

San Miguel Basin Forum

HEALTH CARE

CDC updates COVID isolation guidelines

SPECIAL TO THE FORUM

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced it has updated its guidelines surrounding isolation for those infected with COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses. The guidance removes the recommendation for a five-day isolation with COVID-19 infection and now urges that people stay home when they are sick until symptoms are getting better and there's no fever for 24 hours.

Officials with the CDC looked to a number of factors supporting its updated guidance. While acknowledging that respiratory viruses remain a public health threat, there are more tools than ever to combat them, including vaccines for COVID-19, the flu and RSV. Vaccination has proven to be effective in lowering rates of hospitalization for COVID-19 and associated deaths. Additionally, more than 98 percent of the U.S. population now has some degree of protective immunity against COVID-19 from vaccination, prior infection, or both.

The CDC also looked to other states and countries that changed their COVID-19 isolation guidance to recommendations that are similar to CDC's. Those places did not experience clear increases in community transmission or hospitalization rates. Data from California and Oregon, for instance, where isolation guidance looks a lot like CDC's updated recommendations, shows that those states are not experiencing higher COVID-19 test positivity, emergency department visits, or hospitalizations.

Still, said San Miguel Public Health Director Grace Franklin, the key to preventing the spread of illness is to stay home if you feel sick. And, continue to follow best practices such as frequent hand-washing, covering your mouth when coughing or sneezing, ensuring a fresh flow of air (or gather outdoors), physical distancing and wearing a good-fitting mask.

"Bear in mind that those over 65 years of age, small children, pregnant people and those with compromised immune systems are still at the greatest risk should they become infected," Franklin said. "Follow best practices for prevention of these viruses to help ensure a healthy community. And, get vaccinated!"

Please visit sanmiguelcountyco.gov/173/Public-Health for more information, vaccine clinics and other services.



This March 7 image shows part of the Dolores River Valley, the area in question regarding the highly contested national monument proposition. (Photo by Rusty Scott)

MONUMENT

Tooker calls for consent

By REGAN TUTTLE, *Editor*

Aimee Tooker didn't just join the "Halt the Dolores Monument" group recently. Tooker, a community leader in the West End, has been in conversations about the monument since last summer, though she told the Forum she's currently speaking out on behalf of herself at this point and not organizations she belongs to. A board member of the state's Just Transition Advisory Committee and the West End Economic Development Corporation, she also owns a business.

Tooker has been aware that previously a National Conservation Area (NCA) was proposed for the Dolores River. She said the NCA has been discussed for 15-20 years.

It's been hard for counties, like Montezuma or Montrose, to agree to the NCA though, because of the proposed boundary and also water rights. And, the West End has been worried about mining and exploration limits.

Both Republicans and Democrats have a version of a local NCA on their plates now, and Tooker has compared notes on the two. She said they're identical.

But recently, the Protect the Dolores River Coalition began pushing for a national monument in the region, rather than an NCA, so Tooker began doing more research.

Congress can approve a monument by vote, but Tooker is worried local groups are going to push President Biden to sign off on a monument immediately. With 730,000 people visiting the Grand

Junction National Monument last year, she wonders what will happen to the West End area when "bucket listers" then flock to the Dolores River. She has other questions too.

According to House Bill 23-1247, there's a plan to study advanced energy solutions in rural Colorado, and a local monument seems to violate that. Tooker believes the U.S. needs access to clean power sources, and the Uravan Mineral Belt can assist with those solutions. She doesn't understand why the proposed monument boundaries don't stay with the Dolores River, but expand to encompass energy reserves. The monument boundaries in the most recent map did overlay the Uravan Mineral Belt.

Tooker said she isn't against conservation, but consent is needed.

Cont. on Pg. 2

WEST END

Local leaders gather for strategic plan training

SPECIAL TO THE FORUM

Leaders from the West End gathered in Glenwood Springs last week to begin the process of creating a region-wide strategic plan for the West Ends of Montrose and San Miguel counties. The West End team was one of five communities selected from across Colorado's mountain and rural towns to participate in "Community Builder's Building Better Places" training.

Executive Director of West End Economic Development Corporation (WEEDC) Makayla Gordon, Nucla Town Manager Melissa Lampshire, Norwood Town Clerk Amanda Pierce, Norwood Deputy Clerk and Norwood chamber

vice president president Becky Hannigan, Executive Director of Nucla-Naturita Area Chamber of Commerce and Nucla Town Trustee Paula Brown and Montrose County Commissioner Sue Hansen convened last week for the intensive three-day workshop.

Through the efforts of this team and other leaders in the West End to transition the local economy away from coal and to bolster other industries, the lack of resources and civic capacity to advance the transition has become evident. These leaders were able to create a beginning game plan to tackle some of these challenges and to create a living document that will guide the future of the West End. To learn more about the Building Better

Places training, all may view the Community Builders' press release online at <https://communitybuilders.org/insights/bbp2024/>.

"When I began working at WEEDC, I realized how many studies and plans we had created for each of our communities," Gordon said in a news release. "While having these plans is always the first step in going after any sort of funding, they become irrelevant or outdated after a certain period of time. My goal is to create a region-wide strategic plan that encompasses many of the studies and plans that have already been created for our community to increase our chances of earning funding and to guide our path forward through

Cont. on Pg. 4

ENTERTAINMENT

Bear tales in Naturita, Music on the Mesa

SPECIAL TO THE FORUM

Last month, the Naturita Community Library teamed up with the Talking Gourds Poetry Program to host a new "Stories & Poems" performance series on the third Sunday of each month starting at 11 a.m. The program began with Norwood storyteller Bob McKeever.

McKeever is off to Mexico in March, but Norwood local Bill Wilson has agreed to continue the discussion of apex predators in the local region with a session of storytelling and poetry on bears. Wilson's session, called "Black Bear Tales," will take place Sunday, March 17, at 11 a.m.

All are invited to join and bring a bear story or poem.

Stories & Poems follows a simple format. The morning begins with a performance of a featured storyteller or poet, followed by a question and answer session, and then a passing of the gourd. At that point, everyone present will be invited to tell a personal story, perform a poem (an original or a favorite written by someone else), read a short section of prose, or simply pass the gourd on to the next person.

A collaboration of the Naturita Community Library and the Telluride Institute's Talking Gourds poetry program, Stories & Poems is free and open to all ages, thanks to the generosity of the library, private donors and Talking Gourds' Fischer Cantor poetry contests.

For more information, the public may text 970-729-0220 or email Art Goodtimes at art@tellurideinstitute.org. All are invited to visit the website www.tellurideinstitute.org/talking-gourds.

In other entertainment news, Music on the Mesa, a new music series set to happen in Norwood this summer, announced the lineup for its 2024 concert series. The concerts will be free, at the San Miguel Basin Fairgrounds, and producers said they're starting with two concerts for Music on the Mesa's first year.

On June 16 Wayne "The Train" Hancock will perform. Representatives of Music on the Mesa said since his debut in 1995, Hancock has been the "undisputed king of juke-joint swing, that alchemist's dream of honky-tonk, western swing, blues, Texas rockabilly and big band."

And, on August 11 Couch, a Boston-based band that infuses pop with funk, rock and R&B/soul, will take the stage at the fairgrounds.

Representatives said Couch's "vibrant sound injects their signature flavor: expressive horns, warm

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

A vital role



Candy Meehan. (Courtesy image)

Dear Editor,

Transportation plays a vital role in connecting people to essential services, opportunities, resources and each other. In rural counties, the transportation landscape presents unique challenges compared to urban areas. Limited infrastructure, long distances between destinations and sparse population density are some of the factors that impact transportation options here. This letter delves into the transportation issues faced by residents of rural communities like ours and explores possible solutions to improve access and connectivity.

The vast distances between homes and key destinations can make commuting a time-consuming and costly endeavor. Residents may need to travel long distances to reach schools, workplaces, healthcare providers and employment, leading to increased fuel expenses and wear and tear on vehicles. Additionally, longer commute times can reduce productivity and quality of life for individuals who must spend hours each day traveling to and from their destinations.

Another notable challenge in rural transportation is the lack of connectivity between different modes of transportation. Limited options for transferring between buses or other modes of transportation can hinder seamless travel for residents. The absence of integrated transportation networks make it challenging to plan efficient routes and access multiple destinations in a single trip.

Despite these challenges, there are opportunities to improve transportation in rural counties and enhance access for residents. Fortunately, in San Miguel County, we have outstanding organizations like SMART, All Points Transportation and Telluride Express. These organizations

work hard to provide essential transportation services in our county and beyond.

Investments in infrastructure, such as expanding road networks or building bike lanes, can also contribute to improving transportation accessibility. Enhancing connectivity between different transportation modes and increasing options for active transportation, like walking and cycling, can promote sustainable and inclusive mobility for our residents.

Furthermore, partnerships between public and private entities, as well as community engagement and input, are essential for developing tailored transportation solutions that meet the unique needs of rural county residents. By working collaboratively and creatively, stakeholders can address transportation challenges and foster a more connected and resilient rural transportation system.

Transportation in rural counties presents complex challenges related to limited public transportation, long distances and connectivity issues. However, by implementing innovative solutions, investing in infrastructure and fostering partnerships, rural communities like ours enhance transportation access and connectivity for people. Addressing these challenges is crucial for promoting economic development, improving quality of life and ensuring equitable access to essential services in rural counties.

What are your thoughts and suggestions regarding transportation and other issues in our county? Feel free to contact me. My next letter focuses on energy.

Candy Meehan,
Norwood Mayor and Candidate
for San Miguel County
Commissioner District 3
(www.meehan.life)
NORWOOD

Correction

Last week, in the story "Basin Clinic laments loss of funding," the San Miguel Basin Forum reported that Doylene Garvey was a board member of the Basin Clinic. Doylene Garvey is, in fact, not a board member. Her sister-in-law Lorraine Garvey is a clinic board member.

History: Rimrocker Historical Society
The Nucla flour mill, Part 2By JANE THOMPSON, *Rimrocker Historical Society*

By 1917, the Nucla flour mill was thriving. They were grinding good flour that they called "Lily White." John Reindl, with his partner Mr. Albrecht, had the mill running 16 hours a day. Five hundred bushels of grain were being brought in from Paradox at the end of January.

The West End was being praised for its patriotic wheat growing. In 1916, the West End shipped out three or four narrow-gauge cars full of wheat. Expectations were for them to have 65,000 bushels to ship in 1917 and at least 8,000 bushels for sale at home in the West End. Business was booming.

The Wheat Committee of the Montrose County Farm Bureau was working with the west end of the county to help them get the best prices for their wheat. They suggested that Norwood and Redvale ship out all of their crop, since they were nearest to transportation to market by going to Placerville. Nucla and Paradox wheat would be used strictly for consumption in the West End. It seemed like a good plan for everyone concerned. Nucla and Paradox would not have to ship their wheat, and the Nucla mill would be making flour to be

sold in the local communities.

In October of 1918, the secretary of the Montrose Farm Bureau claimed the plan had been a success. The Montrose Daily Press of October 4, 1918, carried the secretary's letter saying, "It has been suggested that the West End use Nucla flour, since it has a number one flour mill and makes first-class flour. The Nucla wheat crop is sufficient to furnish flour to all the people on the West End from Norwood to Paradox."

A letter from W. A. Hopkins, mayor of Nucla and the editor of The Nucla Independent, written to the Montrose Daily Press of June 26, 1919, explained how this patriotic plan had worked: "The wheat situation worked out fine last fall. Most of the wheat in the lower country including Paradox was held for the Nucla mill. Around Norwood, they shipped out several carloads: "The mill has kept going steady since last fall. They work an eight-hour shift and grind a ton of flour in that time. They have been running about 250 days, which would total 250 tons of flour. The mill was closed down a few days ago, on account of boiler trouble, but they fre-

quently run a 12-hour shift, so that 250 tons should be a safe estimate. Practically three quarter million pounds of flour will be ground before new wheat comes in."

It sounds like the Nucla flour mill was a success. Can you imagine three quarter million pounds of flour being made in Nucla today? John Reindl had proved himself an able miller. Compliments were many in the local newspapers over the three years or so that the mill was thriving.

Mr. Hopkins' letter continued, "The splendid cooperation of the different communities enabled the far West End people 75 miles from the railroad to market the wheat they had patriotically grown, which would have netted them much less had it not been for cooperation."

Let's all dig deep and stir that cooperative, patriotic attitude and tackle the challenging times we have ahead of us in the West End. If we keep those two elements in mind, I believe we can do anything. Let the spirit of those early visionaries be our guide in all of our efforts.

(Articles sourced from Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection, Colorado State Library.)

Monument proposal

Cont. from Pg. 1

She said nobody in the West End wants a monument "shoved down their throats."

What's more is she's researched President Biden's "America the Beautiful" plan, which "(works) to restore, connect and conserve 30 percent of lands and waters by 2030," and she said the Dolores River National Monument proposal doesn't follow the guidelines. Tooker has studied those and created a report as a rebuttal.

She said the current monument proposal is not "collaborative," or "for the benefit of all." She added it isn't "locally designed or led," if it leaves out the West End. Furthermore, are the tribal nations taken into consideration?

Tooker has more talking points that speak to the guidelines, and they include a lack of completed

studies, economic and environmental. Studies would start after a monument declaration, however, but Tooker believes they need to be done now.

Other things concern her: the burgeoning mountain biking community would lose connectivity options under monument status, existing and future mining jobs would disappear — as would water storage options, grazing permits, and plans for keeping the local economy diverse.

She said the NCA is the wisest idea, and one that could be studied as far as visitors and tax-dollar money go. She said that would be a better starting point than a monument.

Tooker spoke at both the recent Gateway and Naturita "Halt the Dolores Monument" meetings. She spoke March 9 in Paradox too.

She's also talking to propo-

nents. Tooker was in a meeting with Amber Clark, of Dolores River Boating Advocates, and also Mason Osgood, of Sheep Mountain Alliance. Tooker brought up negotiation of the NCA Feb. 14, but Clark refused.

"She told me the NCA ship has sailed, and they have momentum for their cause," Tooker said.

Tooker also went to the Montrose County Board of Commissioners meeting March 11, and spoke after Scott Braden, of Colorado Wildlands Project, also for the monument. Afterward, Tooker planned to have lunch with Braden to keep the conversation going.

Dolores River Boating Advocates, Sheep Mountain Alliance and Colorado Wildlands Project are all entities part of the Protect the Dolores River Coalition.



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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Response to loss of funding story

Dear Editor,

This letter is in response to the article in the March 6 issue of the Forum titled "Basin Clinic laments loss of funding." I won't reiterate all the points made by Lorraine Garvey, vice president of the Basin Clinic board of directors, other than to cite it is she, not her sister-in-law Doyleene Garvey, who serves on the board.

I will point out that over the past 17 years that Montrose County funding through the PSST (since 2009), this (2024) is the first year the county commissioners have chosen not to fund the clinic, even though money was budgeted and approved for this year.

I am at a loss as to why, since both board and staff have worked exceptionally hard to meet and often surpass the requirements put forth to us by the commissioners. I realize there is no "recompense" to the county from the clinic — we are, in fact, truly a nonprofit entity. However, I fail to see how putting taxpayer money to the Event Center and fairgrounds, to the tune of \$2-plus million a year with a return of maybe \$350,000 a year, can compare with the lives that have been saved because of the existence of Basin Clinic. Recently, the value of a human life was calculated at \$11 million. Those whose lives have been saved might disagree. Life is priceless. It might appear to some that recreation and entertainment are put ahead of life and healthcare.

Another issue I'd like addressed is Commissioner Sue Hansen's reported comments in that same

issue. She reportedly said she was disappointed that the clinic board or administration had not come to her directly when, in fact, Executive Director Christina Pierce had contacted the county twice following a meeting on Feb. 5 in Montrose, where Commissioner Roger Rash told me we should be hearing from them in a couple days. There was not any formal or informal response, until the clinic's regular board meeting two weeks later when Rash advised the clinic board that the county commissioners had decided not to release the funds.

Hansen also noted that the clinic board is exploring selling the clinic. In fact, the clinic board has been exploring numerous possibilities of additional funding, including selling property bought a few years ago for the plan to build a brand new clinic. The selling of the current clinic is not an imminent possibility, and has not been a real consideration, until or unless all other options are gone. To say "it makes no sense to spend taxpayer money on a clinic that could be sold soon" is certainly putting the cart before the horse.

As for Hansen's continuous urging of the clinic to "merge" with UMC in Norwood, such action is not in our purview. A few years ago UMC approached Basin Clinic regarding working with UMC in pursuing a Point of Access through their being a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC). In fact, there were only 10 such appointments across the entire country, none of which were selected in Colorado. Over

the years we have worked with UMC in various ways, having had a congenial relationship with them until urging from outside forces got in the way. I'll let you draw your own conclusion on that. We left the door open for a continued relationship with UMC.

One final point, Montrose County withdrew the public health nurse from the West End several years ago, leaving Basin Clinic to fill that gap as well. While we appreciate the funding received over the years, I wonder if the county commissioners appreciate how essential Basin Clinic is to our communities in the West End of Montrose County. There are many of our residents who find it difficult, if not impossible, to travel elsewhere for their healthcare, and realistically, UMC (Commissioner Hansen's recommendation) cannot take on the overload, regardless of what some may believe. Another overload would be the burden placed on our EMS, most of whom are volunteers. The six hours for transport to any hospital would be overwhelming for that essential service, as well as trauma placed on the patients.

I do not want to put our neighbors and friends in a situation where their lives are endangered because of healthcare needs. We, both board and staff of Basin Clinic, work very hard to continue providing quality healthcare for everyone who needs it.

Sincerely,
Chris Daniels,
Basin Clinic Board President
WEST END

Stories & Poems

Cont. from Pg. 1

vocals and bubbling synths."

Music on the Mesa is presented by Norwood Park & Recreation District (NPRD), Pickin' Productions and Town of Norwood, with support from local sponsors Blue Grouse Bread, the Norwood Chamber

of Commerce, Telluride Foundation, BackCountry Inn, Lone Cone Legacy Trust, Lisa Foxwell and Paul Finley, Gretchen and Jim Wells with JAM Ranch, Dark Sky Pie Pizza and the San Miguel Basin Forum.

Anyone who'd like to join the support crew may visit the follow-

ing link for the application: form.jotform.com/240335999309063. Additionally, a call for volunteers for both concerts will go out April 1. Those interested should stay tuned on social media, and the job comes with a free T-shirt from the first-ever Music on the Mesa in Norwood.

San Miguel Basin Forum

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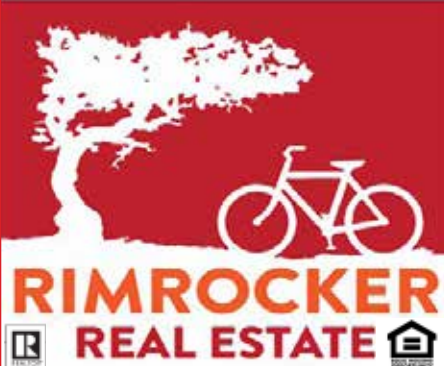
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Strategic plan training

Cont. from Pg. 1
the inevitable changes that are to come. With the amount of outside interest in our community, it is as important now as ever to create a plan that will guide our community forward for years to come."

The Building Better Places training was the first in a many-step process, as the team was also selected to participate in the National Association of Counties' (NACo) Building Resilient Economies in Coal Communities (BRECC) Action Challenge. As one of seven national teams, the West End team will continue its work with Community Builders to continue advancing the region-wide strategic plan to seek funding, create nationwide connections and to properly engage the entire community in the process. The BRECC Action Challenge is a year-long technical assistance program that will capstone in early 2025. For more information on the BRECC Action

Challenge, all may view NACo's press release online: <https://www.naco.org/news/seven-coal-communities-selected-receive-support-through-national-initiative>.

"The BRECC Challenge is a very exciting opportunity for the West End, as we have the opportunity to collaborate and learn from communities all over the nation that are facing similar challenges," Gordon said. "I am most excited to build off of the work our team did at the Building Better Places training to create a sustainable action plan for the West End."

Over the next 12-18 months, the local community can expect many opportunities to engage in this region-wide strategic plan. The team will host many community meetings and visit with as many community members as possible.

"We have just crossed the starting line of a long marathon," Gordon added. "You can expect a lot of outreach and engagement from us in the coming months.

However, as our team is still learning how to tackle this process effectively, while simultaneously addressing the challenges our community is already facing, please be patient. We have no intention of changing our community, just creating a plan that future generations will be able to follow and continue the values we all hold dear."

Gordon said the West End has seen immense growth since the COVID pandemic. Creating a plan that is a living document and that will guide the community through growth, the transition away from coal and other issues, for years to come, is a goal of the team.

"The West End has been invited to participate in some incredibly exciting opportunities over the next year," Gordon said.

For more information, the public may contact Gordon at mgordon@chooswestend.org or 970-865-2499.

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500-600# STEERS	2.80-3.12	500-600# HEIFERS	2.70-2.85
600-700# STEERS	2.60-2.70	600-700# HEIFERS	2.30-2.70
700-800# STEERS	2.40-2.55	700-800# HEIFERS	2.25-2.35
800-900# STEERS	2.20-2.34	800-900# HEIFERS	2.00-2.20
Top bulls	1.25-1.32 high of 1.34	Medium bulls	1.00-1.18
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NEXT SPECIAL HORSE SALE Saturday APRIL 6TH

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Thursday April 11th. All Breds Bulls Sale.

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OBITUARY

Ralph Douglas Thomas

Feb. 11, 1933 — Feb. 28, 2024



Ralph Douglas Thomas.

Ralph Douglas Thomas, Sr., age 91, of Manchester, MD, passed away surrounded by family on Feb. 28 at his home. Born on Feb. 11, 1933, in Westminster, MD, he was the son of the late Douglas I. Thomas and Mildred A. Crum.

Ralph met Grace Elizabeth Sanders during a "Paul Jones" dance, and the two married in 1955. They were married nearly 69 years.

Ralph was a veteran of the

U.S. Army, and he served in the Korean War. He worked for nearly three decades on the U.S. space program through Bendix Field Engineering, a career that took him to tracking station assignments all over the world.

He was an avid outdoorsman and traveler. He spent countless hours fishing, hunting and exploring — from the Bahamas to Newfoundland and Maryland to Alaska. He was especially at home on the mountains, mesas and waters near Nucla and Naturita, where he and Grace lived for more than 30 years after he retired from the space program.

Surviving him, in addition to his wife, are children James Douglas Thomas and wife Marsha of Waynesboro, PA; Lorraine Ann Thomas and husband Robert Hoffert, Jr. of Manchester, MD; Ralph Douglas Thomas, Jr. and wife Margaret of Tumwater, WA; Rosie Thomas Wiley and husband

Don of Mt. Hood, OR; and Shirley Davidson Sanchez of San Diego, CA.

Ralph is also survived by eight grandchildren, 22 great-grandchildren, and siblings, Thelma Danigelis and William Carl Thomas.

Ralph was predeceased by his infant daughter, Theresa, and two brothers, Calvin and Herman Thomas.

A private family inurement will take place in St. Joseph's Cemetery, Taneytown, MD, at a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations may be offered to the American Legion Post 200, 4600 Legion Ln., Hampstead, MD 21074, or to the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, 5705 Grant Creek Rd., Missoula, MT 59808.

Arrangements are by the Eckhardt Funeral Chapel in Manchester, MD. Online condolences may be offered at www.eckhardtfuneralchapel.com.

OBITUARY

Johnie Ray Harris

June 29, 1948 — March 2, 2024



Johnie Ray Harris.

Johnie Ray Harris, Sr. passed away peacefully on March 2 at the age of 75 after a courageous battle with cancer. He was surrounded by loved ones who will continue to honor his legacy by living their lives to the fullest.

Johnie moved from his birthplace of Texas to Olathe, CO, where he spent a great deal of his childhood.

He graduated from Olathe High School and enlisted in the U.S. Army, where he was medically discharged shortly after bootcamp. Johnie worked at Idarado Mine in the San Juan Mountains of Ouray County as a hard rock

miner. In 1977, Johnie and his family moved to Nucla, where he was a mine foreman for Cotter Corporation until his retirement in 2012.

Johnie found the love of his life, Dolores Webb, at the age of 21. The two were married on July 5, 1969, at Olathe Methodist Church and built a beautiful life over their nearly 55 years together. Road trips across the country with Dolores were some of Johnie's favorite memories, and the two were inseparable. Their love and commitment to each other is inspirational to all that know them.

A true outdoorsman, Johnie loved the mountains. He spent countless hours in nature with his three sons hunting, fishing, hiking and camping. His adventurous spirit lives on through his family, and he passed this love of the outdoors all the way down to his great-grandchildren. Johnie loved to read, and would read multiple books everyday with his dog on his lap. His quick wit and great sense of humor kept his family laughing until his final moments. Johnie was a friend to all, and to those who needed him most. He loved

his family fiercely, and his final days were a testament to that love reciprocated.

Johnie is preceded in death by his father, Jerrel; mother, Anita; brother, Larry; and his beloved son, Johnie Ray Jr. (Heather). He is survived by his wife, Dolores; two sons, Robert (Molly) Harris and Randy (Lacey) Harris; daughter-in-law, Heather (Brien) Gardner; his nine grandchildren, Brent (Sarah) Harris, Danny (Makiah) Harris, Talon Harris, Hayden (Reese) Harris, Colten Harris, Carson Gardner, Grace Harris, Mason Harris and Payton Harris; and his five great-grandchildren, Harvey, Jace, Mehlani, Maddox and Tatum.

He is also survived by his sisters, Mary Jones and Susan Clemons, as well as many nieces and nephews whom he loved dearly.

Johnie's spirit and love for his family lives on as we celebrate the life of a wonderful man.

Graveside services will be held at the Nucla Cemetery, March 17, 2024, at 1 p.m. Refreshments will be served at the Nucla Senior Center following the graveside service.

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2/21/2024

2 follow up reports

2/22/2024

0017 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 100 block of Payson Street in Naturita for a noise complaint.

0553 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 26400 block of FF26 Road near Naturita for a suspicious vehicle.

1025 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 500 block of Lake Avenue in Naturita for a medical assist.

1515 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 200 block of West Main Street in Naturita for a lock-out.

1649 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 400 block of West Second Avenue in Naturita for an information report.

1831 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 100 block of East Main Street in Naturita for a trespassing report.

2013 Hours - Alice Richardson, 69, was arrested in the 800 block of Main Street in Nucla on an outstanding warrant.

2144 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 500 block of Main

Street in Nucla for a medical assist.

1 VIN inspection

1 directed patrol in Naturita

2 civil processes attempted/served

2/23/2024

0308 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 500 block of Lake Avenue in Naturita for a medical assist.

0855 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 400 block of Adams Street in Naturita for a medical assist.

1229 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 30700 block of Highway 141 near Naturita for a 911.

1414 Hours - Justin Leyendecker, 24, was contacted in the 100 block of West Main Street in Naturita and cited for expired registration.

1451 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 300 block of East Tenth Avenue in Nucla for an animal problem.

3 civil processes attempted/served

2/24/2024

0937 Hours - Harley Naff, 21, was contacted at the intersection of Highway 97 and EE28 Road near Naturita and issued a warning for no license plates.

1137 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to 25 Mesa Road mm 43 near Nucla

for an abandoned vehicle.

1201 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the intersection of Highway 141 and CC Road near Nucla for an accident.

1330 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 100 block of West Main Street in Naturita for an information report.

1332 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 29000 block of 2700 Road near Nucla for an animal problem.

1714 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 1000 block of Montana Street in Nucla for a noise complaint.

1748 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 300 block of West Seventh Avenue in Nucla for a weapon offense.

1832 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 1000 block of Montana Street in Nucla for a disturbance.

2128 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 100 block of Adams Street in Naturita for a disturbance.

1 VIN inspection

1 directed patrol in Nucla

1 directed patrol in County

1 directed patrol in Naturita

2 civil processes attempted/served

2/25/2024

1155 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 29800 block of 3000 Road near Nucla for a fire.

1332 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 300 block of West Sixth Avenue in Nucla for a medical assist.

1335 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 500 block of West Sixth Avenue in Nucla for a theft report.

1350 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 200 block of Highway 97 in Naturita for a trespassing report.

1725 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the area of West Fifth Avenue and Juniper Street in Nucla for an animal problem.

1 follow up report

Classified Ads

COOK WANTED

Enjoy cooking for others? We have an opening for a part-time lunch cook for a great group of folks at the Senior Center in Nucla. 18-20 hours per week. For more details, call Sherry (970)322-7000 or Monica (970)361-6518.

41-2T-C

LAND FOR SALE IN NUCLA, CO

For Sale by owner: 11.5 acres unimproved land near Hopkins Field Airport in Nucla, \$60,000; for more information, please call 970-864-7498 or 970-596-0649.

59-5T-C

VETERAN MEMORIAL SERVICE INFO

Memorial Services for Veterans - Contact Tom Loczy and VFW at: (970) 428-2268

TEN

* HEARING NOTICE *

Notice is hereby given that a public hearing will be held by the Montrose County Planning Commission in the Public Works Building 63160 LaSalle Road, Montrose, Colorado, on Thursday, March 28, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. to review proposed amendments to the Montrose County Zoning Regulations.

The proposed amendment includes changes to the following sections of the Zoning Regulations:

Section II – Zone District Standards

- Changes to use tables.
- Changes to dimensional standards in the General Residential (R) district.

Section III – Use Standards

- Clarification of Table T-III.1.
- Clarification on Telecommunication Facilities standards.

Section IV – Applications and Review Procedures

- Clarification to Site Plan application and requirements.

Section V – Detailed Development Standards

- Clarifying criteria was added to determine whether operation of Natural Resource Extraction facilities operation outside of hours can be approved by the County Administrator.

Section VIII – Definitions

THE PUBLIC IS ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND AND WILL BE GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE HEARD

The application materials may be examined during regular business hours at the Montrose County Planning and Development Office, 63160 LaSalle Road, Montrose, Colorado or on the Montrose Citizen Portal:

<https://co-montrose-co.smartgovcommunity.com/ApplicationPublic/ApplicationHome>

Search application: AA24-002

Documents will be available in the Montrose Citizen Portal a week prior to the scheduled hearing in the "Notes" section of the application.

THE PUBLIC IS ENCOURAGED TO OFFER COMMENT

Written comment may be sent to the Planning Commission, c/o Planning and Development Director, 63160 LaSalle Road, Montrose, CO 81401; or c/o trichmond@montrosecounty.net

BY ORDER OF MONTROSE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Published in the San Miguel Basin Forum March 13 & 20, 2024

LEGAL PUBLICATION

FILING OF AN APPLICATION FOR PHASE I, II, AND III BOND RELEASE OF A PORTION OF THE NEW HORIZON MINE SITE (SL-28)

Pursuant to the Rules and Regulation of the Colorado Mined Land Reclamation Board published August 1980, and pursuant to the Colorado Surface Coal Mining Reclamation Act 34-33-101, et seq., notice is hereby given of the filing of an application for Phase I, II, and III Bond Release of a portion of the New Horizon Mine site. The application is denoted as SL-28 and pertains to the New Horizon Mine, Permit No. C-1981-008 (approved April 6, 1983) by Elk Ridge Mining and Reclamation, LLC, P. O. Box 628, Nucla, Colorado 81424, filed with the Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety (CDRMS), Colorado Department of Natural Resources, 1313 Sherman Street, Room 215, Denver, Colorado 80203. The New Horizon Mine is located approximately 2 miles west of Nucla, Colorado.

The Phase I, II, and III bond release areas are made up of five backfill monitoring wells and seven exploratory drill holes. All the backfill wells have been plugged and abandoned and the exploratory drill holes were mined through and reclaimed as part of larger reclamation areas at the New Horizon Mine. The bond release areas are shown in detail on Map 1 within the application. The status of the areas being applied for is consistent with the requirements of the plugging and abandoning the backfill wells and reclaiming the larger area for the exploratory drill holes. Listed below is a general legal description of the area:

The five backfill monitoring wells that are requested for Phase I, II, and III bond release are located within the following locations:

Township 47 North, Range 16 West of the 6th P.M. New Mexico Principal Meridian, County of Montrose, State of Colorado
SE ¼ SE ¼ SW ¼ of Section 36
SW ¼ SE ¼ SE ¼ of Section 36
SW ¼ NE ¼ SE ¼ of Section 36

Township 47 North, Range 15 West of the 6th P.M. New Mexico Principal Meridian, County of Montrose, State of Colorado
SW ¼ SW ¼ SE ¼ of Section 31

Township 46 North, Range 15 West of the 6th P.M. New Mexico Principal Meridian, County of Montrose, State of Colorado
NW ¼ NW ¼ NW ¼ of Section 6,

The seven in-pit exploratory drill holes that are requested for Phase I, II, and III bond release are located within the following locations:

Township 47 North, Range 16 West of the 6th P.M. New Mexico Principal Meridian, County of Montrose, State of Colorado
SE ¼ SW ¼ SE ¼ of Section 36
SE ¼ SW ¼ NE ¼ of Section 36
SE ¼ NE ¼ SE ¼ of Section 36

Township 46 North, Range 16 West of the 6th P.M. New Mexico Principal Meridian, County of Montrose, State of Colorado
NE ¼ NE ¼ NW ¼ of Section 1
NE ¼ NE ¼ SW ¼ of Section 1

The New Horizon Mine currently holds a surety bond in the amount of \$2,522,994, which includes the above listed area. With this application, the New Horizon Mine will be requesting relinquishment of 100% of the bond held for these locations.

A copy of the bond release application is on file at the Montrose County Courthouse Annex, 300 Main Street, Nucla, Colorado and the Colorado Division of Reclamation Mining and Safety at Department of Natural Resources, 1313 Sherman Street, Room 215, Denver, Colorado 80203.

Written comments, objections, and requests for a public hearing or informal conference concerning this bond release application should be addressed to the Colorado Division of Reclamation Mining and Safety, Department of Natural Resources, 1313 Sherman Street, Room 215, Denver, Colorado 80203.

Comments must be filed within thirty (30) days from the last date of this publication, or within thirty (30) days of the completed inspection by the CDRMS, whichever is later.

Published in the San Miguel Basin Forum March 6, 13, 20, and 27, 2024

Norwood celebrates Blue Grouse, Bright Futures and Clark's

NORWOOD CHAMBER NEWS By CHERYL JERABEK

If you've ever driven past 1630 Summit Street in Norwood and thought you caught a whiff of something wonderful in the air, you probably did, Blue Grouse Bread. The boutique bakery was founded in 2016, a collaboration between cousins Hannah and Ben Rossman who were inspired by their shared passion for artisan bread-making.

Originally from Vermont, the two realized their love for dough in high school. Hannah Rossman moved to Norwood, and eventually Ben made his way out. The business operates on a wholesale platform, delivering to local establishments, as well to stores and restaurants in Montrose, Telluride, Rico, Ridgway and beyond.

Blue Grouse Bread is known for its high-quality, organic, locally sourced grains and dedication to the art of old-world bread-baking techniques — but also its commitment to the community, something the chamber appreciates.

"Without our community, none of this would be possible," Ben Rossman said in a press release. "Someone once told me that when

you invest in your community, they will invest in you. I have certainly found that to be true."

The Norwood chamber is also celebrating Bright Futures, a nonprofit organization devoted to some of the most precious members of the community: the children. Bright Futures' mission is two-fold, to improve the lives of children as a family resource center and as an early childhood council. Directed by Clea Willow, resources extend to children, families and educators.

From offering individualized support services and navigation of programs and resources to improving access, availability and quality of early childhood care and education, Bright Futures takes strides to make a positive difference in Norwood and throughout the San Juan Region.

The organization also provides higher education and professional development funding to early childhood teachers. In addition, their "Parents as Teachers" program offers an in-home visitation program to parents of young children.

Clark's Market in Norwood is also supporting community. Open daily 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., the

existing store became Clark's in 2020. It is now managed by Marco Dominguez, who oversees the team of 25 employees.

"This team is a group of people who put passion into their work and are always willing to help each other and the customers," Dominguez told Norwood chamber officials.

Clark's contributes to school food drives and the local food bank, hosts "Non-Profit Mondays," purchases a 4-H steer every year, sponsors the San Miguel Basin Rodeo and Junior Rodeo and does more.

"I like that we help where we can," Dominguez added.

Future goals for Clark's Market include adding an area in the front of the store where local artists can sell their creations. The idea was the brainstorm of assistant manager Sadie Lopez. "We're excited," Sadie said. "It'll be good for the artists and the customers."

The Norwood Chamber of Commerce of Wright's Mesa has monthly membership meetings the second Tuesday of each month at the BackCountry Inn from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. All businesses in the west ends of San Miguel and Montrose counties are invited to join.

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YOUTH

WEPS reminds all of fourth-quarter calendar

SPECIAL TO THE FORUM

The year might be wrapping up, but representatives of West End Public Schools District remind the community that there is still much happening in the fourth quarter. The following are important dates that all should remember:

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled for March 14 and 15.

Next, spring break happens for the Nucla kids March 25 through March 28.

The spring carnival will happen on April 5 this year with various activities taking place.

For grades 10 through 12, the PSAT and SAT tests happen April 17, an important milestone and data point for college readiness. Related to

testing, CMAS testing, the state standardized tests, happen in between the window of April 8 and April 26. Teachers and administration will say more about the upcoming standardized tests, which grades will participate, and the exact schedules.

Prom happens this year April 27.

The weekend of May 2 through May 4 is reserved for the Mustang Theatre Play, and details will soon be announced for times and tickets.

The official Ag Day is May 2, and the band concert is May 7.

The middle school academic and athletic awards banquet and art show is May 13, and the high school version is May 14. Both events take place at 6 p.m.

And, the eighth grade continuation ceremony happens May 16 at 6 p.m.

For freshman at Nucla High

School, the community presentations are May 20 at 6 p.m.

The FFA banquet is May 21 at 6 p.m.

Senior tea is May 22 at 1 p.m. and the baccalaureate is the same day at 7 p.m.

The last day of school is May 23, and that's an early release day with a 1 p.m. wrap-up.

Graduation rehearsal for seniors is May 23 at 1:30 p.m., and the graduation ceremony is the following day, May 24, at 1 p.m.

With questions, the community may contact principals Sara Bray or Malisha Reed at the elementary or high school, respectively.

Baseball and track also take place in the fourth quarter, and those schedules can be found online on the school's website.



Teens take a ski trip with True North Youth Program. (Courtesy image)



Cole Bray feeds cows for Bray Ranches in the Basin. (Photo by Keiran Bray)



This image shows Nucla wrestling coaches Lars Naslund and Cody Terrell, with several NHS wrestlers, who refereed the Dove Creek tournament. Branson McCabe and Russell Garvey placed first. Deklyn Moore did not place, but gave a good effort, and Corbyn Reams placed third. (Courtesy image)

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Awakened the sleeping bear

Dear Editor,

It appears that the proposed Dolores River National Monument has awakened the "sleeping bear." When outsiders come into your space and demand you make changes in your life, so they can receive more pleasure in their life, it gets your attention. A quick lesson for these city folk about born and raised rural people. They are quite happy to live life as is. Their roots are deep, and all is good, until you try to force change on them contrary to their moral compass. Mess with their livelihood, property and family and you will find they will not run from a fight, but rather run to it.

I don't know who thought it was a good idea to propose a 400,000-acre national monument that extends to the Utah border and could be so restrictive that it conflicts with the mission statement of the Bureau of Land Management: "The Bureau of Land Management's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations."

Do I need to mention productivity again?

The following statement from U.S. Department of Interior report (<https://www.doi.gov>) illustrates what many of those most affected feel like.

Local governments raised issues relating to lost jobs and revenue, especially when there has been a lack of meaningful consultation, outreach and public process before monuments are designated. Some of the reviewed monument designations were undertaken after public meetings. However, these meetings were not always adequately noticed to all stakeholders and instead were filled with advocates organized by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to promote monument designations. (It is worth noting that this dynamic is similarly reflected in the public comment process for this review. The DOI received approximately 2.6 million form comments associated with NGO organized campaigns, which far outnumbered individual comments.)

Historically, agriculture and mining are the history of this area going back more than 100 years. Perhaps they should have read the Congressional Research Service report prepared for members of Congress, updated on Jan. 2, 2024, in reference to national monuments and the Antiquities Act (<https://crsreports.congress.gov>).

The history of the area has produced thousands of cattle and mining that was in the forefront that led to the end of World War

I. This area was ground zero for the establishment of the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC). Almost a year after the end of World War II ended, Congress established the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission to foster the peace time development of atomic science and technology. Reflecting America's postwar optimism, Congress declared that atomic energy should be employed not only in the nation's defense but also to promote and strengthen world peace, improve the public welfare, and strengthen free competition in private enterprise. Harry S. Truman signed this into law on Aug. 1, 1946. Protecting our energy future may be more

important today than it was in 1946.

"The Bureau of Land Management's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations."

With the growing demand for reduction of fossil fuels, it is obvious that nuclear is the only way we can meet the aggressive plans for reduction of greenhouse gases. The afore-mentioned legislative is a critical step forward to meet those goals. Creation of the Dolores River National Monument conflicts with the need to secure our energy future. Rely-

ing on Russia and China for our energy needs is unacceptable. It is time to take a deep breath and look past tomorrow. Our energy future cannot be tied to those that wish us harm.

The HALEU Consortium was created to provide the fuels for the next-generation nuclear reactors, such as the one proposed by Terra Power in Kemmerer, Wyoming co-founded by Bill Gates. The U.S. Department of Energy is heavily invested to assist and ensure that the fuel rods will be available domestically, rather than rely on Putin's Russia. How wise is it to put limitations and restrictions on the resources necessary to secure our energy future?

The creation of a national monument will eliminate the economic value of the Uravan Mineral Belt in exchange for a few short weeks of rafting, hiking and bicycle riding. Perhaps someone should have done an economic analysis prior to launching this pie-in-the-sky dream.

Mining and agriculture can co-exist with rafting, hiking, biking, along with general tourism. It is not necessary to destroy the lively hood of the folks who call this home to provide pleasure to the nonresidents for a few days or weeks. The "mission statement" of the Bureau of Land Management is still the best option for the care and management of this area.

*Don Coram, Founder Public Policy Group LTD
COLORADO*