at (970) 553-9150.

Line Dancing. 9:30-11 a.m., PLPOA Clubhouse, 230 Port Ave. Beginners meet at 9:30 a.m. and the advance group meets at 10:15 a.m. If you haven't attended before, please call Beverly at (970) 264-2064 for more information.

Brain Fitness and Mobility. 10-10:45 a.m., Senior Center. For anyone 21 and older.

Archuleta County Democratic Club. 11:30 a.m., Coyote Moon. John Porco will speak about the Tracks Across Borders Scenic and Historic Byway.

Senior Conversations. 1:15 p.m., Senior Center.

Healthy Aging and Yoga Therapy Class. 2:30-3:30 p.m., Senior Center.

High School Math Tutoring. 4-5:30 p.m., Sisson Library. Math tutors are available for ages 14 and up. Registration is required.

Pagosa Unplugged. 4-6 p.m., Sisson Library. Musicians of all abilities are invited to jam and sing with others.

Deepening the Faith Classes. 6-8 p.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church classrooms.

DivorceCare/DivorceCare for Kids. 6-7:30 p.m., Centerpoint Church, 2750 Cornerstone Drive. A 13-week program that provides a safe environment for people who have gone through, are going through or are considering divorce and features experts on divorce and recovery topics. DivorceCare for Kids is for kids 5-12, with topics mirroring the adult sessions. For more information, email Jim Shook at jshookup@gmail.com or the church at admin@centerpointpagosa.com. You can register online at www.divorcecare.org.

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.

■ See Calendar on next page



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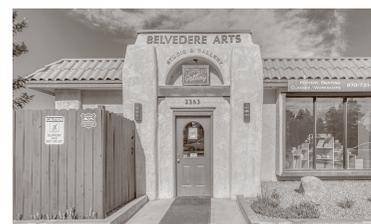
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2 buildings and one parcel. The front of the building is a gallery and workshop. The back unit is an office set up which was a clinic in the past. There is also a Quonset hut on the back of the property. The gallery fronts Highway 160 and parking is 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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.68 acre, 1440 square foot commercial building. There is enough property to build another building or make a large wrap around parking lot. There is a 3000 BTU gas heater and a 40 gallon hot water heater. The doors and walls have a 90 minute fireproof rating. Walls are removable so the floor plan could be opened up. There is a kitchen sink, stove and dishwasher, half bath and the overhead door is 8' x 10'.



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Preview Calendar

■ **continued from previous page**
fee and child care will be provided.
Register at pagosabilechurch.org.

Tuesday, April 8

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: Smithsonian Institute. Noon, virtual. "Stories, Science and History of Trees" with the Smithsonian Institute. For details and to register, go to <https://library.org/pagosalibrary/upcoming>.

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.

Ruby's Book Club. 2-3 p.m., Sisson Library. Join to discuss "James: A Novel" by Percival Everett.

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.

Men's Fellowship. 6 p.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church classrooms.

Wednesday, April 9

Indoor Pickleball. 8-11:30 a.m., Ross Aragon Community Center.

Introduction to Pickleball. 8:30-11 a.m., Ross Aragon Community Center. Register on the Pagosa Springs Parks and Recreation page at <https://secure.rec1.com/CO/pagosa-springs-co/catalog>.

Kids Kare. 9:30-11:30 a.m., Pagosa Bible Church, 209 Harman Park

Drive. A weekly club for 3- to 5-year-olds where the Bible is taught with songs, stories, object lessons, games and more. For more information, email Frank and Connie Porter at ceflittlekids@gmail.com.

Family Storytime. 10-11 a.m., Sisson Library. Join us for great stories, fun songs, and plenty of reasons to get up and move. It's a great way for kids to have fun while building the skills they need to become independent readers. For all ages. Call (970) 264-2209 for more information.

Archuleta County Republican Women. Noon-1 p.m., Victor's Sushi, 118 N. Pagosa Blvd. Nicole Cotts, executive director of Aspire Medical Services will speak. Come at 11:30 for social time and to order lunch from a special menu.

Bridge. 1:15 p.m., Senior Center.

Mindful Drawing. 1:15 p.m., Senior Center.

Legal Clinic. 2-3:40 p.m., Sisson Library. Meet with a volunteer civil attorney via Zoom at the library. Registration is required and opens on the first of each month. Call the library at (970) 264-2209 to register. Space is limited.

Elementary Tutoring. 3:30-4:30 p.m., Sisson Library. Build essential skills in core subjects. Registration required. Call (970) 264-2209 for more information.

Pagosa Springs Elementary School Kindergarten Open House. 4-6 p.m., Pagosa Springs Elementary School. Meet the staff and learn more about what to expect next school year.

Pagosa Springs Photography Club. 6 p.m., Community United Methodist Church, 434 Lewis St. Arrive anytime after 6 p.m. for socializing; the meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. Doug Coombs will present "Journey to Africa." To attend by Zoom, email abutler@mac.com.

Order of the Eastern Star Peace and Harmony Chapter #158. 7 p.m., Masonic Lodge, 277 Lewis St. Call Donna at (970) 946-8201 for more information.

Thursday, April 10

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.

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, April 11

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.

Friday Flix. 2-3:30 p.m., Sisson Library. Participants will choose between a selection of PG-rated

■ See Calendar on next page



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View Our Menu

Brain fitness and mobility program class continuing

By Rose Chavez
PREVIEW Columnist

Join us for class on Mondays during April from 10 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. at your Pagosa Senior Center for a free Ageless Grace exercise program, taught by Judy, a trained facilitator who will support and help you learn gentle movements to enhance brain

Senior News

health and mobility. Drop-ins are welcome.

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, ages 21 and older, is invited and encouraged to participate in this program. Ageless Grace 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.

Ageless Grace is a highly effective brain fitness program that keeps participants moving and thinking through the power of play. Wellness shouldn't have to be boring or painful; in fact, it should be fun.

Senior discount card

The Senior Center is continuing its annual tradition of providing a local discount card for those ages 60 and better.

The discount card encourages seniors to support local recreational, restaurant, medical and retail services by obtaining a senior discount card for a small fee that serves as a fundraiser for Archuleta Seniors Inc. (ASI).

These local businesses provide a



Photo courtesy Archuleta Seniors Inc.

Volunteer Liam McRae, the grandson of Archuleta Seniors Inc. (ASI) treasurer Martine Colombey, used part of his spring break to serve his community by shredding papers in the ASI administration offices last week.

discount ranging from 5 percent to 20 percent off services.

For more information, visit <http://www.psseniors.org/discount-club.html> or stop by our offices at 451 Hot Springs Blvd. to pick up your card. For more information, contact us at (970) 264-2167.

Spring Fling Wine Pairing Soirée

There are a few tickets left for what will be a special evening. Join us for ASI's Spring Fling Wine Pairing Soiree on April 11 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 from and delicious chocolates, all crafted by local artisans. Live music from the gifted Gus Palma will enhance the evening's ambiance. The soiree 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 ASI.

Tickets are limited, so don't miss

out. Purchase tickets at <https://givebutter.com/SpringFlingWinePairing>, by calling (970) 264-2167 or visiting 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 soiree 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 com-

■ See Senior on next page

Preview Calendar

■ continued from previous page movies.

Pagosa Springs Knights of Columbus Lenten Fish Fry. 4-6 p.m., Pope John Paul II Catholic Church, 353 S. Pagosa Blvd. Both dine-in and drive-through dining will be available. The cost of the meal is \$15 and is a fundraiser for the Pagosa Springs Knights of Columbus.

Spring Fling Wine Pairing Soiree. 6-8 p.m., Community Center, 451 Hot Springs Blvd. Join Archuleta Seniors Inc. for a selection of curated wines, savory appetizers and

chocolates, as well as live music from Gus Palma. The event will also feature a silent auction and door prizes. Tickets are available at <https://givebutter.com/SpringFlingWinePairing>, by calling (970) 264-2167 or by visiting the organization's office.

Saturday, April 12

Hora de Cuento Bilingual Storytime. 10-11 a.m. Join for an educational hour of reading and singing in Spanish, and free play.

GriefShare. 10-11:30 a.m., Centerpoint Church, 2750 Cornerstone

Drive. A 13-week program to assist with the healing process, regardless of how long it is since your loved one passed. For more information, contact Marie Rasco at marierascoe67@gmail.com or Centerpoint Church at (970) 731-2205. You can also register and learn more at www.griefshare.org.

Pagosa Springs Scrapbooking and Crafters Club. 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Community Center.

Knitters Circle. 1-3 p.m., Sisson Library. Join new or experienced knitters to get help with your project, or sit and knit.



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Senior

■ **continued from previous page**
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, April 3 — Pork ribs with ginger plum sauce, lavender-apricot rice pilaf, garden salad, fruit and milk.

Friday, April 4 — Black bean veggie burger with chipotle aioli, skillet mushrooms and zucchini, garden salad, fruit and milk.

Monday, April 7 — Codfish florentine, sweet potato, dinner roll, garden salad, fruit, vanilla yogurt and milk.

Tuesday, April 8 — Creamy Tuscan chicken, Mediterranean salad, garden salad, fruit, strawberry cupcake and milk.

Wednesday, April 9 — Green chili pork, quinoa stuffed tomato, tortilla, garden salad, fruit, muffin and milk.

Thursday, April 10 — Cheeseburger casserole, green beans, garden salad, fruit, chocolate cake and milk.

Friday, April 11 — Vegetarian pasta fagioli, ciabatta bread, garden salad, fruit, brownie 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 pickup 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.

Text reservations

Don't forget that we offer a convenient texting service for you to communicate with us. Text us at (970) 264-2167. When texting, please include your name, phone number and the days you want a meal. If you are canceling a reservation, please include your name, phone number and the days you want to cancel.

Texting services are available for dine-in meal reservations, Grab-N-Go meals and Meals on Wheels recipients.

Mahjong

Mahjong is a 19th century Chinese tile-based game that is commonly played with four players. Each player receives 13 tiles with a goal to make

matching sets and pairs (like poker). To win, a player must form four sets and one pair.

Come to the Senior Center to learn or play every Tuesday at 1:15 p.m.

Medicare call by appointment

For anyone who needs help enrolling and navigating Medicare plans, the San Juan Basin Area Agency on Aging helps with parts A, B and D. They can also help you with fraud concerns and troubleshooting any billing issues you may be having. By appointment only. Please call the Medicare line at (970) 264-0501, ext 2.

Mindful drawing

Mindful drawing is an easy-to-learn, relaxing and fun way to create beautiful images by drawing structured patterns. Join our friendly instructor, Roberta Strickland.

Classes are every Wednesday at 1:15 p.m. in the Senior Center. This activity is open to all ages. Help us create an intergenerational community. For those under 18 and/or with disabilities, you are welcome to join us, but we kindly ask you to please bring an adult chaperone with you.

Bridge

The longest-played bridge game in Archuleta County takes place on Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 1:15 p.m.

Bridge is a four-player card game with partners sitting opposite each other around a table. It is a trick-taking card game using a standard 52-card deck. Come alone or bring a partner.

Hand and foot card game

Whether you are new to hand and foot or interested in learning, please join us most Tuesdays at 1:15 at the Senior Center.

This card game involves four rounds of playing until the final round is reached — some two to three hours later. Plan to stay and meet some new friends or catch up with those you have missed over the last couple of years.

No experience is necessary, so come willing to learn.

Board vacancies

The ASI Board of Directors has multiple vacant positions open. The terms are three years with an option to renew for an additional term.

Potential candidates should be at least 21 years of age or older and must have a passion for adult and aging services.

Support the Senior Center

Please support our ongoing operations and programming that provide critical services to some of the most vulnerable in Archuleta County.

You may mail your donation to P.O. BOX 3444, Pagosa Springs CO

81147, or please visit our website: <http://www.psseniors.org/> (donation button).

Donation checks can be written to: Archuleta Seniors Inc.

We are located at 451 Hot Springs Blvd. For more information about ASI, please visit <http://www.pseniors.org/>.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONCERNED ABOUT ANOTHER'S DRINKING? Pagosa Springs Al-anon Family Group meets Tuesdays 6-7p.m., Pagosa Bible Church. Questions? Call/ text (303)815-8569. www.al-anon.org.

PAGOSA AA: M-W-F 5:30p.m. Mens' meeting Tuesday 5:30p.m. Saturday and Sunday 10a.m. Tuesday and Thursday at noon. 315 N. 2nd St., County Road 200 (.2 miles off 160). Zoom Sunday 10a.m. Zoom Thursday noon women only; ID 858 319 763, password 754 234. Call Kathi (970)946-1482 or Central Office (888)333-9649.

THERE IS A SOLUTION GROUP of Alcoholics Anonymous meets Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays, 5:30-6:30p.m. Pagosa Bible Church, 209 Harman Park Drive. Questions? Richard: (970)903-1456. Diamond: (970)264-1073. More resources: www.aa.org, www.aa-westerncolorado.com, (970)245-9649, (888)333-9649 (24 hours).

SERVICES

ASPEN SPRINGS HANDYMAN SERVICES for Archuleta County. Brett at (970)570-9403. Services include but are not limited to: Home repairs, Brush mitigation, Spring cleaning, Landscape maintenance, Greenhouse Kit Assembly, Gardens/ trimming. Hourly: First hr \$100, then \$35 an hour there after. Odd jobs/ to-do list are my specialty and I'll even clean your garage.

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HELP WANTED

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Job Responsibilities

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Administrative: Handle postal paperwork, insertion order processing and payment processing for advertising and subscriptions.
Service: Provide personable, friendly customer service answering phones and interacting in person with customers that visit the office.
Communication: Serve as a point of contact for internal and external communications. Answer phones, respond to emails and direct inquiries to the appropriate team members.
Project assistance: Assist with special projects and initiatives as needed.

Requirements

3-5 years of experience working in an office.
 Excellent attention to detail and accuracy in data entry.
 Strong organizational and time management skills to meet payroll deadlines.
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 CEO Jim O'Rourke at jorourke@orourkemediagroup.com

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PART-TIME ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT. Community United Methodist Church in Pagosa Springs is seeking a friendly, organized Administrative Assistant to manage office operations and support the pastor. This is a part-time position (16 hrs/ week, Mon- Thurs, 8:30a.m.- 12:30p.m.). The Administrative Assistant is often the first point of contact at our welcoming and inclusive church. To apply, email your resume to Rev. Ken Daniell at pastor@cumcps.org.

NEWSPAPER REPORTER — We are searching for a talented reporter to fill a full-time position in Pagosa Springs, Colorado, at The Pagosa Springs SUN. Our journalists are driven to find stories that matter to our community and are dedicated to fairness, accuracy, and ethics. The successful candidate for this position is someone who knows how to cover hard news but also loves to write about people and their passions. They know that a good interview is often a good conversation and know when to ask the tough questions, but also when to listen. The ideal candidate has exceptional writing skills and is willing to put in the extra effort and research to deliver an engaging story. Preferred qualifications for this position include: Degree or diploma in journalism, or a related field; At least 1-3 years of experience as a reporter with experience covering hard news and feature stories or experience at a college newspaper; The ability to meet tight deadlines and report the news as it happens; Superior language, writing and editing skills; Strong photography skills; Able to work a variety of schedules, including evenings, nights and weekends; Excellent critical thinking and problem-solving skills; Ability to work in a fast-paced environment; A valid driver's license and a reliable vehicle; Willingness to live in or near Pagosa Springs, Colorado. If this sounds like the perfect position for you, we would love to hear from you! To apply, please send your resume, letter of interest and relevant samples of your work to Chad Richardson, Vice President of News, crichardson@orourkemediagroup.com. Company Benefits: We offer competitive compensation plans and employees are eligible for medical, dental, vision, life insurance benefits, paid time off and our 401 (k) savings plan. This is an excellent opportunity for career development and growth within the company O'Rourke Media Group is a fast-growing company that owns and operates hyper-local, community newspapers, websites, niche publications and a full-service digital agency. We are family-owned and mission-driven to save newspapers and local media companies by investing in the people, resources and technology needed to thrive for many years to come. We believe that every community can benefit from a well-run, properly resourced, local newspaper and website. Our News teams produce hyper-local, high interest local news and accurate and trustworthy reporting. Our Sales and Digital Fulfillment teams bring omnichannel advertising solutions to local businesses in the communities we serve. O'Rourke Media Group now operates in nine states and 38 markets with 51 publications and hyper-local websites. We started from ground zero in December 2018, totally bootstrapped, confident and with an entrepreneurial mindset.

PINE VALLEY RENTAL, busy equipment rental yard is seeking a reliable, self starting shop/yard person. Must have experience in mechanics, diesels, hydraulics, electrical work, and be knowledgeable of heavy equipment plus small engines. CDL is a plus but not required. Must have own transportation. Full time, Monday -Friday 8-5. Please call (970)731-4410 Or Email ppine000@centurytel.net. 391 Bastille Drive.

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THE KEYAH GRANDE GUEST HOUSE is hiring a line cook/ dish (\$20/ hour) for our new fine dining restaurant, "Beyond the Gates". Experience preferred. Email your resume and references to theguesthouse@keyahgrande.com

THE TOWN OF PAGOSA SPRINGS is seeking to hire a **Facilities & Fleet Maintenance Techn** in the Facilities Division. The individual selected for this position performs a variety of entry-level unskilled and semi-skilled industrial maintenance duties as needed to ensure proper cleaning and routine maintenance of town facilities. May also perform vehicle maintenance including changing oil, checking fluids, and other light vehicle maintenance tasks. This is a full-time position with benefits. For more information on the position and to apply, go to the Town's website at www.pagosasprings.co.gov and select Employment.

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The joy of nature and everlasting joy

By Joyce Holdread
PREVIEW Columnist

With the arrival of spring and the changing of seasons, we begin to see warmer temperatures and generally more favorable weather. With rising temperatures, many experience an increased desire to be outside enjoying the beauty of nature.

Through nature, which is experienced firsthand here in Pagosa Springs, we often feel a tugging on our soul and heart. It is times like these that our inner senses discern the truth that there is something (and someone) more than what is visible to the human eye.

This "nudging" is a gentle reminder that our soul seeks and requires more than the physical world can offer. And while nature gives us a glimpse at the joy, nature is not the source of everlasting joy.

When taking in the beauty of our natural surroundings, our hearts should point toward the Divine Creator. By setting aside our selfish wants, we will experience both God and nature with an indescribable awe.

He stands in front of us as towering mountain peaks. We hear Him in the breeze that goes through the trees and the gentle burble of a stream. We delight in Him in the wildflowers and grasses of a meadow on a warm afternoon.

The Bible speaks to the evidence of God when we look at the natural world. Romans 1:20 reminds us, "Ever since the creation of the world His invisible nature namely, His eternal power and deity, has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made."

Psalms 19:1 echoes the same sentiment in proclaiming God's "handiwork."

When we experience the natural world, whether it be while hiking, enjoying an afternoon drive or simply looking out the window, our souls are moved by God's presence and His invitation to share in His goodness.

But, is it enough to simply "acknowledge" God's existence? The answer is an honest and plain — no.

God wants more for us. He wants a personal relationship with us.

While the admiration of a beautiful vista is for some the first exposure to the Creator, acknowledging and being aware of God through nature

A Matter of Faith

With spring upon us, the seeds of God's handiwork are coming into full splendor.

alone will not satisfy the questing of our souls. Only a relationship with God will.

And how do we enter a personal relationship with God? By attending His church, participating in the liturgy and taking in the love of Christ through the Eucharist. For it is through God's beloved spouse, the church, that the members of His family come together to worship Him as the Creator of heaven and earth.

As adopted children of God through baptism, by stepping out of nature and into His church every Sunday, we outwardly express our desire for a personal relationship with Him and set aside our wants to thank Him for the countless blessings He has awarded us, including all that awaits us in nature.

Nature is a testament to God's glory and the sacrifice of his Son, Jesus Christ. It is essential, however, that we take heed of God's calling. We should not be content to leave ourselves in a one-sided relationship of acknowledgment versus participation.

With spring upon us, the seeds of God's handiwork are coming into full splendor. Yes, nature is God's gift to be explored, but sitting in nature cannot take the place of the personal relationship with Him that is founded within His church.

As our desire to be outside en-

joying the beauty of God's creation intensifies, let us not forget the importance of planting our roots in the fertile soil found through God alone.

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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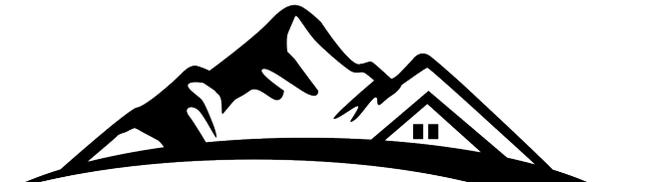
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