

NORWOOD

Firings, resignations, investigations happen at Town Hall

By REGAN TUTTLE, Editor

After months of strife between the Town of Norwood's staff, town trustees, the sanitation district and the water commission, town offices shut down last week after the town clerk was fired, and then the town manager resigned, followed by the deputy clerk. Tense meetings followed Tuesday through Friday evenings.

Tuesday, July 9

Town Clerk Amanda Pierce was reportedly fired by Town Manager Deana Sheriff, but by the mayor's directive. The mayor has denied this, though Sheriff afterward resigned; Deputy Clerk Becky Hannigan also resigned.

Utility clerk Shawny Darby-Turner was left alone at Town Hall and thereafter shut and locked doors, leaving the Town of Norwood closed.

At the Norwood Water Commission's regular meeting that evening, chairman Tony Daranyi resigned due to conflict and politics, though fellow board members requested he reconsider. Daranyi agreed to reconsider.

The water commission discussed hiring Pierce, fired that day from Norwood Town Hall, as interim employee to pay bills, while simultaneously helping the sanitation district too.

"Stuff has to get done and bills paid," said board member Mike Grafmyer.

Public Works Director Randy Harris left in the middle of that meeting, due to a large waterline break.

Board members discussed further what to do without town staff to handle day-to-day operations.

Wednesday, July 10

The Town of Norwood met in its regular monthly meeting, attended by 40 people live with more online via Zoom. Mayor Candy Meehan said no personnel issues could be discussed for legal reasons, though in public comment, many demanded to know why Pierce was fired and why two other staff resigned. The mayor said she didn't know what had happened and was attending the birth of her first grandchild.

Brad Campbell, on the water commission, said the town board "is useless without the staff."

Makayla Gordon, executive director of WEEDC, expressed worry over collaborative grants with impending deadlines. She

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NONPROFITS

West End Family Link holds annual meeting



Chair of the board Doris VanNess speaks with pantry manager Kerri Cook after Family Link's annual meeting July 10 at the Nucla Community Center. (Photo by Regan Tuttle)

By REGAN TUTTLE, Editor

West End Family Link Center, founded in 1993, held its annual meeting July 10 at the Nucla Community Center with a meet and greet, luncheon and then an official board meeting. With a mission to "empower the people of the west ends of Montrose and San Miguel counties" by providing no-cost supportive services, including referrals, education, evidence-based programs, emergency assistance services and resources, the nonprofit released its annual data for the public.

Currently on the board are Doris VanNess (chairman), Glade Hadden (vice president), Jim Womeldorf (secretary), Annie Johnson (treasurer), Ashley Tomlinson and Jim Guire. Staff include executive director TJ Jones, family development coordinator Josh Yarbrough, pantry manager Kerri Cook, pantry and delivery specialist Lorraine Skees and bookkeeper Maggie Nelson.

Family Link serves 2,069 square miles in the remote and rural area that is the West End, and VanNess told the Forum, the nonprofit is doing more and serving more. In fact, The Emergency Food Assistance Program distributed 1,891 boxes in 2023, up from 1,296 the previous year. The Commodity Sup-

plemental Food Program distributed 417 senior boxes in 2023, up from 295 boxes distributed the previous year. Additionally, the food pantry saw an increase from 1,633 visitors in 2022 to 2,411 in 2023. Family Link also provided 636 meals and snacks through the backpack program for kids in local communities.

"We serve so many people," VanNess said in an interview after the board meeting. "Food prices have gone up, and people are coming to us for food."

Additionally, Family Link received a \$15,000 grant from Energy Outreach Colorado and helped locals with utility bills — giving more than \$11,000 — since

Cont. on Pg. 3

SOLAR

Regs recommended; moratorium continues

By REGAN TUTTLE, Editor

On Thursday, July 11, in Norwood at the Sheriff's Annex, the San Miguel County Planning Commission considered the proposed regulations for solar energy systems. Then, the county did move to recommend the adoption of those regulations. Kaye Simonson, the planning director, told the Forum the next step is a public hearing by the board of county commissioners.

"That date has not been set, but I expect it will be in early September," Simonson said.

Still, the planning commission did have several recommended changes. She added the changes include the maximum size of

medium-scale solar energy systems to be less than 30 acres and the definition of large-scale to be more than 30 acres.

"This primarily affects the Wright's Mesa zone districts; the effect on other zone districts is expected to be minimal," Simonson said.

Additionally, with respect to "prime" versus "non-prime" agricultural lands, there's a recommended change to allow up to 30 percent to be located on "prime" or "prime-if-irrigated lands," as mapped by the NRCS, and allow up to 50 percent to be located on "prime" or "prime-if-irrigated," if it is an "agrivoltaic project."

The public should see the most recent draft for the definition of

"agrivoltaic," and that draft can be accessed by visiting bit.ly/SolarDraftRegs on San Miguel County's website.

Also, there's a recommended change to "limit the number of large-scale solar energy systems on non-public (private) lands to a maximum of three total permits within a five-year period." Simonson said the five-year period begins with the issuance of the first permit.

"We cannot put that limit on public lands (BLM, USFS, State Land Board land), because of state and federal laws, although we still have the right to require permits," she said.

And, there's a recommended change in the solar purpose state-

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HORSES

Wild Horse Working Group meetings continue

By REGAN TUTTLE, Editor

T.J. Holmes, of Disappointment Valley, is still living with the wild horses as a volunteer and partner with the BLM. Holmes, who does documentation and darting of mares for birth control, told the Forum she helps with anything needed: water catchments, fencing and more.

This summer she said all is going well, except for drought. The horses there in the Spring Creek Basin Herd Management Area are still within the AML (appropriate management level). According to a 2020 update, the darting method is maintaining a stable population. The AML is 50-80, and the herd is at 72 — below the limit.

"So no roundups on the horizon," Holmes said.

The Spring Creek Basin Herd Management Area, or HMA, is just one of four in the state, and all wild horses in Colorado are the subject of a recent bill. Last spring, Governor Jared Polis signed Senate Bill 23-275 to enable the state to provide some assistance to Colorado's wild horses, as well as form a working group, made up of members from different backgrounds. It includes advocates, like Holmes, who work directly with the BLM in each of the state's HMAs and wild horse range.

The Wild Horse Working Group was established to come up with humane, non-lethal alternatives for wild horses that are taken off range in Colorado or held in federal holding facilities. That group makes recommendations to the state legislature and governor. Holmes said it's important to note the group isn't recommending to the BLM. She said it's about what the state can do — for example, fund range projects, get more darting done in HMAs that need it, help with adoption success and more — not things that the BLM already handles.

"The Wild Horse Working Group is a recommending body only," the state Department of Agriculture said on its website. "While its recommendations are expected to be highly influential in on- and off-range wild horse management in Colorado, the working group has no authority to bind or obligate the state or any working group members."

Those working group meetings have been ongoing. They started last fall, and now they're in a phase, according to Holmes, for consolidation of ideas for Colorado's wild horses — both on the

Cont. on Pg. 5

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

If you're interested in serving this committee

Dear Editor,

The Town of Nucla has a responsibility to protect the local tax base, to preserve the value of private property, to promote local economic stability, and in general, ensure the health and welfare, economically and socially, of the local communities. There exists a majority of BLM and U.S. Forest Service land adjacent to the Nucla community; our local government functions are closely entangled with federal and state land management decisions.

Federal land management policies and actions usually directly, and often profoundly, impact adjoining and co-mingled lands, as well as the civil liberties, local cultures and economies of residents living adjacent to, or within these, government land areas. Federal policies and projects also impact and endanger rights of private land owners, those rights, for instance, inherent to control and use the land, claim water rights, and access rights-of-way and grazing allotments.

Congress has long recognized the importance of local authorities to the management of the nation's resources and to the action of resource management agencies. It has provided for the involvement of local authority in every federal land use statute passed over the past 35 years. Every major federal statute relating to management of land, resources and the environment contains Congress' mandate that the federal land use agencies "coordinate" their policies and management activities with any local government that is engaged in land use planning.

In light of the recent Protect the Dolores River Monument proposal and Senators Bennet and Hickenloopers' agreement with the proponents, the Town of Nucla passed Resolution 2024-006 "RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF NUCLA ESTABLISHING COORDINATION BETWEEN THE TOWN OF NUCLA, COLORADO AND FEDERAL AGENCIES AND STATE AGENCIES INVOLVED WITH FEDERAL AGENCIES" and will be forming

a committee for coordinating with the federal agencies.

If you are interested in serving on the Nucla Coordination Committee, please submit a statement of interest listing any qualifications/experience you have that would be beneficial in working with state and federal agencies. Please submit your statement and qualifications in person at 320 Main St. or mail to PO Box 219, Nucla, CO 81424.

*Melissa Lampshire, Town Clerk
NUCLA*

What shall we support next?

Dear Editor,

Thanks to all of our happy eating customers, we have been donating to local nonprofits with our weekly Wednesday dinners. So far we've given \$120 to Hoof & Paw, \$150 to Basin Clinic, \$120 for Montrose West Recreation's summer theater program, and \$150 for Nucla-Naturita EMS. What local nonprofit shall we support next?

*Galit Korngold, Owner and
Operator of Wild Gal's Market
WEST END*

Thank you

Dear Editor,

The Class of 1974 wants to extend our heartfelt thanks for all of the support and help we received from The Coach's Mother in Norwood with special recognition for Madison DiPaola. We also want to thank Rimrocker Historical Society and the Nucla-Naturita Area Chamber of Commerce for their generous donations of door prizes. A special shout out to Monte Richardson for providing a truck and trailer for our float and for driving us in the parade. Your support of our celebration is greatly appreciated.

*NHS Class of 1974
NUCLA*

History: Rimrocker Historical Society 1878 mail route passes through the West End

By JANE THOMPSON, *Rimrocker Historical Society*



This image shows an old U.S. mail bag, donated to the Rimrocker Historical Society's Museum.

(Photo by Jane Thompson)

I recently found an article in the Colorado Historical Newspapers from the Ouray Times of October 1878 and thought you all would enjoy it. A few things to remember about 1878 are that the Utes were still living in and around the area, there was gold and silver mining going on in the high country, but in the lower country, which we now call the West End, large cattle ranches were springing up everywhere with Paradox Valley being one of the central areas for cattle. The whole area was still in Gunnison County and was not divided into new counties until 1883. This was a big deal to get this mail route to Salina and would open up even more country to hearty pioneers.

"Starting mail service Ouray, Colo., to Salina, Utah: The longest continuous saddle-bag route in America

Between these two points, 370 miles apart, lies an undeveloped country, rich in grasses, water, timber and mineral, but destitute of inhabitants ... The soil of the region in question is generally fertile; the altitude is low; the mild, soft winds of the Pacific Coast aid to make it an agreeable residence and susceptible of the highest degree of perfection in agriculture. All who are familiar with its advantages unite in extolling it as almost an earthly Paradise ... Already the aid of government has been invoked, a mail route established and service ordered upon it ... The Ouray Times now reports the first trip of the contractors, Messrs. V. G. Meserole and Geo. E. Blake, who have just returned

from establishing the stations and stocking the routes.

The contractors started from Ouray Sept. 29 on horseback, accompanied by Dr. W. A. Dobbins, who from his intimate acquaintance of the country had been secured in locating stations. He went with them as far as Paradox Valley where he has an extensive ranch. Three mail riders formed the balance of the party ... The first day's journey was to Cotton Creek, 30 miles; the second day to Naturita creek, 37 miles. During the day, a crossing of the San Miguel was made where the depth of the canyon was nearly 1,000 feet. The camp was made at night with a party of 15 representative Mormons — a commission sent out to look up new points for settlement ... The third night camp was made at Goshorn's ranch, distance traveled 30 miles, the Dolores being crossed once during the day. The fourth night camp was made at a point seven miles from Coyote and 13 miles west of La Sal City; this camp was seven miles from water. During the day, in traveling four miles after leaving Paradox Valley, the ascent was 3,100 feet, over a terrible rocky, crooked trail. The fifth night camp was made at the Old Mormon Fort, distance 32 miles. The sixth camp was on the banks of Green River, distance traveled 40 miles by trail. The Grand River was crossed after leaving Mormon Fort Valley; the trail was selected as it was 10 miles shorter than the wagon road which runs through to Salina. The road is barely passable; it has merely been marked out and requires a considerable expenditure of money to put

it in traveling condition.

At Green River Mr. Meserole and one rider stopped to build a station and collect supplies; Mr. Blake being behind time rode the remaining distance, 127 miles in two days, getting into Salina in eight days from Ouray. When the reader is informed there are but two settlements between the Old Mormon Fort and Salina, the feat will be considered remarkable.

Messrs. Meserole and Blake inform us that everywhere along the route they met with a most cordial reception, even at the Danish settlement on Ferran Creek, where no one could speak a word of English, but understood 'mail bags' and 'post riders'...

The following is a list of distances and present stations:

Ouray to Douglass' Ranch	18	
Placerville	22	40
Navajo crossing San Miguel	24	64
Paradox Valley	19	55
La Sal City	15	134
Old Mormon Fort	46	180
Green river	40	220
Cottonwood Creek	52	272
Salina	75	347

"Some intermediate stations will be established, which will hereafter be announced ... On the route four mail riders are employed and 24 horses ... Persons desiring to travel over this country will be obliged to provide their own riding animals, and feed can be purchased at the stations."

(Article taken from: *The Ouray Times*, October, 1878. *Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection*, Colorado State Library.)



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Crisis in Norwood

Cont. from Pg. 1

said Norwood town staff are named as applicants on shared grants and that two businesses are ready to pull out of Norwood now as a result of the week's chaos. She wants to make sure liquor licenses and other town business tasks are being executed.

Hannigan said Pierce has written "more than \$965,000 in grants for this community" and that she was strongly opposed to the firing.

Trustee Mike Grady advised the board to make a plan to operate the office. He added he saw the departure of the employees as a sort of strike and was interested to hear what they'd need to come back — or if mediation were an option. He produced some of Sheriff's old work materials, one of which was a voice recording device that Hannigan said was to be used to record staff conversations, per the mayor.

Harris was voted in charge of securing Sheriff's old job materials upstairs.

Water commission board member Ray Cossey said he worried about payroll, since it was due Monday, July 15. Hannigan agreed to come help that morning only.

Trustee Morgan Rummel suggested the town board resign, if it meant the staff would come back. He criticized the mayor, albeit calmly, at length and said he's been uncomfortable with her discussions and decisions on various occasions.

Thursday, July 11

The sanitation district met and also discussed the idea of using Pierce as a shared, interim employee to handle billing and payroll, since the town remained in crisis.

Friday, July 12

The Town of Norwood met in a special meeting, attended by town attorney David Reed, with as many as 60 in the audience. Then, four citizens showed up with signs asking for Mayor Meehan and Mayor Pro-Tem Shawn Fallon to resign. Several in the audience verbally asked the mayor to leave her position, though the mayor said she would not.

The meeting was somewhat unruly, due to lack of procedure regarding comments and following a set agenda, and though many wanted to discuss the week's inci-

dents, the mayor and attorney advised against it.

There was some discussion that multiple resignation letters exist from Sheriff, and in different versions too.

Grady advocated for making a schedule in the town's office to be followed by town board members, sharing authority and responsibilities. Meehan said clerks from other regions have offered to come help as well. The board, at Grady's suggestion, voted to give all trustees access to the town attorney.

Fallon said he'd like for the crisis to be officially investigated; Meehan and trustee Niven Drybrough agreed, though Rummel and Grady didn't.

The senior meals luncheon was scheduled for Monday, July 15, and some wondered who would run that, since it's handled by town staff.

Another special meeting for the Town of Norwood was scheduled for July 17, with an executive session beforehand.

"Our heart is toward working this out in mediation," said Drybrough, though he added the town has to go "through these hoops."

San Miguel Basin Forum

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West End Family Link

Cont. from Pg. 1

October of 2023.

Some of the Family Link classes offered in 2023 included parenting, anger management, emotional competence and more, and some services included family advocacy, bill assistance, life skills and application assistance.

VanNess said the services are important, and with inflation and the stress of the economy, there's a need to help. She added senior citizens, though, those over the age of 60, are by far the biggest demographic served by Family Link.

Last year, Family Link served people in 3,736 instances, and households in 1,890 instances. Of those, 666 were the same person coming

for support, and 325 were the same household receiving support.

Nelson's bookkeeping report states that all financial information is transparent and available for anyone who wishes to sort through it.

The annual meeting acknowledged those who give to Family Link, through grants and donations, so that it can remain in existence. That includes Telluride Foundation, the Montrose Board of County Commissioners, Food Bank of the Rockies, Angel Baskets, AV Hunter Trust, USDA, Temple Hoyne Buell, Energy Outreach Colorado, Montrose Community Foundation, Office of Early Childhood, Family Resource Center Association, Kenneth Goldman

Trust, Rocky Mountain Health Foundation and the Department of Human Services.

VanNess, who's served the board for 16 years, said the current board and staff are excellent. She said there's been growing pains over the years, and turnover. At 31 years old, she said Family Link is in a good place.

"The staff goes above and beyond," she said, "and the board too; it's a thankless job. I'm very proud."

Board meetings are the third Wednesday of every month at Hopkins Regional Airport, unless there is a wildfire, in which case the meeting will be moved. The next meeting is Aug. 14.

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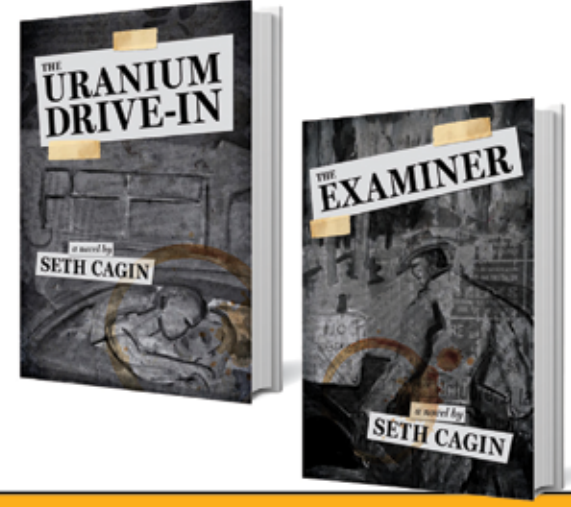
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AUTHOR EVENTS WITH SETH CAGIN




Wednesday, July 17, 5:30 p.m. Wilkinson Public Library, Telluride	Thursday, July 18, 5:30 p.m. Curioser Books, Montrose	Saturday, July 20, 2 p.m. Naturita Public Library	Monday, July 22, 7:30 p.m. Decker Community Room, Ridgway
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THE LONGTIME PUBLISHER OF THE WATCH NEWSPAPER and a two-time candidate for the Colorado State House of Representatives, Seth has written a couple of fun mysteries.

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Solar moratorium continues

Cont. from Pg. 1

ment to add “grazing” after farmland and add “economics” to the other values.

After countless hours of county and community meetings for more than a year, Terri Snyder Lamers, local leader and third-generation rancher, told the Forum she felt like the Planning & Zoning subcommittee did some good work and heard the community. Still, she’d like to see someone from the public be involved in future subcommittees, if possible.

She’s happy that large-scale solar is off the table for the Wright’s Mesa Rural Ag zone.

“That’s a definite win,” she said. “We did accomplish that.”

She’s got some questions, though, on Senate Bill 24-212, since it requires the state’s Department of Natural Resources to review solar projects for impacts to wildlife and habitats. That’s something she said needs more study.

“I feel like we’re moving in the right direction,” she said. “I feel like we need to get the regulations adopted sooner rather than later, just because after the election, we don’t know what kind of legislators were going to have.”

Additionally, Lamers said while

San Miguel County has climate action plans, she wants to know their exact goals and how much solar it would take to achieve those. She wants solar energy produced in San Miguel County to benefit it, not another place, city or state.

Additionally, she asks all to visit protectwrights mesa.org to learn about the community’s working group and its data.

Simonson said the county should have the recording of the July 11 meeting online no later than Monday. The county moratorium on solar energy projects is in effect until November. There are no current applications under consideration.

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Wild Horse Working Group

Cont. from Pg. 1

range and off. That consolidation of ideas will result in final recommendations to state legislators and Gov. Polis by Nov. 1.

This summer, working group meetings happened virtually June 3 and in Telluride June 17. The next meeting is scheduled for Meeker Aug. 28-29. Another will happen in Craig in October.

The public may join by Zoom. Comments can also be submitted in advance via email at CDA_wildhorseprogram@state.co.us.

“The Colorado Wild Horse Working Group welcomes civil and constructive public comment,” the CDA website added. “The working group anticipates that public comment will enhance members’ understanding of issues and inform their decision making.”

Holmes said she’s not sure what the timeline looks like after Nov. 1. She doesn’t know if the working groups will continue to discuss the recommendations they will have submitted.

She said while some con-



This 2014 photo shows wild horses in the Spring Creek Basin HMA. (Photo by the late David Glynn)

trovsky exists in some HMAs across the state, things are good in Spring Creek Basin with the

horses and partnerships. “It’s excellent, but we need rain,” she said.



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NNTC currently has in service 2 Emergency phones, one at the Uravan Ball Park and one at Mesa Creek near the intersection of Rimrock Trail and Highway 141, with more to be installed soon.

Gateway-UnawEEP Fire Department is currently working with CDOT to provide signage along the Highway in Mesa County for each Emergency 911 Phone Box.

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West End Montrose County Sheriff's Office Blotter

6/26/2024
0636 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 32100 block of Highway 145 near Redvale for a citizen assist.
0743 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 28400 block of 2700 Road near Nucla for a civil standby.
0809 Hours - Deputy conducted court security in the 300 block of Main Street in Nucla.
1445 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the area of DD Road and 3000 Road near Nucla for a welfare check.
1719 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to 25 Mesa Road mm 40 near Nucla for an accident.
1945 Hours - Brent Garber, 63, was arrested on 25 Mesa Road mm 39 near Nucla on an outstanding warrant.

2010 Hours - Deputy took an information report in the 100 block of West Fourth Avenue in Nucla.
1 VIN inspection
1 directed patrol in Nucla

6/27/2024
1308 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 800 block of Maple Street in Naturita for a criminal mischief report. Shane Williams, 19, was cited for criminal mischief under Naturita town ordinance.
1640 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to Highway 141 mm 74 near Naturita for traffic hazards.
1708 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to Highway 141 mm 60 near Naturita for a traffic hazard.
2226 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to Highway 97 and Payson Street in Naturita for a traffic complaint.
1 follow up report
1 directed patrol in Nucla
2 directed patrols in County
1 directed patrol in Naturita

6/28/2024
1140 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 33800 block of Highway 145 near Redvale for an information report.
1343 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 28400 block of 2700 Road near Nucla for an information report.
1408 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 200 block of West Main Street in Naturita for a medi-

cal assist.
1834 Hours - Deputy conducted public relations in the 400 block of Main Street in Nucla.
1926 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 29100 block of Highway 97 near Nucla for an animal problem.
2306 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 300 block of West Sixth Avenue in Nucla for a noise complaint.
2311 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to Highway 90 mm 20 near Naturita for a fire.
1 follow up report

6/29/2024
0650 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 400 block of Pine

Street in Naturita for a disturbance
1035 Hours - Deputy conducted public relations in the 900 block of Main Street in Nucla.
1108 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to Highway 90 mm 20 near Naturita for a fire.
1933 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 100 block of West Tenth Avenue in Nucla for a traffic complaint.

6/30/2024
1330 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to Highway 141 mm 20 for an agency assist.
1422 Hours - Deputy was dispatched to the 400 block of Adams Street in Naturita for a medical assist.

OBITUARY
Franklin D. Schneider
July 8, 2024

Franklin D. Schneider, age 90 and of Paradox, passed away on July 8 at St. Mary's Regional Hospital in Grand Junction. He was a pilot.

DELTA SALES YARD - MARKET REPORT

300-400# STEERS	3.80-4.20	300-400# HEIFERS	3.50-4.00
400-500# STEERS	3.50-3.80	400-500# HEIFERS	2.90-3.35
500-600# STEERS	2.95-3.35	500-600# HEIFERS	2.75-2.90
600-700# STEERS	2.65-2.80	600-700# HEIFERS	2.30-2.60
700-800# STEERS	2.40-2.55	700-800# HEIFERS	2.25-2.35
800-900# STEERS	2.30-2.45	800-900# HEIFERS	1.90-2.10
Top bulls	1.50-1.75	Medium bulls	1.40-1.44
Young Cows	1.45-1.82	Top cows	1.40-1.60
Medium cows	1.20-1.39	Low-yielding cows	1.10 BELOW

Please remember to take baby animals home as soon as possible, especially in this summer heat.

NEXT WEEK: No sale July 18

SUMMER SALE SCHEDULE
Thursday July 25th Special Goat and Sheep Sale. 25 shetland sheep, 25 cow/calf pairs. Along with Regular Cattle Sale
Thursday August 1st **NO SALE**
NEXT SPECIAL HORSE SALE - AUGUST 3RD.
THURSDAY AUGUST 8TH regular Sale. For this sale we will be selling all your left over 4-H animals (Lambs, goats, pigs, steer)
Thursday August 15th **NO SALE**
After that a sale every week until Thanksgiving. Please watch our sale schedule for Novembers Special Saturday Feeder Sales.

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Dr. Andrew Baker
Robin Richards, PA-C
Scott Hunter, FNP

Tommy Terwilliger, LCSW
Nichol Bray, Hygienist

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SAN MIGUEL BASIN FAIR

4-H general projects, shooting sports, horse show a success

By REGAN TUTTLE, *Editor*

Annika Kristiansen, San Miguel County 4-H Coordinator told the Forum the 4-H General Projects judging day was a “tremendous success.”

“We saw an incredible display of creativity, dedication and hard work from all our 4-H members,” Kristiansen said. “I’m thrilled to announce that five outstanding projects will be moving on to the Colorado State Fair. This is a testament to the talent and effort our members have invested in their projects. The level of enthusiasm and skill demonstrated by our 4-Hers was truly inspiring. It’s clear that their hard work and commitment have paid off.”

She added the judges had a tough time evaluating so many “excellent projects.”

For Horseless Horse, Grace Blakney was first place and grand champion; in Foods and Nutrition-Cooking, Peyton Brack received a participation award; and in Cake Decorating, Devon Fahrenbacher was second place.

For Veterinary Science, Grace Blakney was first place and grand champion, and Lillian Reynolds was first place and reserve champion.

In Leathercraft, Kyndle Weimer was first place and grand champion, and Sammy Suhr was first place and reserve champion. Additionally, for Leathercraft, Brenna Morlang, Cooper Morlang and Savannah Smuin took second place in their divisions, and Kaliber Merrill placed third. Emma Apanel took a fourth place.

Kristiansen said grand champion general projects will travel to the state fair in Pueblo. If the state fair advancer didn’t want to travel, the reserve champion would go instead. Projects remain on display this week for the public to see, and some will be auctioned off during the livestock sale too.

For Shooting Sports, taking grand champion were Lochlan Schultz and Sammy Suhr, and Jacob Lukaszewski, Wyatt Weimer and David Dawson were the reserve champions.

“The return of the 4-H Shooting Sports program this year has been a resounding success,” said Kristiansen. “The competition on July 7 showcased remarkable talent and enthusiasm from our young marksmen and markswomen.”

Other placers in the Shooting Sports this year were Norah Herland, Emma Herland, Dalton Brack, Xaden Caruso, Jackson Garcia and Max Fahrenbacher, all taking second place titles. And, Clayton Brack and Kaliber Merrill had third place honors. Kalesse Merrill had a fourth place finish,

and Peyton Brack was fifth.

“We couldn’t be prouder of our 4-H members who participated in the shooting competition. Their dedication to safety, skill, and sportsmanship was evident throughout the event,” Kristiansen added.

This was the first year the Fair Board had brought back the 4-H Shooting Sports program in some time, and Kristiansen said it was “amazing” to see the high level of participation, enthusiasm and skill.

“Seeing our 4-Hers excel in the shooting competition was incredibly rewarding. The return of (this) program has been a great addition to our community, and we look forward to its continued growth and success,” she said.

And, the 4-H horse show wrapped up. On July 13, Chloe Sherman was intermediate high-point champion, and Josey Herland was the reserve. Kyndle Weimer was the junior high-point champion, and Norah Herland was the reserve. Additionally, Josey Herland won the gymkhana for intermediates; Brenna Bonacquist won the junior gymkhana division.

Editor’s note: The San Miguel Basin Forum will be covering other San Miguel Basin Fair results, including the desert contest, livestock shows and more.



4-H Shooting Sports leader Jarred Garcia stands proudly behind .22 Rifle members at the conclusion of the 2024 San Miguel Basin Shooting Sports Competition at Nucla’s 10-Ring Gun Club.



The 4-H horse show brought local equestrians together to showcase their talents July 13.



4-Hers lay in the prone position during competition.



Chloe Sherman takes the intermediate high-point champion title.



Lochlan Schultz puts finishing touches on his hand-crafted gun rack, which won first place and grand champion in its class and will be heading to the state fair in August. It will also be offered at auction at the Junior Livestock Sale on July 20 at the fairgrounds in Norwood.



Sherman, the rodeo princess, stands with queen Dilyn Alexander, attendant Haylee Smith and junior queen Shay Snyder. (Courtesy images)