

Bishop's Castle Founder, Jim Bishop, Passes

by George Gramlich

The builder/owner of the internationally famous Bishop's Castle off CO-165, James ("Jim") Roland Bishop, passed away in Pueblo on November 21, 2024. Starting in 1971/72, Jim began turning his little stone cabin on a small lot north of Rye into the world renown Bishop's Castle.

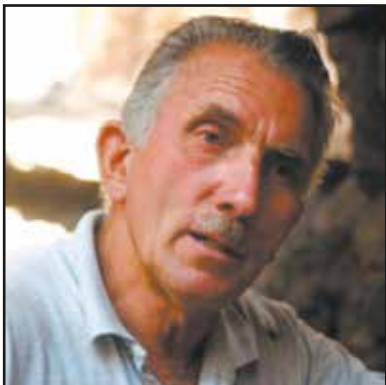
Below is a history of Jim and his castle, from Jim's website at bishopcastle.org. Go there for further information, pictures and how to get there.

Jim, all we can say is Thank you and God Speed.

The Early Years

Let's talk about inspiration. In 1959, a young Jim Bishop, at the ripe old age of 15, paid four

hundred and fifty dollars for a two-and-a-half-acre parcel of land, enclosed on three sides by the majestic San Isabel National Forest in southern Colorado. This money was saved from mowing lawns, delivering newspapers, and working with his father, Willard, in the family's ornamental iron works. That year, Jim had dropped out of high school following an argument with his English teacher, who had yelled at him, "You'll never amount to anything, Jim Bishop!" Ever since he was a boy, Jim had been powerfully drawn to the mountains visible to the west from Pueblo. After finding a small 2-1/2 acre parcel during a weekend bicycle journey with friends, he convinced his parents to buy it for him using his savings. So, Willard and Ma Polly signed for the land deal, as Jim wasn't old enough to do so himself, and the family acquired a heavily forested two-and-a-half-acre plot at 9,000 feet.



Jim and his dad spent the next ten summers camping on the land and laying the groundwork for a family cabin on the site. Setting the stage for what was to come, Jim soon discovered his enjoyment in swinging an axe and wielding a shovel or pick, building a clearing with a driveway, which now serves as the courtyard between the family cabin and the castle itself. In 1967, Jim and Phoebe got married, In 1969, at the age of twenty-five, Jim

decided it was time to start building a cabin in the mountains they so loved. With rocks being plentiful, everywhere, and free, he chose to start building a one-room stone cottage...

The Birth of a Castle

At 9,000 feet, snow usually doesn't melt completely until the middle of May, sometimes even into June. This means the summer building season is quite short, especially when working with mortar, which cannot freeze while drying. There's only so much that can be done in a few months, particularly while still working in the ornamental iron shop to support the family. Jim began building his cabin, and after some time, he and Willard started alternating two-week stints: one working at the shop to run

JIM BISHOP
see page 22

Plymouth Colony Thanksgiving



by Bill Wilson,
DailyJot.com

(My grandfather 13 generations back was William Bradford, co-writer of the Mayflower Compact, inventor of the free market system, and governor of the Plymouth colony for over 30 years. I would like to share some insights of and from his writings in "Of Plymouth Plantation.")

In the days leading up to the first "Thanksgiving" of the Pilgrims, they had dispatched a group of ten men to "explore the bay and trade with the natives." They were guided by the English-speaking Squanto, who also served as an interpreter. When the men returned, they were very impressed with the land around the bay and wished they could have settled there instead of Cape Cod. William Bradford, wrote however, "But it seems that the Lord, Who assigns to all men the bounds of their habitations, had appointed it for another use. And

thus they found the Lord to be with them in all their ways, and to bless their outgoings and incomings, for which let His holy name have the praise forever, to all posterity."

This "Thanksgiving" to the Lord offered by Bradford in his history "Of Plymouth Plantation" indicates that Jesus was at the center of his thoughts about all things—even the land they were allocated by God to begin their colony. It also forebears testimony to the very positive Christian witness and relations the Pilgrims maintained with the Indians. This comment was followed immediately by Bradford's account of the harvest in October 1621. Bradford writes, "Each person had about a peck of meal a week, or now since harvest, Indian corn in that proportion; and afterwards many wrote at length about their plenty to their friends in

PLYMOUTH
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BOCC: Fleet Management Presentation, Employee Bonuses, BOCC Meeting Location Change

George Gramlich,
News and Commentary

The November 20, 2024 Custer County Board of County Commissioners' (BOCC) regular meeting was held in their royally appointed quarters in the Annex across from the courthouse.

It started around 9 a.m. All three Commissioners were present: Bill Canda, Lucas Epp and Kevin Day.

In Commissioner Items, Epp said the Commissioners had to sign the 2025 budget in their December 11 meeting coming up. Day said he had received a letter from the County's insurance carrier, CTSI, warning against "mass changes" in personnel when the new board convenes in January. *(That, folks, was a little strange. There is one new Commissioner coming on board in January.)* Epp noted that the Board has received three applications for the Director of Human Services (DHS) Director's opening coming up in January. Epp wants to speed up the interview/hiring process so the newly hired Director has a chance to train with the retiring one.

In New Business, the first item up was a presentation by a company called "Enterprise Fleet Management". They manage the purchase of fleet vehicles for various government entities and private

companies. This was Day's item. The Enterprise guy gave a decent Zoom talk which went on for a bit. The Commissioners will give him the VIN's of all our fleet vehicles and he will get back to them with a proposed plan.

Next up was approving the Upper Ark Weed Management Area Agreement. This passed.

The annual "Dedicated Service Awards for the County Employees" bonus was next. This is a year-end bonus of around \$120 gross to each county employee. (Elected officials are not included.) Epp said we have "money in the salary lines" to do this. He also said the county "should be \$200k to \$300k under budget for the year". *(Commissioners, give that money to Road & Bridge. They need more help and equipment.)* The bonus passed.

As a comment, Day said if somebody needed to see the County's 2025 budget, one must go to the county website and then to the HR/Finance page. It is on a tab there.

Elected Official reports were next. The Sheriff's Office report was first up. It was written and was not read at the meeting so we don't know what was in it. After the Commissioners spent a few minutes scanning it on

BOCC
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Valley Bible
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ALERT!**
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*His grace for us is
overwhelmingly
worthy of our thanks!*
2 Corinthians 4:15

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of Conservative
Colorado!



We believe that freedom is a gift from God and not granted to us by politicians or governments. Freedom demands responsible behavior of all citizens and must be consistent with the truths expressed in the great moral and governing guides as The Ten Commandments, The Declaration of Independence, The U.S. Constitution and The Bill of Rights.

These were the principles that guided our founding fathers and which we believe are still relevant. These are the principles that will guide our reporting and be the basis of all our views.

We will not be constrained by the illogical, misleading and inaccurate thinking and use of "political correctness" but by truth, facts, logic and common sense.

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Opinion



TL Davis: Civil War II and WWII

by TL Davis, Commentary

Broadcasting from the nuclear bunker outside of the Pentex blast zone, I find myself in the uncomfortable position of accepting that I called it wrong. Who knew that the wandering Biden would stumble into a means of igniting WWII to keep the government out of the hands of Donald Trump and his weird cabinet selections? I mean, Dr. Oz over Ben Carson? There are multitudes of criminal bureaucrats plotting their civil war to keep from answering for their treasonous acts, but they were, no pun intended, trumped by Joe Biden's handlers when they approved long-range missile strikes on Russia proper.

What I find more astounding than that is that this act of national suicide, with extreme nuclear connotations, was done so in such a quiet fashion. If one were not tuned into the alternative media (AM), they would think that the only story worth comment was the nomination of Matt Gaetz as Attorney General. Despite the fact that during a nuclear exchange no one will give a rat's behind who the intended Attorney General is, or will be, the MSM makes out that its only concern is the destruction that can come from such a nomination rather than the destruction of a nuclear blast or two.

Where is the Special Coverage of the impending nuclear war complete with running countdown of the anticipated Putin response and gathering all sorts of military guests to explain to the American

people what a nuclear exchange would look like and what to do during an attack? Hunker down or evacuate? This has been done several times during such high-tension periods in American history as the daily reports concerning the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Instead, we are met with constant comments and interviews surrounding the nomination of Matt Gaetz. If that isn't telling in itself, I don't know what is. This signals desperation among those who are guilty of treason and their media-cover apparatus. If one combines that with the threats and "resistance" being built to deny Trump his deportation efforts and the general exercise of his rightful powers as president, there just isn't news space enough to cover the wildly irresponsible act of a demented lame-duck president.

The larger question being: Who in the world made the decision to instigate WWII for him and why is that not the most important question to be asked by our elected representatives? Where on earth are these clowns? This is treason at the highest levels, because it seems that this power of annihilation was given to someone outside the elected civilian command. Was it NATO itself? Was it the Joint Chief of Staff? Was it someone in the UK? It wasn't Joe Biden and if it was, somehow, where was his explanation to Congress as to the purpose and scope of such an act?

Honestly, a nation this inattentive to the prospect of nuclear englow-

ination of the entire world is simply not worthy of respect. I'm ashamed of it. Again, those to blame are the Republicans, who are in a position to make this the story, but who are too busy counting their checks from the CCP to care.

I'm not going to pretend that I don't understand it, though that is the literary stance one should take. The fact is, the election of Trump was, for the communists, the nuclear blast. That is the only story worthy of reporting by the captured media, because what Trump ran on, and was supported with overwhelming popularity, was the destruction of the communist shadow government.

While the communists shore up their support and lay the groundwork for the civil war they now need, they expose themselves as the true enemies of a constitutional republic. What they had kept neatly concealed from the American people is now being broadcast by the MSM as a natural and important denial of those principles.

What I have always appreciated about Trump is his ability to expose the criminal acts of government officials, something I've been shouting about and publishing books and produced a movie to expose for the past fifteen years, though my activism goes back twice that. At one time I was a lone protester on a cold afternoon in 1987 and every egregious act of government has only brought more people to my point of view, but Trump was able to accelerate that by light years just because he was

not a typically bought-off politician that they've been recycling for all of my politically attentive period.

As pleasing as it is to watch the snakes squirm in their desperation, it is not the time to be asserting party politics. No, I do not advocate unity with these treasonous communists, I suggest only that it's time for them to be forced out of their obstructionist positions and made to rally behind Trump and give him whatever he wants, even accelerate his agenda ahead of the inauguration in order to present to the world a united front for the defense of the nation. As wild as this sounds, it is exactly what the communists would be demanding of Republicans were the shoe on the other foot. That is exactly what exposes them as the destructive force they are.

What I am suggesting is a groundswell of demands by those much more influential than I am to make that case publicly and to force that demand into the forefront while those who voted overwhelmingly for the destruction of the shadow government are paying attention. They have already identified themselves as obstructionists, something one cannot and should not do under war-time conditions without being recognized as insurrectionists and traitors.

What we are witnessing is the choreographed 1917 Bolshevik Revo-lution, combining a civil war with a world war. But who will be alive to tell the story this time?

Please see: <https://tldavis.substack.com/p/civil-war-ii-and-wwiii>

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Local Mountain News & Notices

JESUS CHRIST IS KING King of the Universe

by Fred Hernandez

Last Sunday, the last Sunday of the Liturgical Year was celebrated by Catholics throughout the world as the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ-King of the Universe.

Recognizing the growing trend to “thrust Jesus Christ and His Holy Law” out of public life in general Pope Pius XI instituted the Feast in 1925 in response to the growing secularism and atheism much like it is today not only in the USA but around the world. This celebration is a clear reminder to all Christians, Catholics, Evangelicals and people of all Faiths and beliefs that Christ is King and while world governments rise up and fade out over time Christ is there forever. *Christus;*

Herie, Hodie, Semper. Christ: Yesterday, Today and Always.

Here in Custer County, Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Church led by its holy pastor Fr. Stephen Injoalu offered the Holy Mass and followed it up with a procession of the congregation around the Church. About one hundred fifty of the parishioners, including the choir singing as it went along following Fr. Stephen who carried on high the Holy Eucharist in the Monstrance. Once back at the front of the Church on Fifth Street, Fr. Stephen raised high the Monstrance in a general blessing of his flock. It was a wonderful celebration and always a timely reminder that Jesus Christ, Our Lord, is King of the Universe now and forever. God bless America

Altitude Fitness Honors Mary Seifert

November 21 2024

In a very nice dedication ceremony, the Altitude Fitness Center, honored its founder, Mary Seifert (and her husband Jerry Seifert) with a beautifully etched window in the reception area leading to the pool. Mary, who started the club, originally named it “Club America” (with that great American Flag sign sculpture that was once at the front entrance.). It was started in 2005.

The etching says, “Seifert Swim Center”.

God bless Mary.
We miss her.



Top: Glass Etching completed. Bottom: Left to Right: Justine Beach, Addie Banning, Jerry Seifert, Bekki Reisch, and Laramie Koch (with the broken elbow.)

Photos by Fred Hernandez



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“The doctrines of our Fathers have been represented as gloomy, superstitious, severe, irrational, and of a licentious tendency. But when other systems shall have produced a piety as devoted, a morality as pure, a patriotism as disinterested, and a state of society as happy, as have prevailed where their doctrines have been most prevalent; it may be in season to seek an answer to this objection.”

“The Memory of our Fathers.” A Sermon delivered at Plymouth, on the twenty-second of December, 1827. By Lyman Beecher D.D.

*We have a lot to be thankful for.
Happy Thanksgiving
from
Custer County Realty Inc.*

Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.
Psalm 100:4

Westcliffe to Move Forward on Grant Application for Infrastructure to Town Lots, 7th Street Rezone Approved, New Loader in the Works for Snow Removal

Westcliffe Town Meeting
November 19, 2024

by Laura Vass

The Regular Board of Trustees meeting for the town of Westcliffe started at 5:30 p.m. Pro Tem George Mowry called the meeting to order. Mayor Wenke attended remotely via Zoom through the first public hearing and vote. They had a quorum, however, without his presence.

Under New Business, the board approved the lease agreement with 4 Rivers Equipment with payments to begin January 2025. This will include one new piece of equipment deemed more appropriate for snow removal noting that currently owned attachments will also work with the new loader. Town Manager Caleb Patterson said that he got an improved interest rate.

Next the board went into a Public Hearing for Consideration of Approving Rezoning Blocks: 19 & 20, 33 & 34, and Town-owned lots in Westcliffe from Residential to Multi-Family District. (Finalizing this has been a long process.)

The Board heard a few residents and discussed ordinance 5-2024 being considered. There still seems to be a consensus among business owners that there should be protections in place to keep any future housing on the town owned lots for the workforce first, avoid overbuilding, due diligence on research of any “strings attached” to grant monies, and insuring builders provide sufficient parking. Caleb answered the the last item about parking, saying that any future builder on the town owned lots would need to provide 1.75 parking spaces per unit. Other zoning requires two paces per unit.

After the public Hearing the Town board voted yes on #5-2024, Rezoning only the Town owned lots from Single Family to Single Family Multi-Family District. The board voted no on the alternative ordinance #6-2024 which would have rezoned privately owned blocks.

A couple of post vote comments that were

notable were that 1) the town has made it possible for all home builders to add on to a home or home plan an ADU. Duplexes are already allowed under current zoning for the lots in blocks 19 and 20. So flexible housing choices are already in place. 2) Mr. Schneider noted after a question about getting water to the private lots at a later time, that he could only comment as an engineer and not representer, that he hoped there would be an adjustment to the grant application for water/sewer to these lots (which will be completed and submitted at the beginning of December by Caleb) that would ensure that the infrastructure to the lots would accommodate any future extension of lines into the other blocks not being considered for rezoning.

The board went back into a new hearing for ordinance #7-2024 on Rezoning 106 South 7th Street. From Residential Single Family to Traditional Neighborhood per the Planning Commission’s recommendation.

The owner has plans to create housing and a rentable/leasable event space and off-street parking. The owner’s plan is to create another venue for the dance studio, the VFW, etc. to use. A Caterer’s kitchen is also being considered in his plans. The ordinance was approved.

Next on the regular meeting agenda was a request to hire a part-time/ at will IT employee for the town’s website. The Town office staff has been doing their own IT. That was also approved.

The last item of business was to approve paying the bill on construction of the EV charging station via Black Hills Energy. The cost went over in construction by \$8,047.60. The board approved this.

Under staff reports, Erin Christie said the audit is complete and has been filed with the state. It did not affect their sales tax income. The request for an extension was due to the auditor who was out for a period of time due to personal circumstances.

Caleb Patterson gave a short report on his preparations for the next Housing Needs Assessment.



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solgranite.com
Inventory, Custom Design, Fabrication & Installation

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Jared Smith, DMD

618 Main St, Cañon City
719-275-0661
www.jaredsmithdmd.com

Firewood

Westcliffe Firewood

Ryan Stover
719-371-6074
westcliffefirewood@gmail.com

Florist

Salty Pine Floral & Boutique

411 Main St, Westcliffe
719-783-9393
www.westcliffeflowershop.com

Funeral Homes

Holt Family Funeral Home

806 Macon Ave, Cañon City
719-275-4113
www.holtfamilyfuneralhomes.com

Furniture & Home Goods

Yoder’s Home Outfitting

57965 Hwy 69, Westcliffe
Home & Patio Furniture, Footwear, Outdoor Wear
Mon-Sat 9am-5pm

Grocery & Health Foods

Lowe’s Market

50 Main St, Westcliffe
719-783-0550
www.lowesmarket.com

DUTCH PANTRY & DELI

404 E. Main St., Silver Cliff
719-298-6689 STORE HOURS:
Mon-Thur: 9-5, Fri: 6:30-5, Sat: 7-4

Guns , Ammo, Knives

Custer County Supply Co

206 Main St. Westcliffe | 719-659-8743
Open Tues-Sat: 10am-5pm
Guns, dog supplies, clothing, & much more!

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132 W Hwy 50 Salida
719-539-2884 Monday-Friday 9-6
Where you’ll find sharp gifts & smokin’ deals!

Gun Clubs

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1345 Elm Ave, Cañon City 719-276-3030
Lincolnparkpawn@hotmail.com
1 foot to over 1 mile, 75 different powders

Sangre Shooting Sports Club

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http://sangreshooting.com

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All Service Heating · Residential & Commercial
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www.whitebrosplumbing.com
P.O. Box 957, Westcliffe ~ 719-217-7202
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719-275-1548
https://www.canoncityinsurance.com

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CranioSacral Therapy, Visceral Manipulation, MLD
114 N 2nd Street, Westcliffe
wetmountainmanualtherapy.com 719.639.8447

Mitigation/ Pest Control

Premier Pest Control LLC
719-371-7404 ~ ppc16@privategarden.org
inspections, estimates, professional pest management
residential, commercial, licensed and insured

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Swota Enterprises
Wildfire Mitigation and Excavation
719-783-4477
rswota@gmail.com

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719-784-3876
www.rivervalleyplumbingandheat.com

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www.whitebrosplumbing.com
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Propane

Norup Gas
28 Range View Loop, Westcliffe
719-783-9338

Real Estate Services

Bighorn Realty
Jack & Jean Canterbury
719-429-5411 ranchrealtor@outlook.com

Brenda Bosse HomeSmart Preferred Real Estate
9 Bassick Place, Westcliffe, CO 81252
719-371-3270, brenda@brendabosse.com
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902 Main St, Westcliffe
719-783-9221
www.custerrealty.com

Lori Kastendieck
Independent Broker
719-269-0653
WestcliffeBroker.com

Restaurants & Dining

ALPINE LODGE
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719-783-2660 • 6848 COUNTY ROAD 140, WESTCLIFFE
facebook.com/TheHistoricAlpineLodge

DUTCH PANTRY & DELI
404 E. Main St., Silver Cliff
719-298-6689 Call for store hours
DELI HOURS: Mon-Friday 11 - 4 , Sat: 11- 2:30

**Stage Stop Gourmet Sundaes
& Espresso**
3rd and Main Street, Westcliffe
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Restaurants & Dining Cont'd

Tony's Mountain Pizza
719-783-9300 • tonysmountainpizza.com
Tues – Sat 11 am-8 pm, Sun 12 pm-7 pm, closed Mon
630 Main Street, Silver Cliff

Tony's Steak & Tavern
719-783-9300 • tonyssteakandtavern.com
Wed 4-8 pm, Thurs-Sat 11am-8 pm, Sunday Brunch:
9am-2 pm & Full Menu 12-7 pm, closed Mon-Tues

Septic Installation

Seifert Enterprises
Excavation, Septic Systems, Culverts,
Driveways, Rock Sales & Delivery
719-783-2757 info@SBCompanies.com

Solar / Renewable Energy

Custer Solar--Silver Cliff, CO
John "CJ" Goebel 719-458-9852
email: custersolar@proton.me
Licensed & Insured

Solar Solutions Ltd
Off Grid and Grid Tie
10 Hermit Lane. Silver Cliff 719-783-9666
email: pbailey@solarsolutions.com

Storage

Wet Mountain Storage
300 Main St, Westcliffe (office)
719-783-9321
www.westcliffecoloradoselfstorage.com

Tractor/Trailer Sales

True Value Hardware and Trailers
635 Shoop Dr, Penrose
719-784-0123
https://www.truevaluetrailers.com

Vacation / Accommodations

Darksbies Vacations
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Visit Darksbies.vacations or call
719-783-0648

Veterinary

High Peaks Animal Hospital
1200 Broadway St, Silver Cliff
719-783-3770
www.highpeaksanimal.com

Well Drilling and Pump Services

Finney Drilling
Cañon City
719-275-9525
larryfinneydrilling@gmail.com

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR ADVERTISERS!

Custer Senior Center Menu

Monday, December 2
#44 Ham and Beans

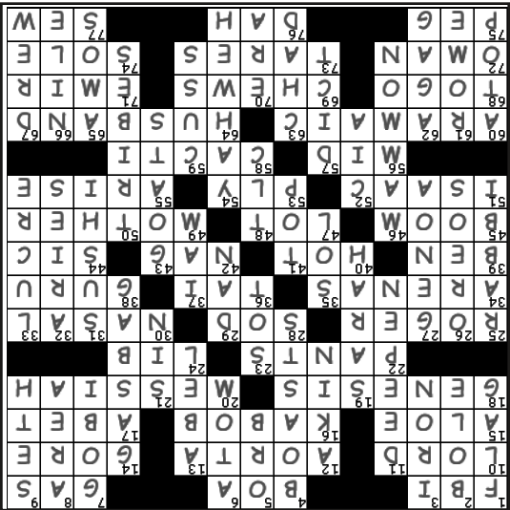
Collard Greens
Cornbread
Orange Juice

Tuesday, December 3
#88 Stuffed Peppers
Chopped Spinach w/Malt Vinegar
Applesauce Cake
WW Bread w/Butter

Thursday, December 5
#3 Arroz Con Pollo
Corn & Zucchini Mexicana
Tossed Salad
Apricot
WW Bread

Served Mondays, Tuesdays & Thursdays at noon. 612 Main St. , Silver Cliff Townhall (lower level)
The following major food allergens are used as ingredients: Milk, Egg, Fish, Tree Nuts, Peanuts, Wheat, Soy and Sesame.

Please call (719) 783-9508 before 9:30 a.m. for reservations
A \$3 suggested donation per meal is appreciated, but not required. All menus subject to change.



Recurring Events

Mondays
10 a.m. Pickle Ball Silver Cliff Mem.Park (SCMP)
More info: lizbrannen@gmail.com
6 -7:30 p.m. Men’s Bible Meeting (The Bible and X) w/ Scott Munger. at First Baptist Church.
6 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous (CLSD) 12 Step study, at St. Luke’s, 3rd & Rosita, Westcliffe. Martha at 719-371-1853.
1st Monday of the Month
5 p.m. Post 170 Auxiliary monthly meeting (year-round) at Cliffe Lanes
2nd and 4th Monday
6 – 7 p.m. Narcotics Anonymous
Community United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall.
Children Welcome. colobamanana@yahoo.com
Tuesdays
12 noon – 1 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous (CLDS)
“As Bill Sees It” St. Luke’s, 3rd & Rosita in W/C.
Call Martha at 719-371-1853.

1st Tuesday of the Month
9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Old Schoolhouse Quilters Comfort Quilters @Valley Bible
6:00 p.m. American Legion Post 170 monthly meeting at Cliff Lanes meeting room.
4-6 p.m. Christian Music on KLZR 91.7 FM
2nd Tuesday of the Month
9 a.m. Old Schoolhouse Quilters Guild Meeting @Valley Bible
3rd Tuesday of the Month
Liberty Rocks TUESDAY Meet/greet &order 5:30 p.m. Presentation 6 p.m. Location Tony’s Pizza All welcome.

Wednesdays
8 -9 a.m. Veterans Coffee Social, Veterans and Caregivers welcome. West Custer County Library Community Rm., 209 Main St. Westcliffe
9:30 – 11 a.m. Line Dancers meet at United Methodist Church, 204 S 6th St. Call Debbie Underwood at (432) 553-7483.
9:45-11:30 a.m. The Posse Ladies Bible Study “Names of God” at Sangre de Cristo Fellowship, 120 Jerry Dr. Westcliffe. September 18- December 4 Questions? Holly 703-338-4100
10 a.m. Pickle Ball (SCMP) info: lizbrannen@gmail.com
6 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous (CLSD) Big Book Study at St. Luke’s, 3rd & Rosita, Westcliffe. Martha at 719-371-1853.
6 p.m. Prayer Group Meeting. First Baptist Church of Westcliffe. Call 719-783-2498.
First Thursday of the Month
9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Comfort Quilters, FBC (log bldg next to the church) 417 S. 6th St. Contact Delores at 719-371-1451.
2nd Thursday of the Month
6 p.m. Custer County Republican Central Committee meeting. Ranchers Roost. The public is welcome See www.CusterGOP.com or Facebook page at https://m.facebook.com/custergop

3rd Thursday of the Month
2 p.m. Round Mt Water District Meeting.
Fridays
10 a.m. Pickle Ball Silver Cliff Memorial Park
More info: lizbrannen@gmail.com
1 - 4 p.m.- Mah Jongg at the Senior Center
6 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous Open Discussion, St. Luke’s, 3rd & Rosita. Call Martha 719-371- 1853
2nd Friday of the Month
8 am- Westcliffe Band of Brothers & Sisters Men’s Prayer Breakfast, at the Senior Center followed by **Monthly Meeting at 9:30** - all are welcome

Saturdays
10 a.m. Wet Mountain Al-Anon Family Group meets at St. Luke’s Episcopal Church. Call Dee (719) 404-1851 or Jean (719) 371-1229.
3rd Saturday of Month
8 a.m. Valley Bible Fellowship Men’s Breakfast Open to all Men of the Community, 116 Hermit Lane, Silver Cliff Questions, **Mike @ 719-650-0362**
1 p.m. VFW meeting at Cliff Lanes Conference Room, Post Commander Burt Daniels 719-783-3050



Presentation on Scammers, Fraud, Identity Thieves

Press Release from the Custer County Sheriff’s Office

This time of year, we all need to be especially wary of scams. We are hosting an expert from the Colorado Bureau of Investigation for a 90 minute presentation on TUESDAY December 3rd at 6PM.

This presentation will be interactive, so please bring your questions. An expert from the Colorado Bureau of Investigation will talk about the most common ways scammers and identity thieves target older adults to steal your money and your identities. Some things covered will be:

- Who are the criminals?

- How do they contact their victims?
 - What are some of the tactics they use?
 - What are the most common scams happening right now?
 - Red flags that you are dealing with a scammer.
 - What can you do if you have been the victim of a scam or attempted scam?
- Tips for safety and crime prevention
This will be in the west gym at the school.
709 Main Street Westcliffe CO 81252
Enter from the west side parking lot

BOCC from page 1

their computers, Epp stated that he was working with our IT guy Vernon Roth to get the written reports online so us peasants can see what is going on. He said hopefully in January this will be working. *(Thank you Mr. Epp and Mr. Roth for doing this.)*

The Treasurer’s written report was accepted.

Coroner Brad Baltzly gave his report in person. He said they had 20 deaths YTD including one from Sawatch County (a hiker died in their county but the body was pulled out to Custer so we got stuck with it). Baltzly said suicides were “way up” (the county had seven) and about 40% of our total deaths are suicides. There were no homicides this year. He noted that in 2023 the county only had 13 deaths. (re homicides: Custer County Sheriff Rich Smith has put together a top notch team of very qualified counselors to respond to suicide calls. The timing is good. Our suicide rate, per capita, is very, very high.)

Human Resources was a written report. It was accepted.

Our Veteran Services Office Director, Dominic Edginton, was there to give his report. He had 61 scheduled appointments last month with around 65 walk-ins. He went through his claim numbers and compensation gained which were impressive. At the end he mentioned that he was Vice President of the Colorado Veteran Service Officers organization, but now, since the President stepped down, he became the big Chief. He made a couple of comments that there were going to be some changes in the organization in terms of performance and responsibility. *(Go git ’m Dominic!)*

Road & Bridge gave their report. He needed the Commissioners to ok the water lease with the Upper Ark Water District (they get their road water from them). It was \$9,500. The same as last year. It passed. He also needs the Commissioners to approve the cost to replace the R&B’s fuel station. That cost was \$80k for the work and equipment and another \$12k to do a new concrete pad. That passed.

Human Services, Landfill and Recycling reports were all written and accepted. Planning & Zoning was also

written but Epp made the comment, from the report, that all receipts (building permits, etc.) were down dramatically from last time, around \$200k worth. (The building boom is over folks. We better start tightening our budgets.)

The Airport report was written. Canda said the new AvJet fuel tank is here but not installed yet. He also noted the \$450k game fence project had started. (That is being paid by a private company with no cost to the county.

Information Technology’s report was written. It was noted that there are two finalists for the vacant IT assistant position.

The Office of Emergency Management and the Extension Office reports were both written and accepted.

In Additional Items, Epp said the BOCC were moving their meetings down to the All Aboard Westcliffe building in Westcliffe to avoid using their current room as the Annex is HR and Finance’s current home and the BOCC meetings are very disruptive to their operations. The time frame is open.

And that was it. Another day in Happy Valley.

Department Reports

Come and Worship

Christian Science 9:30 a.m. Worship 8 Bassick Place, Westcliffe Church of Christ 9:30 a.m. Bible Study 10:30 a.m. Worship 818 Ohio Street, Silver Cliff 719/783-4601 Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints 240 Ridgeline Dr, Westcliffe Pres: 719/214-4589 Cody Park Community Church 9:30 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Worship Tues. 8:30 a.m., Prayer Mtg. Wedn. 7 p.m. Bible Study 0157 County Rd. 27A Cotopaxi 719/942-3526 Community United Methodist Church 8 a.m. & 10 a.m. Worship 202 S. 6th Street, Westcliffe 719/783-2511 Cotopaxi Community Church 9:45 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship 6 p.m. Wedn. Bible Study PastorSteveHolcomb@gmail.com 20326 Hwy. 50, Cotopaxi	First Baptist Church of Westcliffe 9:30 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Fellowship 10:45 a.m. Worship 4:30 p.m. Wedn. AWANAS 410 S. 6th Street, Westcliffe Pastor Josh Olsteen 719/783-2498 High Country Mennonite Church 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:45 a.m. Sunday School 103 N. Adams St, Westcliffe 719/783-9045 Huerfano Community Bible Church 10:30 a.m. Sunday Worship 7 p.m.: Thursday Bible Study 603 Leon Street, Walsenburg (719) 251-9053 Hope Lutheran Church 2 p.m. Worship 3:15 p.m. Bible Study 3rd & Powell Streets, Westcliffe Pastor Dan Kletke 719/783-2323 Lange Hall 719/783-2561 Living Stone Calvary Chapel Saturday evenings: 5:30 p.m. Sunday Mornings: 9 a.m. & 11a.m. 830 Bridge St., Canon City, CO Pastor Sean Meagher 719/276-0863 Our Lady of the Assumption Send Church updates to sdc.sentinel@gmail.com (719) 783-3360	Roman Catholic Church Diocese of Pueblo 11 a.m. Sunday Mass 10 a.m. (2nd Tuesday of month) Mass 10 a.m. Wednesday Mass 5:30 p.m. Thursday Mass 109 S. 5th Street, Westcliffe 719/783-3507 Our Lady of Mt. Zion Catholic Church 11 a.m. Mass, 2nd & 3rd Sunday of month 210 S. 2nd St, Westcliffe 719/783-2491 Praise Community Church Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Praise & Worship 10:45 a.m. 215 N Pikes Peak Ave. , Florence 719/784-1184 St. Luke’s Episcopal Church 10:30 a.m. Worship & Eucharist 11:30 a.m. Fellowship 8:30 a.m. Prayer Service, Thursdays 3rd & Rosita Streets, Westcliffe 719/783-2477 St. Patrick’s Anglican Church 11 a.m. Worship 403 S. 2nd S., Westcliffe 925/339-0175 or 719/783-2500 Sacred Heart Catholic Church Diocese of Pueblo Saturday Mass 4 p.m. Highway 69, Gardner Bldg. Mickey 719/746-2037	Sangre de Cristo Cowboy Church Pastor: Mike Shields 10 a.m. Sunday School Bible Study 11 a.m. Worship Last Sunday of Month: Potluck at Noon sangredecristocowboychurch.com also on Facebook 60260 Hwy 69, Westcliffe 719/232-5372 Sangre de Cristo Fellowship 9 a.m. Meet & Greet 9:30 a.m. Service 120 Jerry Drive, Westcliffe 719/783-0903 Sangre de Cristo Seminary Chapel 10 a.m. Worship 6160 County Rd. 130, Westcliffe 719/ 371-1822 Valley Bible Fellowship 10 a.m. Worship 116 Hermit Lane, Silver Cliff 719/581-7572 Wetmore Baptist Church 9:45 a.m. Sunday School 10:45 a.m. Worship 6 p.m. Worship Junction of Hwy 96 & 67, Wetmore 719/371-1230 Wetmore Community Church 9 a.m. Sunday School 10 a.m. Worship 699 County Rd. 395, Wetmore 719/784-0596
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Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Colossians 4: 6-7



The American Legion Monthly Meeting is the 1st Tuesday of every month at 6:00 p.m. at the bowling alley.

The American Legion Auxiliary Monthly Meeting is the 1st Monday of each month at 5:00 p.m. at the Cliff Lanes meeting room.

American Legion and VFW Monthly Meetings

The Veterans of Foreign Wars Monthly Meeting is the 3rd Saturday of every month at 1 p.m. at the bowling alley.





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Events

3rd St. Gallery Thursday - Monday, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Sangres Art Guild ~ ‘In the Mood for Art’ Show
HOLIDAY ART SHOW Begins December 5th
RECEPTION Saturday December 7, 1-4 p.m.
59000 N. Highway 69, Westcliffe

December 5, 2 to 5 p.m. & December 6 & 7, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. **Holiday Arts and Crafts Fair** to benefit the West Custer County Library@ Hope Lutheran Lange Hall, 312 South 3rd Street Westcliffe.

Friday, December 6, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. & Saturday, December 7, from 12 to 7 p.m.
Festival of Cheer, (Festival of Trees)
Hanssen Hall at 218 Main Street

Friday, December 6, 6 p.m.
Sons & Brothers Band Concert. Fundraiser for Lighthouse Pregnancy and Family Resources Center. Concert at Hillside Hall, North of Westcliffe. To request tickets, please call 719-207-3289 or 719-371-7711, or email lighthousehelp1@gmail.com

Classifieds

Announcements

FREE BOOKS
At the Sentinel’s Lending Library:
History, biography, war, crime, etc. Good quality.

For Rent

Three bedroom house
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or Email kathy@colomountainproperty.com

Help Wanted

Valley Ace Hardware is hiring for a full-time Human Resources Administrator. 401(k), LTD, Life Insurance, and health benefits. Starting pay is \$22.35. Please send your resume to shandy@valleyacehardware.com. ***

Custer County School District is now hiring for the following positions:
Substitute Teachers.
Coaching positions include MS Head Track Coach, MS Assistant Track Coach, HS Head Baseball Coach, HS Assistant Baseball Coach, and HS Assistant Track Coach (Throwing). Any Certified Teacher/ Substitute application without a CDE license is incomplete and will not



be considered. Online applications only. Please visit us on the web at: <https://custercountyschools.tedk12.com/hire/index.aspx> or South Central BOCES - Westcliffe openings for more information and to apply.

Sangre de Cristo Sentinel
We Need Local people to Report on LOCAL News Stop by Tues -Wedn. 9-3, Fri. 9-12
601 Main St., Westcliffe

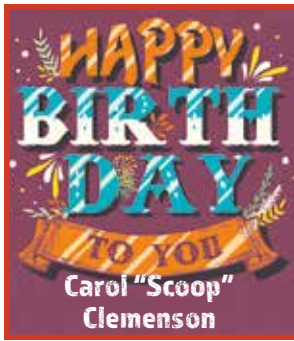
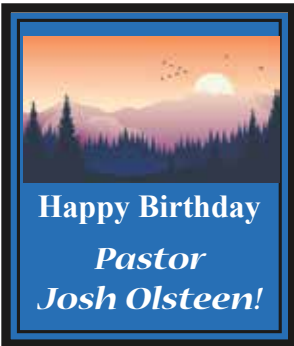
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December 7, 2-4 p.m.
Santa & Mrs. Claus @ Silver Cliff Town Shop
1011 Butler St. Goody bag, hot dogs and more.

December 7, 4:30 p.m.
Christmas Parade “Magical Musical Christmas” on Silver Cliff and Westcliffe Main Streets
For more information or to register see ValleyStrong.us
Tree Lighting at dusk, followed by a reading of “A Christmas Carol” at the Historic Jones Theater.

December 7 & 8, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Beckwith Ranch Traditional Christmas Celebration
North of Westcliffe 64159 Highway 69 N.

Saturday, December 7, 2024, at 1 p.m
Emergency Services Basket Ball Game & Fundraiser in the East Gym of the Custer County School.

Sunday, December 8, 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.
Lessons & Carols 2024 Christmas Concert by Wet Mountain Community Chorale. Held at First Baptist Church this year. 410 S 6th St. Westcliffe

December 14, 11 a.m.
Wreaths Across America Wreath Day
Ceremony and Wreath Laying
Silver Cliff Memorial Park

Community Services

Altitude Community Fitness
(719) 783-0750

American Legion Post #170
PO Box 424, Westcliffe, CO 81252
talpost170westcliffe@gmail.com
(719) 783-2462 westcliffepost170.org

Custer County Community Sharing Food Pantry
120 N. 3rd St. Fri. (719) 783-2994
OPEN First 3 Fridays of the month
12 – 2 p.m.
An Equal Opportunity Provider

Family Crisis Services
Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Center for Fremont and Custer Counties
(719) 275-2429 FamilyCrisisOnline.org

Front Range Clinic
Medications for Addiction Treatment (MAT)
1-866-MAT-STAT
www.frontrangemd.com/mobile-unit

Lighthouse Pregnancy Resources
Monday and Thursday 11a.m. to 4 p.m.
Friday 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
(719) 783-4357

National Suicide HOTLINE
1-800-273-8255 Veterans Press 1

Solvista 24/7 Crisis Line
for Fremont and Custer Counties
Regional 719-276-5488 Local Office 719-275-2351

VETERANS SERVICE Office (VSO)
Dominic Edginton new VSO
(719) 618-8266 vso@custercounty.co.gov
Courthouse Bldg. (Rosita Rd. Entrance)

West Custer County Library
209 Main Street Westcliffe, CO 81252
(719) 783-9138
Tue. – Fri.: 10 a.m. – 5:30 p.m..
Saturday: 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Wet Mountain Rotary Van Service
Limited Dispatch 719-783-2343



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LEGAL NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICE

Vacant District B and D Director
Cotopaxi Fremont RE-3 School District
345 County Road 12/ PO Box 385
Cotopaxi, CO 81223
Fremont County, Colorado

The Cotopaxi School District in the County of Fremont, Colorado has two vacant seats on the Board of Education. To be qualified a candidate must have been a registered elector of the school district for at least 12 consecutive months before the election and a resident of the District B or D.

A person is ineligible to run for the school director if he/she has been convicted of committing a sexual offense against a child. A person who desires to be a candidate for school director shall file an affidavit of qualifications and a letter of intent. The former document may be obtained at the Cotopaxi School Office. Please submit both documents to the superintendent prior to **December 5th**.

To check if you are a qualified candidate in District B or D, please contact the Cotopaxi School Office. A Master Chart is available in the school administration office for viewing by interested persons between the hours of 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM, Monday through Thursday.

Festival of Cheer

Custer County Elementary **Festival of Cheer**, formerly known as the Festival of Trees, will take place **Friday, December 6th**, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and **Saturday, December 7th**, from 12 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The event will be held at Hanssen Hall at 218 Main Street. The entrance is to the right of Hayden Outdoors Realty, and the space is a fantastic open area right in the heart of Downtown Westcliffe.



All members of the community are invited to attend!

This year, festival-goers will have the opportunity to bid on auction items

such as student-decorated trees and wreaths, gift baskets, and other holiday items. We are also excited to introduce the NEW “Buy This Item Now” feature, allowing attendees to take home their desired items immediately!

Additionally, there will be a special KIDS ONLY TABLE with items priced for children’s wallets and purses. Refreshments and carolers will also be part of this special event!

Victorian Christmas at Beckwith



Press Release

Soon the lights at Historic Beckwith Ranch will be turned on for the Christmas Season.

Saturday, December 7th, Friends of Beckwith Ranch, Inc. will celebrate the final event of the year, the Beckwith Victorian Christmas.

The event begins on Saturday at 11 a.m. Bring the family out to see the festively decorated rooms of the old Beckwith Mansion and vote for your favorite. The Celtic High

Mountain Strings will be there playing great Celtic music. Bring the kids for photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus.

Then the kids can make their own original Christmas Ornaments to take home for their tree. Refreshments will be offered for everyone and the Beckwith Gift Shop will be open for gift shopping.

Sunday, December 8th, Carolers will be on hand to sing our favorite traditional Christmas songs. Santa and Mrs. Claus will be there again for the kids and photos.

Tour the rooms and vote on your favorite. The winners of the room decorations will be announced at 4 p.m. And throughout the day, refreshments will be served and the Gift Shop open for shopping.

This event marks the end of the 2024 year for the ranch. It is your last chance for a guided tour and a fun day at Historic Beckwith Ranch. At the end of the day, we will announce the newest inductees into our Hall of Fame. Keeping Beckwith alive for another year is our mission and you can help with a generous donation.

Wet Mountain Valley Community Chorale Presents ❧ Lessons and Carols ❧ Sunday, December 8th

Season’s greetings, everyone!

Yes, it is that festive time of year again and the Wet Mountain Valley Community Chorale welcomes you to join us for a concert performance of “Lessons and Carols”.

This year’s event is being held at the First Baptist Church in Westcliffe on **Sunday, December 8th, with performances at 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.** We are so pleased to be led once again by our wonderful Sarah Peachey, director, and amazing Cheryl Pinnella, accompanist.

The WMVCC is a non-profit organization and the concert is free to attend. Free will donations to support the chorale will be happily accepted. All funds are used to support the expenses of the chorale, including providing child care so that young parents are able to participate. We so appreciate your generous past support of us, our love of music, and our desire to add to the joy of the Christmas season as we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. We look forward to seeing you all there, friends and neighbors!

Notice of Rate Change Sangre de Cristo Electric Association, Inc.

29780 North US Highway 24, P. O. Box 2013, Buena Vista, Colorado 81211

Sangre de Cristo Electric Association proposes to change Rate Schedule No. 13 – Wildfire Mitigation Rate Rider effective January 1, 2025, to remain at the February 1, 2024 level. The proposed changes are listed below.

WILDFIRE MITIGATION RIDER – RATE SCHEDULE NO 13

Fixed Monthly Tariff

January 2021 through December 2021	\$6.00 per month
January 2022 through December 2022	\$7.00 per month
January 2023 through December 2023	\$8.00 per month
January 2024	\$9.00 per month
February 2024 – December 2024	\$8.00 per month
January 2025 – December 2025	\$8.00 per month
January 2025 until the SDCEA Board of Directors(Board) determines this Wildfire Mitigation Rider is no longer necessary.	\$9.00 per month

The proposed and present tariff provisions are available for examination and explanation at the above listed office, online at www.myelectric.coop, or by calling Sangre de Cristo Electric Association, 719-395-2412 or toll-free 844-395-2412, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday-Friday, closed major holidays. Anyone who desires to comment about the proposed changes may file in writing with Sangre de Cristo Electric Association at P.O. Box 2013, Buena Vista, Colorado 81211, or email info@myelectric.coop.

Published November 29, 2024
Sangre de Cristo Sentinel Westcliffe, Colorado

Children's Health Fund

The 2025 Grant Cycle is here!

Please join us for informational meetings:

**Tuesday, December 3rd
@ 5:30 pm**

and

**Tuesday, January 7th
@ 5:30 pm**

**in the West Custer County
Library Community Room**

for more information please visit:
<https://www.wmcf.org/funds/childrens-health-fund/>



The High Mountain Hay Fever Children's Health Fund, established in 2015, is designated for children's programs addressing physical and mental health, as well as social, recreational, and educational health needs of the children and youth of Custer County.

RIGHT SIMON PRODUCTIONS AND
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A Christmas CONCERT

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FREE ADMISSION; TICKETS REQUIRED
FOR TICKETS, PLEASE CALL 719-207-3289

LIGHTHOUSEHELP1@GMAIL.COM

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for He is faithful that promised;)

Hebrews 10:23 KJV



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Friends of the West Custer County Library Holiday Craft Fair

Thursday, Dec. 5, Friday, Dec. 6,
and Saturday, Dec. 7, 2024

Discover handcrafted treasures just in time
for Christmas and support our public library!!

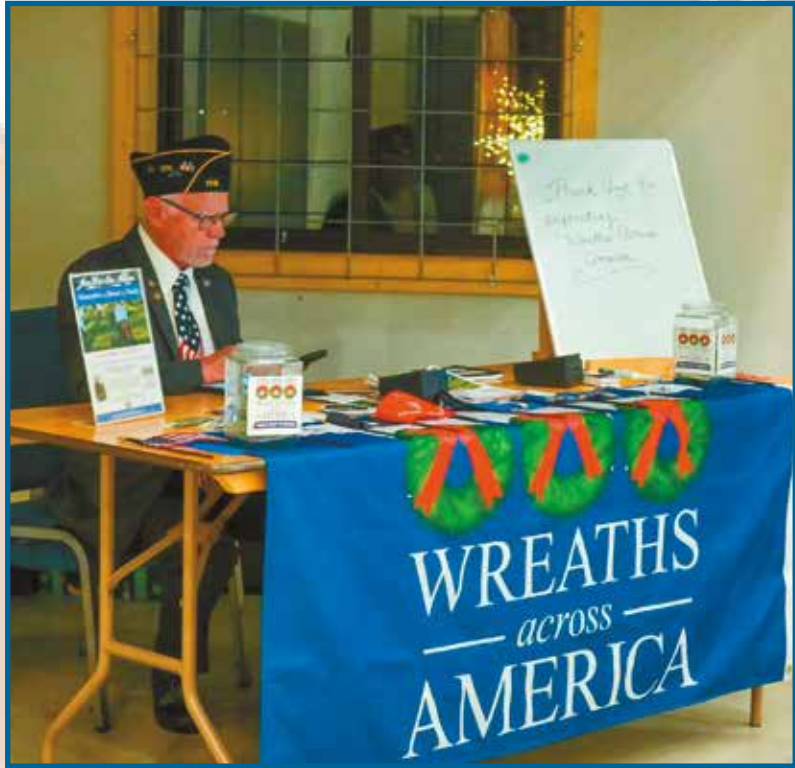
Lutheran Fellowship Hall
312 Third Street, Westcliffe, CO

We are sure to have something for everyone!

- 15% décor, jewelry & candles.
- 25% off all outdoor poly furniture
- Hot spring Hot tubs up to \$1000.00 off and free salt system or ozonator & accessories.
- 20% Fontana Forni pizza ovens.
- 10% off GMG pellet grills Napoleon, & Halo grills
- Up to 30% off outdoor firepits

“At this Christmas
when Christ comes,
will He find a warm heart?
Mark the season of Advent
by loving and serving the others
with God’s own love and concern.”
– Mother Teresa

This Thanksgiving **GRATEFUL for** *Valley Bible Fellowship*



Living, we are our Veterans! ip Veterans' Day Dinner



Sentinel Photos by Donna Holt Photography; Layout by Katherine Brenchley

Local Mountain News & Notices



County School District C-1 MENU The week December 2nd thru December 5 2024

	Breakfast	Lunch
Monday	Cereal Yogurt Oatmeal Fruit, Milk	Hamburger Oven Fries Carrots with Ranch Fruit, Milk
Tuesday	Pancake Sausage Sandwich Fruit Milk	Walking Tacos Corn, Rice Fruit, Milk
Wednesday	Muffins Fruit Milk	Pizza Salad Fruit, Milk
Thursday	Biscuits and Gravy Sausage Yogurt, Oatmeal Fruit Milk	Goulash Capri Blend Veggies Fruit, Roll Milk

ELEMENTARY - MAIN DISH, GRAIN PRODUCT, VEGETABLE, FRUIT AND MILK. MIDDLE & HIGH - MAIN DISH (OR SALAD BAR), GRAIN PRODUCT, VEGETABLE, FRUIT AND MILK,
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Cameron Fore Newly Appointed to Custer County School Board

via Custer County Schools
Facebook Page

Custer County Schools
Shared with Public

We'd like to welcome Cameron Fore to the Custer County School District Board of Education! The members put in countless hours to help make our District the best it can be and we are infinitely grateful!

Introducing School Board Director
Cameron Fore:

Cameron has been a Bobcat parent for three years. Cameron brings his more than 25 years of experience in the Information Technology Industry to the District. He also serves our community as a member of the Sheriff's Posse and serves as a 4-H Shooting Sports Leader. Cameron's vision for the District is to improve student access to quality education while fostering a safe learning environment.



Cameron Fore

KIDS

November 29, 2024

Holiday Traditions --Poland

Well, the holiday season is officially here. With the Thanksgiving celebrations going on all over the U.S.A. For the next few weeks, I will do my best to talk about the traditions from different parts of the world. So, if you stick with me, we should have an interesting journey and learn new meanings of different traditions.

This week I will start with my personal traditions from my Polish background. I am a second generation Polish American. My grandparents came to this country from Poznan, Poland. I don't speak fluent Polish, but I do know some words and phrases in Polish. Of course, my parents always carried out the Polish Christmas traditions brought to this country by their parents.

So, we start the Christmas season at the end of November. That is when many Christmas markets start showing up in different cities. You can find Christmas trees, warm food and drinks and handmade ornaments and decorations.

The actual celebration of Christmas begins on Christmas Eve. This day is called Wigilia. Wigilia (Polish pronunciation: [viˈɡilja]) is the traditional Christmas Eve vigil supper in Poland. That day everyone is busy cleaning house, decorating the tree and preparing the traditional meal. On that day everyone fasts from eating until the evening meal is ready. No one eats until all members of the family have broken the Christmas wafers (opłatek) together and exchanged wishes for good health and prosperity. Breaking of the wafer is done before eating the meal. This wafer is a large paper-thin wafer that usually has an image of Mary, Joseph and Jesus on it. Everyone takes a piece of the wafer and shares it with everyone else wishing them Christmas blessings. Everyone breaks off a piece of everyone's wafer and eats it. This symbolizes the breaking of bread at the Last Supper.

The tradition is to have 12 different dishes and everyone is expected to taste a bit of everything. The 12 dishes represent the 12 apostles. Some of the traditional dishes are fish, herring, pierogi, and placek (sweet bread). There is no meat or hard alcohol at this meal. After the meal, gifts are exchanged. At midnight the families usually go to Midnight Mass, Pasterka. A translation of that would be "Shepherds Mass" referencing the shepherds who were visited by an angel and told of the babe's birth.

This is just a small list of Polish traditions. I hope you enjoyed reading about Christmas traditions I grew up with. More traditions next week.

by Audrey Slater. Sources: <https://study.gov.pl/news/polish-christmas-traditions-how-do-we-celebrate-christmas-poland>, <https://keytopoland.com/post/13-polish-christmas-traditions-wigilia-traditions>

Sangre de Cristo Sentinel • Westcliffe, Colorado

CORNER

Jesus said

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.”

John 10:28-29 ESV

December Library Youth Events

Wednesday, December 4th at West Custer County Library Community Room, from 10-11 a.m., ages from 0-5 years and parents/caregivers are welcome to participate in our STORYTIME. Craft and snacks will be provided.

Saturday, December 7th at West Custer County Library Community Room, from 2 - 4 p.m., join us for a special CAMP HAPPINESS event. We will be providing crafts for kids and adults right before the Magical Christmas Parade in town. Please

enjoy free hot chocolate and a special showing of THE GRINCH while you craft.

Friday December 27th, from 3-5 p.m. FREE PG MOVIE EVENT at the West Custer Library Community Room. Snacks and drinks will be provided. See you at the movies!

For more information, please call Youth Services Librarian, Mindy Kenyon, at 783-9138 ext. 4 or email mindy@westcusterlibrary.org

Booster Club Bobcat Corner



Come out and support your
Custer County Bobcats!

All games and dates are subject to change without notice.

Saturday, November 30:

3 pm Boys HS Basketball Tournament @ Northglenn Rec Center

Tuesday, December 3:

6 pm Girls HS Basketball @ HOME vs Swallows Charter

7:30 pm Boys HS Basketball @ HOME vs Swallows Charter

Friday & Saturday, December 6 & 7:

TBD Girls & Boys HS Basketball @ Las Animas Tournament (away)

Friday, December 6:

TBD Girls HS Wrestling

Saturday, December 7:

9 am Boys HS Wrestling @ Grizzly Invite in Fowler

TBD Girls HS Wrestling @ Strasburg Invite in Strasburg

Wednesday, December 11:

TBD Girls & Boys HS Wrestling @ Match Night in Primero



Don't forget to grab your
TONY'S MOUNTAIN PIZZA DISCOUNT CARDS
to support your Bobcat athletes! Only \$20 each!
With over \$50 in discount savings at Tony's!





Colorado State News



Voters Paint Weld County Solidly Red, Five Seats Flipped to the GOP Column

by Sherrie Peif,
Complete Colorado Page Two

GREELEY, Colorado

After recognizing that the Colorado Republican Party leadership had neither the money or inclination to help Republicans get elected to office on November 5th, Weld County candidates and their supporters went ahead and pushed forward on their own, with remarkable results

“Weld County is the face of the Republican Party,” said Sen. Barbara Kirkmeyer, R-Brighton. “And we will deliver at the Capitol just like we delivered flipping seats — left to right — assuring no supermajority for either chamber.”

Kirkmeyer was referring to a GOP sweep of five seats that fall entirely, or partially within Weld County that were previously held by Democrats.

Those seats are:

- Congressional District 8 US House of Representatives — Republican Gabe Evans, of Fort Lupton, defeated incumbent Yadira Caraveo.

- Congressional District 8 Colorado State Board of Education — Republican Yazmin Navarro, of Johnstown, defeated incumbent Rhonda Solis.
- Senate District 13 — Republican Scott Bright, of Greeley, beat Brighton City Councilman Matt Johnston.
- House District 19 — Republican Dan Woog, of Frederick, defeated his Democrat opponent Jillaire McMillan, who ran after incumbent Jennifer Parenti, who beat Woog in 2022, decided not to run for reelection. Woog previously held the seat from 2020-2022.
- House District 50 — Republican Ryan Gonzalez, of Greeley, defeated Democrat Mary Young, a three-term incumbent and the wife of Colorado State Treasurer Dave Young. Gonzalez lost the same race in 2022 by just 330 votes.

Many already expected Bright would return SD13 to the Republican column after the seat was vacated by Democrat Kevin Priola due to term limits. However, Priola was never elected in the strongly Republican SD13 in the

first place. He was gifted the seat because his predecessor former Sen. John Cooke, of Greeley, was term limited, and Priola was drawn out of his original district (SD25) and into SD13 during redistricting three years ago, much to the chagrin of Weld Republicans. They were not happy with Priola representing them without an election.

At that time, Priola was a registered Republican, but he voted consistently with the Democrat caucus and eventually flipped parties altogether. The move angered SD13 Republicans, who vowed to get the seat back. Voters did just that and in a landslide victory for Bright, who won by nearly 8,000 votes and 14 percentage points.

Hitting the trifecta

Three other races were always considered either toss-ups or Democrat leaning. But it was a challenge Kirkmeyer and House Minority Leader Rose Pugliese accepted and faced head on, raising several hundred thousand dollars for the candidates, knocking on doors, making phone calls, and overseeing a group effort to get them all over the line.

“Before anyone gets carried away with slapping themselves on the back, thank you to the candidates for stepping up,” Kirkmeyer said in reference to GOP state party chairman Dave Williams, who has attempted to take the credit for the win multiple times since election night. “And to team Weld, we stuck together. We helped each other out. We got us across the finish line.”

Both Kirkmeyer and Pugliese also both had their own campaigns to worry about, although Kirkmeyer was running unopposed for her second term. They worked overtime and came out so victorious that without Weld County and its tenacity, Kirkmeyer said, the Democrats would still have a supermajority in the House of Representatives.

Although a third seat, House District 16 in El Paso County, where Republican challenger Rebecca Keltie beat incumbent Stephanie Vigil by just seven votes, also played a pivotal role in taking away the supermajority, House District 19 and House District 50 were both needed to pull off the trifecta, with HD 50 the toughest fight of them all.

That district has not seen a Republican representative since 2004. Prior to redistricting two years ago, HD50 had a 6 percentage point favor to Democrats, even after the redistricting it still favored Dems by somewhere between 2- and 4-percentage points, depending on who you asked.

Two years ago, Gonzalez ran and came within 330 votes of knocking off incumbent Mary Young, but a Libertarian in the race drew 615 votes. This time around, Gonzalez won by 563 votes, and the Libertarian Party not only did not run a candidate, but it endorsed Gonzalez, and some of its members walked and knocked on doors with him.

“I cannot thank the voters of HD50 enough for the opportunity to serve them,” said Gonzalez, who will be 30 on Christmas Day, “It is a responsibility I take very seriously — the extra 563 votes said yes to TABOR (Taxpayer’s Bill of Rights); the extra 563 votes said yes to freedom; the extra 563 votes said yes to our

WELD COUNTY
see page 23



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Polis Pushes PUC, State Agencies on Electrification, Acknowledges Higher Utility Rates

by Sherrie Peif, Complete Colorado Page Two

DENVER, Colorado

Planning is underway to put Colorado residents on a path to an all-electric lifestyle before Gov. Jared Polis exits his office in 2026, despite Polis’ own acknowledgment that so-called “electrification” is driving up utility rates wherever it’s tried.

Electrification generally means replacing fossil fuels (coal, oil, and natural gas) for power generation with electricity generated by intermittent sources such as wind, solar, and batteries and renewable geothermal.

In a letter obtained by *Complete Colorado*, Governor Polis admits he’s concerned those same large rate increases are coming to Colorado if electrification is not “carefully managed.” Polis “strongly urges” the Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC), Colorado Energy Office, Office of Economic Development and International Trade, Department of Natural Resources, and Department of Local Affairs to work together for a “proactive whole-of-state approach where sites

in Colorado are identified and preliminary early-stage development occurs.”

The letter lays out a goal to offer “developers and owners a comprehensive and attractive package that meets their needs” to electrify all of Colorado.

“Coloradans have never been allowed to vote on whether they want to raise their utility bills by thousands of dollars annually in perpetuity,” said Amy Oliver Cooke, the director of the Energy and Environmental Policy Center

at the **Independence Institute**.* “Polis’s ‘whole-of-government’ coercion to unreliable, unaffordable power is tantamount to a massive regressive tax on every resident. We need a ballot measure to decide if this is where Colorado wants to go.”

Electrification marching orders

The letter, dated October 8th, was sent to the heads of the previously named departments, and outlines exactly what Polis demands the departments do to see his idea come to fruition.

SUPPORT COMPLETE COLORADO

Our unofficial motto at *Complete Colorado* is “Always free, never fake,” but annoyingly enough, our reporters, columnists and staff all want to be paid in actual US dollars rather than our preferred currency of pats on the back and a muttered kind word. Fact is that there’s an entire staff working every day to bring you the most timely and relevant political news (updated twice daily) from around the state on *Complete’s* **main page aggregator**, as well as top-notch original reporting and commentary on **Page Two**.

LADLE A LITTLE GRAVY ON THE CREW AT **COMPLETE COLORADO**. (Editor/GG: see <https://secure.anedot.com/independence-institute/completecolorado> or go to [121.Org](https://www.121.org) and click on *Ways to Give*.)

“For example, working with the utilities, local government, and private sector developers, the state could develop pre-construction hubs that provide early engagement and planning for access to fiber optic backbone, developable land, water, clean heating options, and affordable and reliable power in a timely and fixed cost manner to meet the needs,” the letter reads in part.

Polis actually uses other areas in the country that have not “carefully managed” the transition as examples of how forced electrification is causing large increases in rates, but according to Cooke, his latest plan is already too little too late.

“Rarely does a week go by without a headline about rising costs,” said Cooke. “The Governor uses California as an example. But it’s happening here too. His own energy office acknowledges that wind, solar, and batteries are the most expensive ways to decarbonize.”

In the letter, Polis outlines how the state would essentially overstep local authorities to put his 11th hour plan in place hoping

to minimize the damage already in place, an effort that essentially picks winners and losers.

“By giving developers what they primarily need ... the state may be able to negotiate directly with developers seeking access to sites,” the letter continues, adding the Polis plan would remove market-driven competition from the mix by incentivizing chosen companies to develop chosen land. “This approach stands in stark contrast to the status quo where developers play potential sites against each other in a series of confidential negotiations with potentially self-interested utilities with limited public oversight.”

Ratepayers beware

Polis calls it an “opportunity in Colorado to invest a few millions (sic) or tens of millions (which could be potentially be (sic) supported in part by the regulated utility system),” which appears to indicate a willingness to put the onus at least partially on utility ratepayers.

ELECTRIFICATION
see page 17

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Colorado State News

Scientist Manipulated Colorado Drinking Water Tests for Years Before Coverup Ensued

by ColoradoPeakPolitics.com

A government scientist in the Polis administration is accused of intentionally reporting inaccurate testing data pertaining to certain metals in the state's drinking water since 2020.

But not to worry, state officials assure Denver news outlets in a written statement.

Only smaller systems in about 3% of Colorado's drinking water systems were affected.

So, if you are in that 3%, it may or may not suck to be you. More on that in a minute.

The chemist was busted for manipulating data that impacted thousands of water samples back in December, but a "culture of fear" delayed any response to the problem, Denver 7 News reports.

The public was never informed, and neither were the water districts, until (checks calendar) almost a year later.

Some of the factors they found that contributed to the data ma-

nipulation included inadequate oversight, outdated equipment and technology, resource constraints and staffing issues, and communication and cultural challenges.

The tests were to detect levels of copper, barium and chromium. The employee was put on administrative leave in February and later resigned on May 31st.

Barbara Kirkmeyer@COSen-Kirkmeyer

"the state knew of this data manipulation last December, its response was delayed by communication breakdowns, a "culture of fear" within the agency & a reluctance to report issues"

Jill Ryan @CDPHE declined an interview - shocker!

#coleg #copolitics

denver7.com

Colorado state chemist caught manipulating data, impacting thousands of water samples
A chemist with the Colorado Department of Public Health

and Environment apparently intentionally manipulated data, which altered the accuracy of thousands of water tests since 2020.

5:48 AM · Nov 19, 2024

The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment issued this vaguely written statement to 7 News:

"In February, the State Public Health Laboratory discovered a quality control lapse affecting one of our water quality methods, method 200.7, which tests for metals and trace elements, including copper, barium, and chromium. Our latest information shows that this affected primarily smaller systems that represent approximately 3% of Colorado's drinking water systems. After the managing chemist discovered anomalies in test results, we removed the acting chemist from all laboratory testing and began an investigation. Lab supervisors took the time to re-analyze an extremely large amount of data, which led to the discovery of an intentional disregard of protocol by the acting chemist. After we

notified the EPA, they revoked the lab's certification for this method. In order to maintain service, CDPHE is contracting with certified commercial labs to perform these tests.

In August, the EPA prematurely revoked other methods performed by the chemist, prior to the completion of a third-party audit. CDPHE has no current information that demonstrates similar intentional disregard of protocols with the other revoked methods. We have appealed this decision to the EPA, as we wait for third-party data analysis results.

We are in the process of formally notifying and recalling data for the specific water systems, which are primarily smaller systems. At this time, we do not have any evidence of acute public health risks. This third-party investigation is expected to conclude next month.

The State Public Health Laboratory takes quality assurance very seriously. This incident has prompted us to provide additional

staff training, and we have hired laboratory consultants to review quality assurance processes across the lab."

While the state says it has "no evidence of acute public health risks," one can only hope that doesn't mean they have evidence of moderate or mild risks. Or even that they've started to look for evidence of public health risks at all.

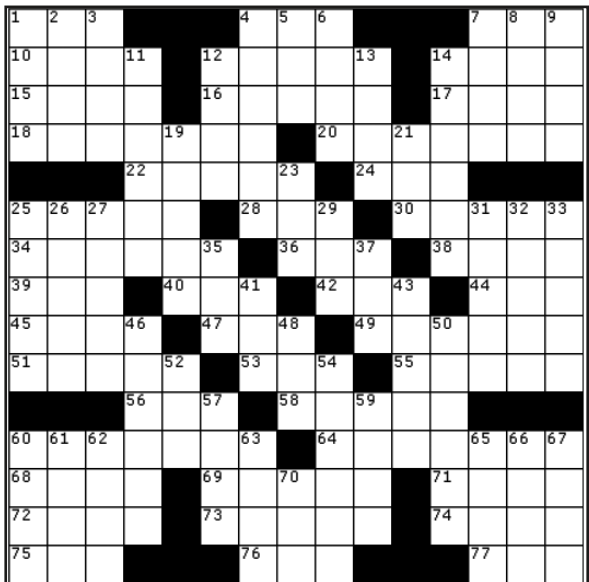
The whole timeline just reeks of malfeasance on the part of the government employees involved in this mess.

Perhaps Gov. Polis should take a page from President-elect Trump and appoint some watchdogs to root out waste, fraud and abuse within his own administration.

(Editor/GG: SOP for our lib Colorado government. Just take a gander at Griswold and that horror show.)

Please see: <https://coloradopeakpolitics.com/2024/11/19/scientist-manipulated-colorado-drinking-water-tests-for-years-before-coverup-ensued/>

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS

- 1 National police
- 4 Constrictor snake
- 7 Fuel
- 10 The ___ is my shepherd
- 12 Main artery
- 14 Clinton's VP
- 15 Lotion ingredient
- 16 Stick food
- 17 A wager (2 wds.)
- 18 First book of Bible
- 20 Christ
- 22 Lower body wear
- 24 Ad ___
- 25 "I hear you"
- 28 Turf
- 30 Whining speech
- 34 Playing fields
- 36 Mai ___
- 38 Wise man
- 39 TV lawyer Matlock
- 40 Fiery
- 42 Vex
- 44 Attack

DOWN

- 1 Banner
- 2 Tree trunk
- 3 Press
- 45 Thrive
- 47 Tons
- 49 Honor your father and ___
- 51 Son of Abraham
- 53 Layer
- 55 Get up
- 56 Middle
- 58 Spiny plants
- 60 Language of Jesus
- 64 Wife's partner
- 68 African nation
- 69 Chomps
- 71 Mideast ruler
- 72 Asian nation
- 73 Biblical weeds
- 74 Lone
- 75 Wooden leg
- 76 Morse code dash
- 77 Stitch

- 4 Brags
 - 5 Sphere
 - 6 Particle
 - 7 Mongolian desert
 - 8 Region
 - 9 Abel's brother
 - 11 Enhance
 - 12 Related
 - 13 Eve's son
 - 14 Bore
 - 19 Wife of Abraham
 - 21 Transgression
 - 23 Drunkard
 - 25 Jewish teacher
 - 26 Sandwich cookies brand
 - 27 Italian City
 - 29 Tribe of Israel
 - 31 Japanese dish
 - 32 Constellation
 - 33 Filthy ___
 - 35 Sun's name
 - 37 A name of God
 - 41 Go beyond
 - 43 Parable of the sheep and ___
 - 46 KJV word for wealth
 - 48 Tender loving care
 - 50 Groups of related families
 - 52 Central Intelligence Agency
 - 54 OT name of God
 - 57 Dictionary (abbr.)
 - 59 Curse
 - 60 On top
 - 61 National capital
 - 62 A king of the Amalekites
 - 63 African nation
 - 65 OT prophet
 - 66 African river
 - 67 Sketched
 - 70 Time period
- Puzzle Key on page 7

ELECTRIFICATION from page 16

"Significant investments in the electricity system over the coming years and decades are critical to enhance the reliability and resilience of the transmission and distribution system, mini-mize wildfire risk, replace legacy fossil generation with renewable energy, and increase the utilization of electric products like high efficiency heat pumps, and electric vehicles." Polis said in the letter.

Cooke called Polis's letter yet more evidence his desire for an all-electric state is falling on the backs of energy users and ratepayers.

"Governor Polis's letter is another indication that his forced march to costly, unreliable, weather-dependent sources isn't going well," Oliver Cooke said, pointing out that the situation already has the state

Department of Health of Care Policy and Finance giving away battery backups to Medicaid patients.

"When Coloradans are staring at mile-high electric bills, the Governor and legislators who codified this fantasy will be long gone. If power matters to you, get a generator."

*Independence Institute is the publisher of Complete Colorado.

Please see: <https://pagetwo.completecolorado.com/2024/11/07/gov-polis-pushes-state-agencies-puc-on-electrification/>

(Editor/GG: Folks, The Independence Institute could use some support. The are the go to place for top notch political and economic reporting for Colorado. They have been very gracious to allow us to reprint their material. Throw them some coin.)



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NOTE: When writing about God and Jesus, The Daily Jot means YHVH as God and Yeshua Ha Mashiach as Jesus--the actual original names and the true nature and character of them.

Thanksgiving Special: The Pilgrim Settlers and the Israelites

Over the ages, there have been many parallels drawn between the United States and Israel. Close allies since the declaration of Israel as an independent state in 1948, America and Israel have shared economic, political and spiritual links. One of those commonalities dates back to the original Pilgrims who ventured across the Atlantic to escape persecution and claim a new land in the “Name of God” and “Advancement of the Christian Faith,” as is written in the Mayflower Compact. William Bradford, an author of the Compact and leader of the Pilgrims, alluded to being driven out of England “as the heathen historians asserted of Moses and the Israelites when they went out of Egypt.”

Indeed, the allusion to the Israelites’ journey to the Promised Land was not lost on the Pilgrims as they prepared and eventually traveled from Leyden, the Netherlands, to the new America and the establishment of the Plymouth Colony in 1620. The parallels between the Israelite’s Exodus and the Pilgrims are significant. Bradford’s history of the Plymouth Colony, carefully written in great detail in his work, “Of Plymouth Plantation,” documents the persecution Separatists endured from both the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England under King James. The Separatists were poor and heavy-labored to survive and “submitted to bondage” by not being allowed “to enjoy the ordinances of God in their purity, and the liberty of the gospel.”

Thus, Bradford wrote, “they cherished a great hope and inward zeal of laying good foundations, or at least of making some way towards it, for the propagation and advance of the gospel of the kingdom of Christ in the remote parts of the world, even though they should be but stepping stones to others in the performance of so great a work.” Even so, King James would not grant the Separatists “religious freedom by his public authority, under his seal, [it] was found to be impossible.” They decided to move ahead and “trust to God’s providence for the outcome, as they had done in other things.” Bradford later wrote they “endeavored to establish the right worship of God and the discipline of Christ in the Church according to the simplicity of the gospel and without the mixture of men’s inventions, and to be ruled by the laws of God’s word.”

Bradford compared the Pilgrims’ plight to the Israelites’ migration from Egypt to Canaan: “Our fathers were Englishmen who came over the great ocean and were ready to perish in the wilderness, but they cried to the Lord, and He heard their voice and looked on their adversity....Yes, let them who have been redeemed of the Lord, show how He has delivered them from the hand of the oppressor. When they wandered forth into the desert-wilderness, out of the way, and found no city to dwell in, both hungry and thirsty, their soul was overwhelmed in them (Psalm 107:1-6). Let them confess before the Lord His loving kindness, and His wonderful works before the sons of men.” Indeed as Psalm 107:13 states, “Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and He saved them from their distress.”

Moreover, Bradford and his Mayflower colleague William Brewster are credited with bringing the Hebrew language to America. Some 400 books, many in Hebrew were in the hold of the Mayflower. Bradford was a student of Hebrew. Why? In his own words: “Though I am grown aged, yet I have had a longing desire to see with my own eyes, something of that most ancient language, and holy tongue, in which the law and Oracles of God were write; and in which God and angels spake to the holy patriarchs of old time; and what names were given to things from creation...” The Exodus from Europe to a new land; The wilderness of starvation and death; The deliverance by the hand of God; and the Thanksgiving “sukkot feast”—the first Thanksgiving. And the making of a new nation under God—the parallels of the Israelites and the Pilgrims.

Bill Wilson

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Law Protecting Minors from Gender Transitions Upheld

by Joshua Arnold, The Washington Stand

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit upheld an Indiana law protecting minors from gender transition procedures last Wednesday. The appellate court had stayed a preliminary injunction that blocked all of the law except its prohibition on gender transition surgeries in a simple order on February 27th, allowing the law to take effect. Wednesday’s ruling (*K.C. v. Medical Licensing Board of Indiana*) included a 50-page opinion for why the court reversed the lower court ruling, vacated the preliminary injunction, and remanded the lawsuit back to the district court.

The ruling is “a huge win for Hoosiers,” declared Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita (R) “and will help protect our most precious gift from God — our children. By rejecting the injunction against our commonsense state law, dangerous and irreversible gender-transition procedures for minors will remain banned in Indiana.”

The Indiana legislature is one of 26 that have enacted protections for minors from gender transition procedures. On the day the bill (SB 480) was into law, April 5, 2023, the ACLU sued the members of the Indiana Medical Licensing Board. “They alleged SEA 480 violated the Equal Protection Clause, substantive due process, the First Amendment’s Free Speech Clause, the Affordable Care Act, and the Medicaid statute,” according to the circuit court.”

On June 16, 2023, Trump-appointed U.S. District Court Judge James Patrick Hanlon issued a preliminary injunction against the Indiana law. However, his opinion addressed only the Equal Protection and free speech claims, finding that the law failed to meet the heightened scrutiny standard.

In a 2-1 opinion on Wednesday, a three-judge panel of the Seventh Circuit reversed Hanlon’s decision. The opinion was joined by Judge Kenneth Francis Ripple, a Reagan appointee on senior status, and Judge Michael Brennan, a Trump appointee, while Biden appointee Judge Candace Jackson-Akiwumi dissented.

Regarding Equal Protection, the law’s “classifications based on age and medical diagnosis do not merit higher scrutiny,” wrote the court. “The key issue in this appeal is whether SEA 480 classifies based on a protected class, and that issue requires us to answer two questions. First, does SEA 480 classify based on sex? ... Second, is transgender status a quasi-protected class warranting a level of scrutiny higher than rational basis?” The court answered both questions negatively.

First, the law “bars gender transition procedures regardless of whether the patient is a boy or a girl: Nobody may receive the treatment the state has chosen to regulate. So, sex does not indicate on what basis treatment is prohibited,” they reasoned, citing U.S. Supreme Court precedents *Geduldig v. Aiello* (1974) and *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health* (2022). Although the ACLU tried to insert the reasoning from Bostock, the court declared with finality, “Bostock is of no use when interpreting the Equal Protection Clause. That clause does not use the word ‘sex.’ ... The case decided an interpretive question about Title VII’s reach. Title VII does not apply here, so neither does Bostock.”

Second, the court rejected the notion that people who identify as transgender are a “quasi-suspect class.” “Even if transgender status were a quasi-suspect class,” they wrote, the Indiana law “regulates gender transition procedures,” not individuals. “The law allows mental health care, does not limit an adult’s access to gender transition treatment, and does not prohibit treatment focused on non-medical affirmation of the individual’s gender identity,” they said, and it focuses exclusively “on the medically induced part of a gender transition, which is the part of the transitioning process Indiana believes is too dangerous and novel to be left unregulated.”

Regarding Substantive Due Process (essentially a parental rights argument), the court argued that everything depended on “what right is at issue.” The ACLU wanted to define the right as a parent’s right “to make medical decisions for their children” or “to consent to medical care for their child.” The court rejected both “broad” options because, as *Dobbs* explained, defining a right this broadly can lead to problems. Instead, they chose to define the issue as a parent’s right “to access gender transition procedures for their children” and concluded that such a right is not “‘deeply rooted in [our] history and tradition’ and ‘essential to our Nation’s scheme of ordered liberty.’” In fact, “the first report of a minor transgender patient treated with puberty blockers was in the Netherlands in 1998,” the same year that “WPATH approved its first treatment guidelines for children,” they recorded.

Regarding free speech, the ACLU challenged the Indiana law’s secondary liability provision, which says that practitioners “may not aid or abet” another practitioner in providing prohibited gender transition procedures to minors, such as by referring to them. However, the Seventh Circuit was highly skeptical of this argument. “It is not clear that the law prohibits anything other than speech used ‘as an integral part of’ unlawful conduct.

... Such speech ‘is historically recognized as unprotected.’” Alternatively, the reasoned, even if the law does burden speech, it only does so “‘incidentally because it targets conduct: facilitating the provision of gender transition procedures.”

“Appellees ask us to constitutionalize and thus take from Indiana the power to regulate a new and heavily debated medical treatment with unknown risks,” concluded the court. “If we hasten to set one side of the debate into constitutional stone, we will prevent Indiana from responding to tomorrow’s insights. Our Constitution is not so quick to act. By design, it provides a solution to just a few difficult questions and leaves the rest to the people.” Consequently, they reversed the lower court’s order and vacated the preliminary injunction, remanding the case for further proceedings.

Jackson-Akiwumi disagreed with the majority opinion “for largely the same compelling reasons explained by dissenting judges around the country,” which she cited in a footnote but did not restate. Instead, she limited her opinion to consider a “question no court of appeals has addressed to date: whether a state law construed to prohibit medical providers from aiding and abetting out-of-state providers in the provision of gender transition treatment to minors violates the First Amendment.” The majority responded that this dissent “focuses entirely on an issue that neither party raised in the district court nor on appeal.”

The Seventh Circuit is the fourth U.S. appellate court to consider the issue of laws protecting minors from gender transition procedures on the merits. The Eighth Circuit (*Brandt v. Rutledge*) found Arkansas’s law constitutional, while the Sixth (*L.W. v. Skrmetti*) and Eleventh Circuits (*Eknes-Tucker v. Alabama*) upheld similar laws in Tennessee, Kentucky and Alabama. The Eleventh Circuit largely borrowed its reasoning from the Sixth Circuit’s opinion.

The Seventh Circuit had the advantage of consulting all these prior opinions. However, they opted to largely conduct their own independent analysis and only briefly mentioned the other opinions. “*Skrmetti* and *Eknes-Tucker* engaged in much deeper and more thorough analyses of the Equal Protection Clause,” with *Skrmetti* citing 12 Supreme Court precedents, they analyzed, while “Brandt cited only four cases” and “did not discuss or even cite *Dobbs* and *Geduldig*,” the two major precedents they used. Consequently, “The Sixth and Eleventh Circuit’s analyses are more persuasive because they compre

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Study: Christian Voters Responsible for Trump Victory

by S.A. McCarthy,
The Washington Stand

In the wake of President-elect Donald Trump’s historic electoral victory earlier this month, media pundits and talking heads have focused on his significant gains among traditionally-Democratic voting blocs, such as young voters and both black and Hispanic men; but a new study is suggesting that it was Christian voters who were the decisive factor in Trump’s win. George Barna, senior research fellow for the Center for Biblical Worldview at Family Research Council and director of the Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University, published his post-election report last week, demonstrating that Christian voters “made the difference in the race.”

Prior to the election, Barna had anticipated that voter turnout among Christians would be low, with as many as 40 million Christians simply choosing not to vote. While Christians did vote in fewer numbers than they did in 2020, Barna noted that the “potentially devastating impact for the Trump campaign was blunted by the even lower levels of turnout among the Harris campaign’s target segments.”

Overall, 56% of self-identified Christians voted in 2024, which Barna pointed out “was barely higher than the involvement among people aligned with non-Christian faiths (53%), but significantly higher than among voting-age Americans who have no religious faith (48%).” Interestingly, Catholic voters and Christians with a biblical worldview both outperformed their 2020 turnout by three points.

“Trump was a heavy favorite among most of the three dozen Christian segments studied by the Cultural Research Center survey. The former president received a landslide 56% to 43% margin of victory among all self-identified Christians,” Barna observed. He added, “Among the approximately 75 million votes Trump garnered in the election, more than three-quarters of them — 78% — came from the Christian community.” Barna also noted that Trump’s Democratic opponent, Vice President Kamala Harris, scored low among almost all Christian denominations and demographics, with the exception of “mainline and traditionally black Protestant congregations.” Overall, less than two thirds of Harris’s votes came from Christians.

The majority of Christian voters also identified their religious beliefs, the differing party platforms, and the insight of their family as the biggest impacts on their choice of candidates. “Consistent with the patterns established, Trump voters were twice as likely as Harris voters to identify their religious faith as a major influence on their candidate of choice (30% vs. 14%, respectively),” Barna noted.

In comments to The Washington Stand, Joseph Backholm, senior fellow for Biblical Worldview at FRC, explained, “Religion gives people a worldview which, among other things, gives people a way to understand what’s wrong with the world and what the solution is. Elections are one way people indicate their understanding of what’s wrong and what we need to do to fix it.” Pointing to Barna’s study, he continued, “This survey is evidence that Christians think about these questions differently than people of other faiths or no religion at all, which really shouldn’t be surprising. If anything, it might be surprising that Christians aren’t more different, but elections never offer perfect choices, and this election was more complicated than others.” Backholm added, “Christians

were always going to be a significant part of this election either through what we did or did not do. In this case, tens of millions of Christians evaluated an admittedly tricky choice and reached the same conclusion, and as Robert Frost would say, that has made all the difference.”

Appearing on Monday night’s episode of “Washington Watch,” Adam Rasmussen, who worked on the post-election report with Barna, explained just how decisive a role Christians played. “What we saw is that 72% of those who came out to vote were Christians, and they have values,” Rasmussen said. He continued, “And we saw that — probably because of the platform of the Republicans and Donald Trump — Christians gave a 17 million vote advantage or cushion to Donald Trump, and because the margin between the two of them was less than that, it was insurmountable.”

Inflation and immigration were consistently ranked as top concerns among the general population heading into the election, and Barna’s post-election study found that Christian voters also placed the greatest emphasis on those issues. Overall, nearly 40% of Christian voters identified inflation as a

major concern that determined who they voted for, and 34% rated immigration and border control as the same. Evangelical voters, however, placed a higher premium on immigration, with 40% identifying it as a major concern. Rasmussen said that this was likely linked to a concern over the breakdown of law. “That’s one of the major responsibilities of the federal government, is to have safe borders. How could it not? And that was a decisive factor for certain,” he said.

Addressing the issue of the 44% of Christians who chose not to vote, Rasmussen recommended that pastors and church leaders should encourage their congregations to vote in accord with Cristian principles. “We found that perhaps if there was a last-minute push, pastors and family members and churches could encourage those 32 million Christians we were calling to come out and vote,” he said. Rasmussen added, “And maybe that might push another five million into the voting polls. And we need to be more engaged in those things.”

Please see: <https://washingtonstand.com/news/study-christian-voters-responsible-for-trump-victory>

California Fuel Could Rise by Up to \$1.15 per Gallon Next Year

by Kenneth Schrupp,
The Center Square

(The Center Square) - California gas prices could rise up to \$1.15 per gallon next year thanks to the state’s new carbon credit system, taxes, refinery regulations, and refinery shutdown. This would require the typical Californian to make up to \$1,000 per year more in pre-tax income to “break even,” according to an analysis from a professor at the USC Marshall School of Business.

“The increase contributes to inflation, the high cost of living in California, and has a disproportionate and adverse impact on lower income Californians,” wrote Professor Michael A. Mische. “To compensate for the increases, the average Califor-

nian driving an internal combustion vehicle will have to earn an additional \$600.00 to \$1,000.00 a year in pre-tax income in order to “breakeven” with 2024 prices, depending on the grade of gas they purchase.”

Days after the November election, the California Air Resources Board — a regulatory commission almost entirely appointed by the governor — passed new updates to the state’s Low Carbon Fuel Standard, requiring producers of “dirty” transportation fuel to purchase more credits from producers of “clean” transportation fuel. The new LCFS will provide an estimated \$105 billion in EV charging credits and \$8 billion of hydrogen credits largely paid for by fees on gasoline and diesel,

which the state estimated would be passed on to drivers and consumers.

Mische first estimated that the state’s newly passed carbon credit requirement will increase retail prices for regular grade gasoline in 2025 somewhere between 40 and 65 cents per gallon — similar to that estimated by the University of Pennsylvania Kleinman Center for Energy Policy.

He then estimated that the governor’s new refinery regulations he passed during a special legislative session last month would increase prices between 5 and 27 cents per gallon, and that the shutdown of the Phillips 66 refinery announced after the new refinery regulations would add another 8 to 14 cents per gallon.

Because California gas taxes rise with the state’s price index, Mische estimates the gas tax will go up between one to two cents per gallon in 2025.

Combined, these changes add up to an increase of 55 to 90 cents per gallon of regular-grade gasoline in 2025, and 95 cents to \$1.15 for premium-grade gasoline.

Republicans pointed out that the governor has now moved away from Sacramento, the state’s capital, and will now be chauffeured to work in a gasoline car.

“Newsom is completely out of touch, recently purchasing a \$9.1 million mansion in Kentfield, a wealthy town that’s 90 miles away from his job in Sacramento,” said Senate Minority Leader

Brian W. Jones, R-San Diego, in a statement. “While regular Californians face tough choices between putting food on the table or gas in their cars, Newsom will be chauffeured to work from his luxury home in a taxpayer-funded car, running on taxpayer-funded gas, on the rare occasions he decides to show up.”

(Editor/GG: This insanity will be here in Colorado soon. Our woke libs in Denver are a couple of years behind the Cali nutcases, but not that far. They hate rural Colorado. And you.)

Please see: https://www.thecentersquare.com/california/article_55a18774-a6a2-11ef-a048-536825c3c018.html

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The Second Amendment Corner

1776

Liberty's Line in the Sand

2024



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"Blessed be the LORD my Rock, Who trains my hands for war, And my fingers for battle—"A Psalm of David, Psalm 144:1

Building the Ideal Civilian Plate Carrier Setup

by Ammoland Editors & Staff,
ammoland.com

As armed citizens, preparation isn't optional—it's a duty. In today's world, staying ready to protect yourself, your family, and your community is more important than ever. One cornerstone of readiness is your plate carrier setup. A solid plate carrier isn't just gear—it's life insurance, utility, and capability in one. Whether you're preparing for natural disasters, civil unrest, or worst-case scenarios, this guide will walk you through building an effective civilian plate carrier setup.

Why Civilians Should Invest in Plate Carriers

It's no secret: civilians have the right to self-defense. With the Second Amendment as our backbone, American citizens can and should equip themselves responsibly. Owning a plate carrier isn't about looking "tactical"—it's about staying alive and protecting those you love.

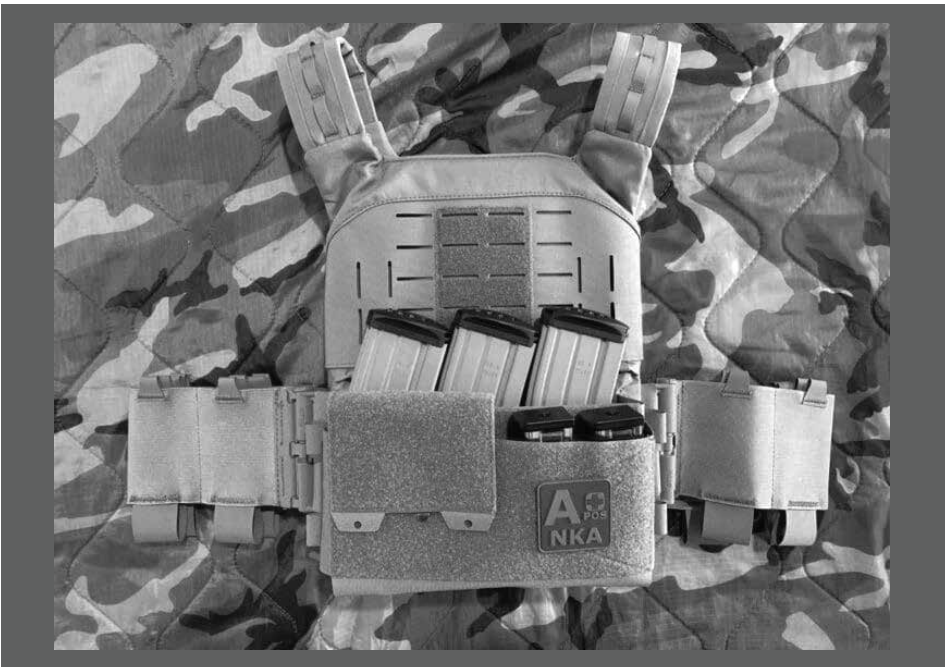
A civilian's plate carrier setup isn't about playing soldier. Instead, it's about three critical functions:

- **Stop Holes:** Your armor must stop bullets before they stop you.
- **Plug Holes:** Medical gear saves lives when things go south.
- **Make Holes:** Ammo and tools ensure you can fight if necessary.

Choosing the Right Armor: Stop Holes

The plates in your carrier are its heart. Here's what you need to know:

1. **Level IV Armor:** The gold standard, stopping armor-piercing rounds like 30.06. If your budget allows, go lightweight. Brands like Hesco are a solid bet.
2. **Level III+:** Cheaper and lighter, these stop most civilian threats, like 5.56 M855 green tip.
3. **Side Plates:** While not always necessary, side plates or soft armor can protect you from frag and pistol rounds. Flexible side armor, like Ferro Concepts, offers a good compromise between mobility and protection.



Universal Armor Carrier by Otte Gear. Photo by Lee Williams

Placement Tips: Your front plate should cover your vitals—place it high enough to protect your heart and lungs. The back plate should align with your T1 vertebrae.

Plugging Holes: Medical Gear

You're not invincible. When things go wrong, proper medical gear can make the difference between life and death. Every civilian plate carrier setup needs:

- **Two IFAKs (Individual First Aid Kits):** One is for personal use, accessible by either hand, and another is a standardized kit for your team.
- **Contents Checklist:**
 - Tourniquets (CAT or SOF-T recommended)
 - Compression bandages
 - Chest seals
 - Hemostatic agents (e.g., Combat Gauze)
 - Needle decompression kits (if trained)

• **Tourniquet Tips:** Carry at least three and stage them for quick access. Keep extras because gear gets lost, damaged, or used on others.

Making Holes: Ammunition Loadouts

Running out of ammo during a firefight isn't an option. Your carrier needs enough to sustain you through the fight. For a standard AR-15 or similar rifle:

- **Recommended Load:** Seven magazines are the absolute minimum (one in the gun, six on the carrier). If possible, run more.
- **Placards and Pouches:**
 - **Elastic placards** (e.g., Blue Force Gear or Ferro Concepts) for lightweight, low-profile setups.
 - **Taco-style pouches** for secure and adaptable magazine storage.
 - **Grenade pouches** may sound outlandish on a civilian's kit, but flashbangs and even frag grenades (with proper ATF papers) can be legally obtained.
- **Special Considerations:** If you're running heavier calibers (e.g., 7.62 NATO), tailor your load accordingly. Balance weight and mobility.

Customizing Your Carrier

Civilians need flexibility. Here's what to consider when setting up your gear:

- **Pouches:** Use general-purpose pouches for tools, extra ammo, or mission-specific items like breaching rounds or flashbangs.
- **Hydration:** A CamelBak or water bottles stored in cargo pockets can keep you going during long engagements.
- **Radio Gear:** Communication is vital, but keep your electronic signature low.

Essential Accessories

Small details make a big difference. Here's

what every plate carrier setup should include:

- **Headlamp:** Red lenses preserve natural night vision and are harder to detect.
- **Knife and Multitool:** Both are indispensable. A knife for self-defense and a multitool for utility work.
- **Signaling Gear:** Chem sticks (IR and visible) or VS-17 panels help you mark positions, signal allies, or identify yourself.

Training: The Key to Confidence

Your gear is only as good as your training. Regularly test your setup by:

- Running and moving in full gear.
- Practicing reloads and clearing drills with your setup.
- Simulating real-world scenarios, like getting in and out of vehicles.
- Competitions that encourage participants to wear plate carriers, i.e., The Tactical Games.

Your plate carrier is a tool—it should work with you, not against you.

Recommended Plate Carriers

The market is full of options, but these stand out for civilians:

- **Velocity Systems Scarab Light Plate Carrier:** Lightweight and versatile. Perfect for streamlined setups.
- **Grey Ghost Gear SMC Plate Carrier:** Rugged and ideal for carrying heavier loads.
- **Spiritus Systems LV/119 (Front Bag):** Low-profile and great for urban or low-visibility operations. Highly customizable.
 - **NOTE:** This is a component of a Spiritus Systems LV/119 Plate Carrier build. To build a COMPLETE plate carrier, you will need to select AT LEAST ONE of each of these items:
 - Spiritus Systems Front Plate Bag
 - Spiritus Systems Rear Plate Bag
 - Spiritus Systems Shoulder Covers
 - Spiritus Systems Cumberbund Set

With the right plate carrier setup, you're not just another statistic—you're a protector, ready to defend what matters most. Gear up, train hard, and stay prepared. Freedom isn't free, and neither is survival. As a gun-owning civilian, you are the first and last line of defense.

(Editor/GG: Will be needed pretty soon when you go to many cities here in Colorado. Plus, it looks cool. Make sure you practice your mag changes...)

Please see: <https://www.ammoland.com/2024/11/building-the-ideal-civilian-plate-carrier-setup/>

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hensively apply Equal Protection law and better respond to more counterarguments."

The ACLU has the option to ask the entire Seventh Circuit court to review this panel's decision "en banc." The current composition of the Seventh Circuit includes one Reagan appointee, one H.W. Bush appointee, four Trump appointees, and five Biden appointees, resulting in a narrow majority appointed by Republican presidents. En banc review is rare. Normally, the ACLU would also have the option to appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court. However, the U.S. Supreme Court

has already agreed to hear a challenge (*U.S. v. Skrmetti*) this term to the Sixth Circuit's opinion.

The result of *U.S. v. Skrmetti* will likely control the outcome of the Seventh Circuit case as well, which may motivate both the parties and the court to pause further proceedings until that decision is issued. However, the Seventh Circuit did issue this decision (and dissent), which made relatively unique arguments, to add to the record the U.S. Supreme Court can consider in reaching their decision. Oral arguments in *U.S. v. Skrmetti* are scheduled for December 4, 2024.

Please see: <https://washingtonstand.com/news/seventh-circuit-reverses-ruling-against-indiana-law-protecting-minors-from-gender-transitions>

Who is this King of glory?
The LORD, strong and mighty,
the LORD, mighty in battle!

Psalm 24:8 ESV

The Myth of “Lethality”: The Legal Defense of the ‘Dangerous’ AR-15 Rifle

by Ammoland Editors & Staff,
ammoland.com

At the 2024 Federalist Society Conference, David Thompson, managing partner at Cooper & Kirk and one of the nation’s foremost litigators, working directly with the Second Amendment Foundation, delivered a compelling defense of the AR-15 rifle.

With 44 million AR-15s owned across the U.S., Thompson dismantled the narrative that the rifle’s “lethality” justifies banning it, highlighting how such arguments ignore the Second Amendment’s purpose, legal precedent, and the role of firearms in preserving freedom.

Thompson’s speech not only educated but also energized pro-Second Amendment advocates, reminding them that technological advancements in firearms are a feature of liberty, not a flaw.

Lethality: The Anti-Gun Argument

In his speech, Thompson addressed the growing trend among anti-gun advocates and lower courts to label firearms like the AR-15 as “too dangerous for civilian ownership” due to their perceived “unprecedented lethality.” This argument has been weaponized to support bans on AR-15s and standard 30-round magazines, which are owned by millions of law-abiding Americans.

Thompson called this narrative both factually and constitutionally flawed.

“The entire history of firearms is the relentless, continual search for more lethality and more accuracy,” he explained. “These are instruments that determine your life or your death, whether you live free or as a slave.”

This focus on a firearm’s potential danger shifts the legal conversation away from its common use by law-abiding citizens, a cornerstone of the Supreme Court’s *Heller* decision.

The Supreme Court’s Clear Guidance

Thompson’s analysis rooted itself in precedent, particularly the Supreme Court’s 2008 *Heller* ruling. That decision established that firearms commonly owned by law-abiding citizens for lawful purposes, such as self-defense, cannot be banned.

By this test, the AR-15, which is overwhelmingly used for self-defense, target shooting, and hunting, is protected. “99.999% of AR-15s will never be used in any criminal activity,” Thompson said. The rifle’s popularity and lawful ownership place it firmly within the Constitution’s protections.

Thompson also addressed claims that AR-15 rifles are “military

weapons” unsuitable for civilian use. He explained that AR-15s are semi-automatic, firing one bullet per trigger pull, unlike the fully-automatic firearms used by militaries. Far from being “too dangerous,” the AR-15’s design makes it accessible, accurate, and effective for civilians defending themselves or their families.

The Founders & Firearms Evolution

Thompson dispelled the myth that the Founders couldn’t have envisioned modern firearms like the AR-15. He pointed to historical records, including a 1775 demonstration before the Continental Congress of a firearm capable of firing 20 rounds without reloading. This early innovation proves that the Founders were aware of—and embraced—advances in firearms technology.

Justice Antonin Scalia echoed this sentiment in *Heller*, ridiculing the idea that the Second Amendment protects only firearms existing at the time of the Founding.

“The Constitution protects advancements in arms as much as it protects advancements in speech or the press,” Thompson said.

AR-15 Bans: Misguided & Dangerous

A major flaw in anti-gun arguments, Thompson noted, is

the attempt to redefine the Second Amendment’s protections by focusing on criminal misuse of firearms. Courts have entertained the idea that AR-15 weapons and similar firearms can be banned because criminals might use them in harmful ways. But Thompson emphasized that the Constitution was designed to protect law-abiding citizens’ rights, not to cater to hypothetical abuses.

“The features of the AR-15 that make it accurate and effective for self-defense are the same features being twisted into reasons to ban it,” Thompson argued. “The focus should always be on how these firearms empower law-abiding Americans—not on how criminals misuse them.”

A Broader Lesson: Why Lethality Matters

Thompson’s most profound point may have been this: the Second Amendment was written precisely because firearms are effective tools. Their lethality is not a constitutional bug—it’s a feature. Citizens need reliable, effective firearms to protect themselves, their families, and their communities.

“Lethality isn’t the problem,” Thompson said. “It’s the solution when it comes to defending your home or your freedom.”

He warned that using lethality as a reason to ban firearms undermines

the Second Amendment’s purpose and sets a dangerous precedent that could erode other rights.

Standing Firm on the Second Amendment

David Thompson’s speech at the Federalist Society Conference was a rallying cry for Second Amendment advocates. By grounding his arguments in history, legal precedent, and common sense, Thompson exposed the flaws in the “lethality” narrative and defended the AR-15’s place as a vital tool of self-defense and freedom.

For millions of Americans, the AR-15 represents more than a firearm—it’s a symbol of their constitutional right to protect themselves and their families. Thompson’s message was clear: technological advancements and effectiveness in firearms are fully consistent with the Second Amendment, and banning AR-15s is not only unconstitutional but an affront to the principles of liberty.

(Editor/GG: Get'em while you can. Custer County Supply on Main Street has a ton of them. At good prices. Own a piece of American history. And get plenty of ammo.)

Please see: <https://www.ammoland.com/2024/11/myth-of-lethality-david-thompsons-powerful-legal-defense-dangerous-ar15-rifle/>



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JIM BISHOP
from page 1

the business and the other up the mountain working on the family cabin. This arrangement lasted until late spring of 1971, when the challenge of getting running water into the cabin arose. Willard suggested installing a large metal tank, salvaged from a welding job, to serve as a gravity-fed cistern that would need filling once or twice a summer. Jim agreed it would be functional, and so the construction of the water tank began. It was a 40-foot metal cylinder, which Willard encased in stonework. Jim continued to build his cottage, and the walls steadily rose. Throughout the summer, family friends, a few local ranchers, and even some family members commented that it looked like they were building a castle. “Hey Jim! That looks like a turret or something!” “What are you building, a castle?!” Jim heard these remarks so often that by late spring 1972, his imagination was fiercely ignited, and he began telling friends and family that he was, in fact, going to build a castle. When Willard first heard this, he matter-of-factly stated that castles were usually quite large and that he wanted no part in such an endeavor. “That’s just too much work!” he exclaimed. Nevertheless, Jim persisted in building, and the construction that began as a one-room stone cottage with an Eiffel Tower-shaped fireplace evolved into what is now known as the Bishop Castle, possibly the largest one-man project in this country, and perhaps even the world.

It Just Keeps On Growing!

As the castle grew, so did the fame of the man in the mountains pursuing the American Dream – to be the king of one’s own castle! More and more people began visiting, and Jim was frequently asked if he needed help building his castle. For the first eight years, his response was always, “Sure!” Yet, in all those years, not a single person ever followed through on their promise to help. In a fit of cynical frustration, Jim declared, “By God, I’ve gotten this far by myself. If you’re going to do something right, do it yourself!” (along with a few other choice words best left unprinted). Thus, the concept of the castle being a one-man project emerged in the midst of construction; it was not an original intention or a childhood dream, as many might assume. Nevertheless, he continued building. And building. And so, the Bishop Castle continued to grow...

Other Discoveries Along the Way

Numerous features of Bishop Castle were discovered intuitively or emerged spontaneously as the construction progressed. Some might even say they “suggested themselves.” During the castle’s construction, Jim also found joy in building his physique. He set up an old army wall tent in the clearing, where he would work out with weights for a couple of hours each evening after a day of building



with stone and mortar. As he delved deeper into his weightlifting regimen, he discovered a mental realm where the principles he applied in building could also be applied to his life – striving for balance in everything. This pursuit of balance became an ideal in his self-improvement journey, evident in his stonework, his body, and his mind. Through this approach, Jim began to fully visualize his next steps in construction and how everything would fit together on a grand scale. There were no plans, blueprints, or drawings, except for the one Jim created to illustrate his book, “Castle Building from My Point of View.” The more Jim marveled at how certain features naturally aligned or fell into place, the more he suspected that something greater was at play, perhaps the Creator of All Things working through him in this magnificent endeavor, which seemed to possess a spirit of its own. Jim began to describe Bishop Castle as “Built by One Man with the Help of God.” There seemed to be no other way to explain it. And still, it continued to grow...

Feats of Strength

To realize the full extent of his vision, Jim utilized every resource available to him. He had apprenticed and then excelled in welding and scroll bending under his father’s tutelage at the family’s Bishop Ornamental Iron Shop, learning how various elements fit together for most of his life. Jim undertook every task necessary – hauling rock from state highway ditches, felling timber and milling it into lumber, constructing forms for his arches from railroad ties (reusing the same form repeatedly), and building scaffolding as he progressed. He manually dug holes up to 12 feet deep for the foundations, mixed all his own mortar, and carried it, often uphill, to his work site. He also devised and assembled complex systems of pulleys and come-alongs to hoist items such as tree trunks for floor supports. Stone by stone, his dreams materialized. Remarkably, Jim handled each and every stone in the castle an average of six times before it found its final place in this grand reorganization of scattered granite from the Rocky Mountains into the structure of Bishop Castle.

Structural Ornaments

The construction of the square tower on the south side of the main keep marked the first significant use of ironwork in the castle’s construction. Until then, Jim had used his ironwork skills primarily for window frames, stairs, and decorative elements. However, his use of iron

and steel evolved to become structural, starting with a core frame for the tower right from its foundation. The stonework built around this base provided such strength that

hard work in Pueblo sufficiently supported his family, and he was content to build the castle to the extent that visitor donations allowed. Although this approach sometimes led to frustrations, particularly when he wanted to construct larger features like an elevator but lacked the funds,

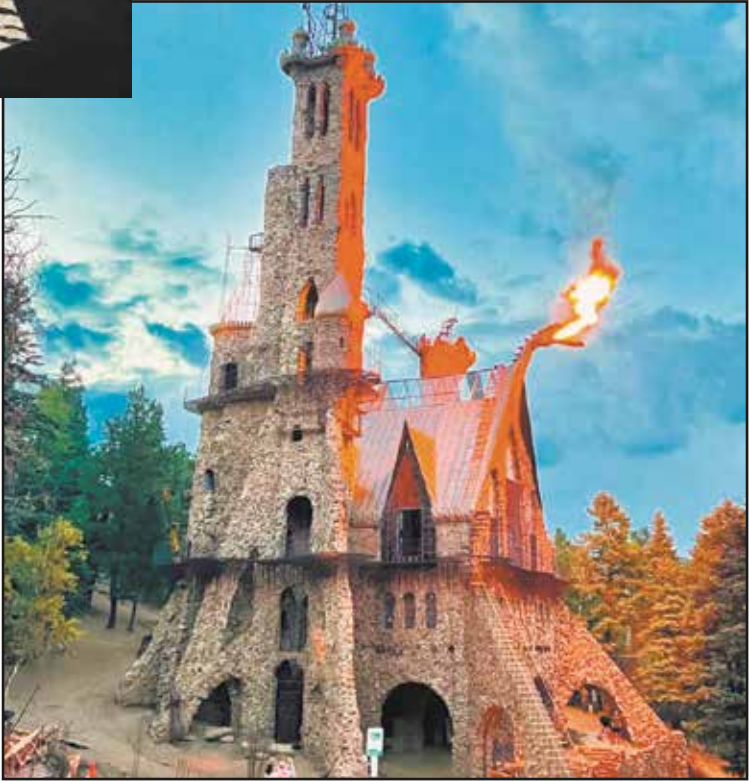
with medical expenses for young children not covered by insurance. Despite the IRS informing the Bishops that they were not obligated to make any donations through the charity until the castle’s completion, they have operated the Charity for Newborn Heart Surgery in such a way that it has made numerous contributions over the years. The Bishops take pride in possibly being the only charitable foundation in the United States created and sustained by working-class individuals.

Enter The Dragon

In the mid-1980s, a friend of Jim’s, while transporting a truck-load of discarded stainless steel warming plates from Pueblo County Hospital to the landfill, realized that Jim could make better use of this trove of expensive stainless steel than the dump could. Consequently, he delivered it to the Bishop Ornamental Iron Shop. Jim dedicated that winter to constructing a chimney from the steel, meticulously riveting thousands of hammered “scales” he had fashioned from the plates around a steel frame. By spring, the dragon was complete. Jim then faced the formidable challenge of transporting and installing this remarkable sculpture. It now sits majestically, perched eighty feet high off the front of the Grand Ballroom. The dragon’s transformation into a true fire-breathing spectacle came later with the addition of a burner, donated from a hot air balloon, which Jim ingeniously placed in the dragon’s throat.

Unimaginable Heights Reached

Jim is often told that he must not be afraid of heights. He believes that since he started building from the bedrock base of the earth and has been gradually working his way up, the increase in height has been so gradual that he became as comfortable with it as he is on the ground. This experience can be likened to the difference between watching a child grow daily and seeing them after a year’s gap. The former is hardly noticeable, while the latter is striking in its effect. Jim’s involvement with the castle has been so intimate—he’s handled every single stone there an average of six times—that he has grown with the structure, stone by stone, and the heights do not bother him. In 1994, Jim reached a point with the square Andreatta Tower, named after the family that donated the old school bells housed within, where he felt it was sufficiently high. However, this satisfaction was short-lived. In 1995, he constructed and installed a thirty-foot-tall steel steeple atop the masonry, elevating the total height to approximately one hundred and sixty feet, akin to a 16-story building. To this day, Jim is content with the overall height of his castle. However, he has recently toyed with the idea of extending one of the corner outer wall towers to 250 feet, a whimsical response to a local zoning official who told him he couldn’t build over 25 feet—he simply added a zero..



Top: Jim and his wife Phoebe, who passed in 2019.
Bottom: The Castle with the Dragon lit. (Courtesy of Courtney B.)

Jim confidently envisioned the tower reaching even greater heights. Wooden forms on the second floor soon made way for ornamental iron forms in the arches, showcasing some of the most precise examples of geometry in the castle. The most magnificent feature, however, is the inner roof support trusses and the main central arch. These elements are so intricately detailed yet massively functional that it’s astounding to think they are the work of just one pair of hands. Everywhere one looks, there is something to marvel at, such as the hand railing ascending the southwest corner, named Roy’s Tower. Its bizarre twists and turns, all hammered cold into a highly customized shape, are a testament to the extraordinary craftsmanship at play.

The Dream Defined

As the castle expanded over the years, it gained increasing attention, drawing more visitors to this mountainous phenomenon. Friends suggested that Jim should capitalize on the growing attraction. However, Jim had a different perspective. He remembered his own childhood frustrations of being unable to afford visits to the zoo or ballpark due to high admission costs for a working-class family. Since the initial inspiration for the castle came from people visiting the property, Jim decided to welcome visitors for free. He placed a donation box on the property, allowing people to contribute whatever amount they felt comfortable with. This honor system became the project’s financier, reinforcing Jim’s belief that the castle was a symbol of American freedom. He felt that his

vision. He felt so strongly about maintaining the integrity of his dream that he legally documented that Bishop Castle would always remain free to the public. This commitment to the ideals of a free country, composed of free individuals, fueled his passion for building the castle as a tangible, awe-inspiring representation of the American Dream.

Financial Mechanics of Building

After eight years of diligent paperwork, completed without a lawyer’s assistance, Jim’s wife Phoebe achieved what many had deemed impossible. In 1984, she successfully obtained a 501(c)(3) non-profit charter from the IRS, enabling the creation of the Bishop Castle Non-Profit Charitable Foundation for Newborn Heart Surgery. This achievement formalized the castle’s ability to set up and maintain a donation box on the premises, which became a key funding source for its construction. Additionally, Phoebe established the first gift shop in a one-room log cabin, built by the family across the courtyard from the castle, and she managed it for 13 years. The combined proceeds from the gift shop and the donation box were crucial for purchasing materials for ongoing construction. Although the management of the gift shop has changed hands twice since Phoebe stepped down, both the shop and the donation box remain the primary financial sources for the Bishop Castle’s construction.

The charity established by the family aims to assist local families

WELD COUNTY
from page 15

oil and gas, and said yes to checks and balances.”

The Libertarian Party also played a large role in the other two close-call races. In House District 19, which straddles Weld and Boulder counties, the Libertarian party also chose to support Woog and did not run a candidate. Woog, who was the incumbent in 2022, lost to Jennifer Parenti, with the Libertarian drawing 1,168 votes.

This time around, Woog won the battle by 121 votes over Democrat Jillaire McMillan (Parenti chose not to run for reelection).

Woog said winning these seats back was important to restore order to Colorado.

“It was important for me to come back to the state legislature because it has never been more clear to me how important it is for the Republican Party to start winning seats back and bring some balance to the state,” Woog said. “The Democrats have been in full control with the Senate, House and governor’s office and created an extremely high cost of living, with burdensome regulation and spending.”

And in Congressional District 8, the US House of Representatives race, the Libertarian Party initially ran a candidate, but he dropped out just before ballots were printed, endorsing Evans, who eventually won by over 2,400 votes.

Flipping a state board seat

But it was the outcome in the State Board of Education race in CD8 that may have been the biggest surprise victory in the county.

In 2022, Weld County Democrat Rhonda Solis beat her Republican candidate by just 1,951 votes, losing her home county of Weld, where she could not draw the endorsement of most of her fellow school board members or high-up party leaders. And in that race, an American Constitution Party candidate, who was considered to be

even more conservative than the Republican Peggy Probst, took 5,367 votes.

This time around Solis still only garnered the endorsement of two former colleagues but was beat by Navarro overwhelmingly — more than 16,000 votes and 5 percentage points. Ironically, Navarro had lost a race for a board of education seat in Loveland’s Thompson School District just one year earlier.

“I met with Yazmin, and I thought ‘man this young woman can win,’” Kirkmeyer said. “She’s got the right story. She’s very sincere. She’s authentic.”

Gonzalez said much of the credit has to go to Kirkmeyer and the Weld County Republican Party.

“She was an instrumental piece of our success,” Gonzalez said, adding the Weld County GOP’s efforts to rally volunteers and donations was also paramount to the candidates’ success. “... Weld County is in fact the true freedom model for the rest of Colorado.”

Kirkmeyer agreed. She said the candidates and other volunteers worked together to make sure they all had what they needed to be successful. Candidates who didn’t have a primary, worked for candidates who did, and vice versa in the general.

“We covered more territory, and all just worked together,” she said. “We are the face of the Republican Party. This is what the Republican Party looks like. It’s women; it’s Hispanics; it’s businessmen; it’s farmers, a former school administrator, former school principal. We got a great group of individuals that are all working together and delivering the same messages. We brought home a message that speaks to the general population of our state.”

(Editor/GG: The Weld County Republican Party is a shining example of coming together, team work, and great leadership. When that happens, we can beat anybody.)

Please see: <https://pagetwo.complete-colorado.com/2024/11/22/voters-paint-weld-county-solidly-red-five-seats/>

PLYMOUTH
from page 1

England—not feigned but true reports.”

One of those true reports is found in “Mourt’s Relation” by Pilgrim Edward Winslow – the ONLY historic account of the first “Thanksgiving.”

Winslow writes: “our harvest being gotten in, our governor sent four men on fowling, that so we might after a special manner rejoice together, after we had gathered the fruits of our labors...at which time amongst other recreations, we exercised our Arms, many of the Indians coming amongst us, and amongst the rest their greatest king Massasoit, with some ninety men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted, and they went out and killed five deer, which they brought to the Plantation and bestowed on our Governor, and upon the Captain and others.”



Winslow concluded, “And although it be not always so plentiful, as it was at this time with us, yet by the goodness of God, we are so far from want, that we often wish you partakers of our plenty.” Thanks to the godly men and women who came before us, even in our decline we remain blessed more than any other

nation on earth. Jeremiah 4:2 says that if God’s people return to Him, “And thou shalt swear, The Lord lives, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; and the nations shall bless themselves in Him, and in Him shall they glory.” This is a promise to the nations. This Thanksgiving may you have a Psalm 103:2 day, “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.”

Don’t let [the] anti-God academics spoil your joy in the Lord by their divisive and destructive lies aimed at destroying our nation.

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Governor Bradford’s house many years later. (1892 Block Print)





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