

Sludge-Be-Gone

Round Mountain Water’s Sludge Disposal Plan Fertilizes Hay Fields

by George Gramlich

Early this week the *Sentinel* received a whole bunch of inquiries concerning a proposed sludge disposal plan for Round Mountain Water & Sanitation District’s waste treatment project. The district wants to dispose of the dry sludge from its sediment/containment ponds as fertilizer on a local ranch. The inquiries mostly regarded possible soil contamination, especially with “forever chemicals” (often referred to as PFAS chemicals (per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances)).

The issue is about disposing

of the dry sludge found at the bottom of the sediment treatment ponds at Round Mountain’s waste treatment facility. The dry sludge must be removed so that the ponds can be refurbished for Round Mountain’s new revolutionary treatment process that they want to install. (The project has just been approved by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE)). Construction of the infrastructure for the new process is tentatively scheduled for mid-summer, and if everything goes all right, the new plant could go online in the fall. (Dave Schneider, Round

Mountain’s Director, is the man behind installing this low cost, low tech, electrical coagulation process. This system can process the wastewater effluent at a fraction of the cost of traditional methods. Dozens of other Colorado counties and municipalities are facing the same problem we are; traditional waste treatment processes, as mandated by CDPHE, are not fiscally possible for small tax based entities. Dave has worked with CDPHE for years trying to get them to approve of this new technology and he has finally got it done. (It is truly revolutionary.)

To find out the facts of the situation, we went over and talked to Dave. He said Round Mountain has contracted with a firm in Fort Lupton, Colorado, Denali Water Solutions (DWS), to dispose of the sludge. In turn, DWS has contracted with a Colorado rancher out of Pueblo, Joseph Knopf, who owns a large tract of pasture in the Valley, to dispose of the sludge on his land as it is considered outstanding fertilizer. The land Mr. Knopf will be applying the sludge to is a section of a larger lot. Mr. Knopf hays that lot.

Denali has approached Custer County Planning & Zoning with details of the plan to apply the dry sludge/fertilizer to the local hay field in the Valley. Denali has had the sludge tested for everything that Colorado and the Feds require, including PFAS chemicals. This has been done at least four times in recent months and according to Dave, the sludge has passed all the tests easily. Thus, it is good fertilizer. Denali will also comply with all state setback requirements, e.g., from water sources, buildings, roads, etc.

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Medal of Honor Recipient

Robert Howard

Only Soldier Nominated for MOH Three Times

by Katie Lange,
U.S. Department of Defense

Army Col. Robert Lewis Howard was a legend for his service in the Special Forces during the Vietnam War. Having deployed there five times, he’s the most decorated soldier to have served in the conflict and is the only soldier to have been nominated three times for the Medal of Honor.



Army 1st Lt. Robert Lewis Howard, Medal of Honor recipient.

Army photo

Howard was born July 11, 1939, in Opelika, Alabama, to Charles and Martha Howard. His father was drafted into World War II when he was very young, and his mother

worked in a textile mill to aid in the war effort, so he and his sister were largely raised by their grandmother for the first several years of his life.

Howard’s father and one of his uncles were paratroopers in the famed 101st Airborne Division, so he grew up hearing their stories, which inspired him to serve. On July 20, 1956, the 17 year old enlisted in the Army a month after graduating high school.

For several years, Howard worked his way up the ranks and even earned an associate degree in business administration from the University of Maryland in 1962.

Howard was sent on his first deployment to Vietnam with the 101st, his father’s former unit, in 1965. After being injured in battle, he was recruited to the Special Forces, which he did missions for until his yearlong deployment was finished, and he returned home for Special Forces training. Howard earned the Ranger tab and eventually became a Green Beret.

Howard returned to Vietnam four more times, mostly doing Special Forces work with the

HOWARD see page 23

Round Mountain Water

Progress

Projects and Accomplishments

by Fred Hernandez

A meeting with Round Mountain District Manager Dave Schneider was convened on March 3, 2025, to receive an update on the status of some of their ongoing projects. For an hour and a half Dave, in esoteric and highly technical language, explained the details of Round Mountain’s various projects. In the interest of quicker understanding for non-experts and general clarity of the information we translated, as best we could, the complex narrative into readily acceptable layman’s terms:

Project #1 Water Meters

All the “ancient” water meters have been replaced. The new system (AMI), Advanced Metering Infrastructure, utilizes Ultrasonic Smart Meters. This state of the art, high technology meter “communicates” hourly to the computers at the office of Round Mountain and to the cell phones of their team members transmitting from the AT&T tower close to the Sheriff’s Office. The metering system is monitored and managed with software known as Aquahawk. With this powerful combination of high-tech equipment Round Mountain receives critical information heretofore not available including such amazing details as the volume of water flowing through each tap in the network, how fast or how slow the water is flowing, the temperature of the water and it will send an

alert if there is an uptick in the flow or no flow at all. It is now possible to save hundreds of thousands of gallons of water, an achievement not possible in the past. As an example, when snowbirds are absent from their homes and a leak occurs there was no way to tell until the end of the month when the meter was read and by that time a great volume of water was lost. With this new equipment, the office is alerted within the hour. Only a handful of counties in the state are this well equipped. This is quite an accomplishment by Round Mountain Water and Sanitation District.

Project #2 Wastewater

Project Number Two which is currently on the table, is the ongoing work to upgrade the wastewater treatment plant to meet state standards. The cost of the state’s requirements was prohibitive, and District Manager Dave Schneider went shopping for something more affordable. From a company called Powell Water Systems, Inc. with forty years experience in water treatment he learned of the ElectroCoagulation System which he presented to the state. The whole approval process which went on for quite a while was an uphill battle with the state and with the Department of Local Affairs who would provide

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Kill Gun Background Checks
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But you, O LORD,
reign forever;
Your Throne endures to
all generations.
Lamentations 5:19
ESV

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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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Colorado Dems Advance Semi-Auto Ban in Late Night Committee Vote

By Cam Edwards,
BearingArms.com

SB 3, the sweeping gun control bill that would outlaw the purchase and possession of almost every semi-automatic long gun on the market in Colorado unless buyers jump through several state-mandated hoops, is one step closer to becoming law after a House committee voted to approve the measure late Tuesday night.

The House Judiciary Committee heard hours of testimony before adopting the bill on a 7-4 vote, with opponents declaring the bill unnecessary and unconstitutional, while supporters deployed their usual rhetoric about "weapons of war" not being suited for civilian uses.

"This bill is about recognizing the deadly reality of modern-day mass shootings and doing everything in our power to prevent them," said one student from East High School, who spoke about their own first-hand experience while encountering violence at the school.

The legislation includes a provision allowing individuals to purchase otherwise restricted firearms if they complete safety courses through Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), a requirement opponents labeled as unnecessarily bureaucratic.

To purchase a semiautomatic weapon that falls under the bill, an individual would have to complete multiple in-person courses including a hunter education course with CPW within five years of the purchase. The bill also requires an extended firearms safety course.

"I also agree that you shouldn't have to get approval from the state of Colorado or local government to take a class and pay fees to exercise your God-given, constitutional right," said Douglas County Sheriff Darren Weekly, who testified against the bill Tuesday. "This will not stop murder. It will not stop a mass shooting. It will not stop suicides for those who are committed to ending your own life."

Gun shop owners reported seeing a surge in sales as the legislation advances. Opponents said the bill would hurt the firearm industry in Colorado.

"We are seeing first-time buyers and longtime owners in anticipation of those laws," said David Grasso, Co-Owner of the Gallery Sportsman's Club & Range.

Grasso urged lawmakers to consider alternatives, saying, "We all want a safer community. Instead of passing ineffective laws, we should be having a real conversation about common sense solutions that actually improve public safety."

Amber Estes countered in favor of the bill, stating, "This is a level of firepower that a civilian does not need access to."

The anti-gun rhetoric doesn't match the reality of the legislation, but that doesn't seem to matter to the lawmakers or the gun control advocates pushing for SB 3's adoption. If Estes truly believes that semi-automatic rifles should be banned, then why on earth would she testify in support of the legislation? In its original form the bill did indeed prohibit the sale of gas-operated semi-automatic firearms capable of accepting a detachable magazine for everyone except law enforcement, but Senate Democrats modified the bill after discussions with Gov. Jared Polis' office.

After being revised to allow anyone who undergoes additional training to continue to purchase and possess these firearms, it's probably more accurate to describe SB 3 (at least in its current form) as a permit-to-purchase measure. Civilians will still have access to this "level of firepower" if SB 3 becomes law, and ironically those who can legally purchase semi-automatic long guns will have more training on the use of the firearms; ostensibly making them better shots, or at least more comfortable handling and using their rifle or shotgun.

As the Douglas County sheriff testified, SB 3 won't stop a single mass shooting. What it will do is make it harder for Coloradans to purchase and possess the most popular rifles and shotguns in the country. Keep in mind that the legislation prohibits "knowingly manufacturing, distributing, transferring, selling, or purchasing" gas-operated semi-automatics that can accept a detachable magazine. It doesn't actually ban the possession of those guns, and since under federal law long guns can be purchased out-of-state without having to be transferred to an in-state FFL, Coloradans can always head to neighboring states like Wyoming, Nebraska, Kansas, Utah, or Arizona to buy their AR-15s in the future.

Now, it's entirely possible that if/when SB 3 becomes law, the anti-2A forces at the statehouse will go back and revise the measure in future sessions, perhaps even returning it to its original form and including a ban on possession of these modern sporting rifles as well. Gun owners should see SB 3 as just the first step in completely prohibiting semi-automatic rifles and shotguns; an infringement in its own right, but not the end game for the anti-gunners.

Editor/GG: The bill now goes to another House committee. Eventually to the House again for a vote. If any amendments are added, it has to go back to the Senate. This is what fascism is, folks. Arm up. Ammo up. Train up.)

Please see: <https://bearingarms.com/camedwards/2025/03/12/colorado-dems-advance-semi-auto-ban-in-late-night-committee-vote-n1227944>

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SALIDA STOVE and SPA

A Successful Family Owned Business

by Fred Hernandez

With all the hype of America's big business and constant exposure through heavy national advertising the paramount importance of small business is lost. Make no mistake, however, small business definitely drives the U.S. economy and keeps the American dream alive and well. Believe it or not, small business enterprises with five hundred employees or less account for ninety-nine (99%) percent of all U.S. businesses. These are the organizations that provide most of the jobs and funnel money back into communities in every state. Let us also not forget big businesses started small.

In the Salida and Poncha Springs area one such business is Salida Stove and Spa, a very successful enterprise owned and operated by the Neppel family. Jim and Janelle established the company almost three decades ago as a cow sales barn and feed store in 1996 that morphed into a heating stove and spa arena. They moved the business once before, settling on their present location where they have been for the last seven years. The large showroom has a cozy, friendly ambiance where customers can roam around at their leisure with no pressure from anyone.

The extensive variety of spas and hot tubs of every size and configuration will satisfy most buyers' needs and budgets. There are sauna rooms

for two, four, six or more, built of fragrant wood wherein one can enjoy the amazing benefits of infrared light “therapy”. Consider the healing advantages of detoxification; heat raises the temperature of the body producing profuse perspiration which promotes increased blood flow to the organs, all within twenty minutes. It heightens mental performance by improving connectivity in the brain. It releases natural growth hormones, rejuvenates skin by boosting collagen, relieves pain, reduces stress and contributes to weight loss and longevity.

In their line of wood, pellet and gas stoves the selection is just as extensive. Their main supplier is a company called LOPI whose motto is simply "North America's Favorite Fire". Forty years of solid craftsmanship, reliable performance and unbeatable heating efficiency has been the winning combination of this Mukilteo, Washington, based enterprise committed to customer satisfaction.

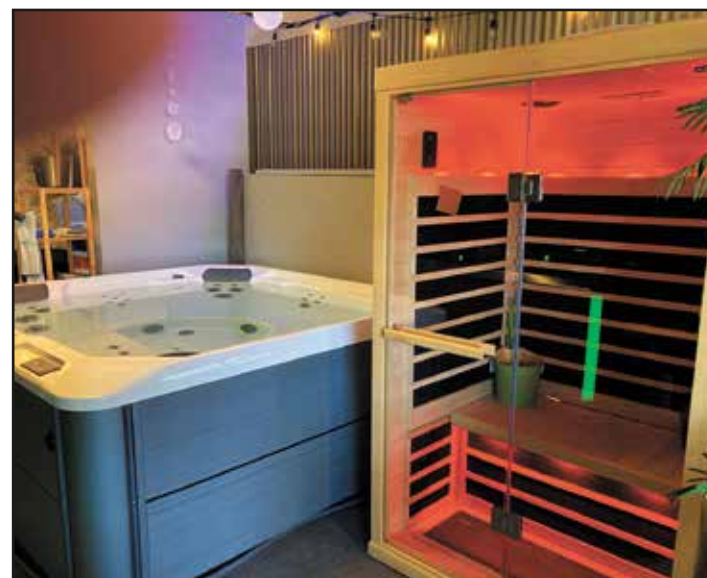
Truly a family enterprise, all its members are involved in the operation and management of the business. The sons, (Nathan and Colton) are the installers of the stoves and the spas and the rest of the family handle the administrative tasks.

The store offers all the accessories one would need

at home including brand name jeans, plush towels, a wide selection of wall art/decor and designer jewelry, candles and soaps.

Out in the parking lot there is a wide selection of outdoor furniture in every color of the rainbow. You will also find the big "barrel" rooms made of fine timber which are the sauna rooms for six individuals. These are generally installed in the backyard of homes. This is the place for all your needs when it comes to stoves and spas. A well run, family owned and operated business that any community would be proud and happy to have. Visit Salida Stove and Spa at 11130 W. Hwy 50 in Salida/Poncha Springs. At the end of Hwy 50 turn right on Hwy 285 and find them at the next light on the left.

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A composite of two photographs. The left photo shows a woman standing next to a Lopi wood stove in a room with large windows overlooking a mountain landscape at dusk. The right photo shows a child sitting on a rug reading a book next to a Lopi wood stove in a rustic stone fireplace setting.

The Lopi logo, which is an oval shape with a red border. Inside, it says "NORTH AMERICA'S Favorite Fire" around the top and bottom edges, and "Lopi." in a stylized script font in the center.

FIREPLACE
XTRORDINAIR

A composite of two photographs showing different fireplace styles. The left photo features a brick fireplace with a wooden mantel and a deer head sculpture above the opening. The right photo shows a stone fireplace with a built-in Lopi wood stove insert.

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Local Mountain News & Notices

Excerpt from Custer County Public Health

The best way to protect yourself is through vaccination. The MMR vaccine is highly effective in preventing measles, providing about 93% protection after one dose and about 97% protection after two doses. The MMR vaccine is available for no or low-cost at CCPHA, doctor’s offices, and some pharmacies.

For non-vaccinating individuals & families, we encourage you to check your travel destinations and/or if you have travelers visiting you at the CDC’s Measles Cases and Outbreaks webpage. If you are traveling internationally, check the CDC’s Global Measles Travel Health webpage.

If unsure of your vaccination status or have other measles related questions, call the Custer County Public Health Agency (719-783-3369).

New Custer County Assistant Veteran Service Officer

Press Release from the Custer County Veteran Service Office

—Marach 7, 2025

I wanted to take a second to introduce the new Custer County Assistant Veteran Service Officer, Cortney Shank.

Cortney is a proud Westcliffe native and a proud 21 year USAF veteran/retiree. Her career field in the US Air Force was Traffic Management Office (TMO) and she also served as a First Sergeant. Her active duty experiences have helped shape her for this role; networking and seeking out additional resources are both critical components to supporting our veterans and their families.

“I’m thrilled to have the opportunity to not only support my community, but do it by helping those that made it possible for me to serve.” she said.

Cortney is currently trying to get through her initial state/federal training to garner access to systems, and become a fully accredited representative. Once completed, she will primarily be taking on initial intakes so [VSO Dominic Edginton] can focus more heavily on claims. Courtney



will eventually start taking on claims of her own. Her office hours will be Monday and Tuesday 8 a.m.-4 p.m. by appointment, and Wednesday 8 a.m.-12 p.m (Wednesday morning is veterans coffee followed by a statewide CVSO huddle).

VSO Dominic Edginton remarked “I am grateful that the BOCC recognized the need for the additional support and I am confident that Cortney will be an amazing asset to the Custer County veterans community.”

Education Legacy Fund Announces \$250,000 Endowment Donation

Press Release
The Education Legacy Fund

The Education Legacy Fund is proud to announce a \$250,000 donation as seed money for an endowment fund. This launches a fund-raising campaign for an

endowment to continue supporting breakthrough educational endeavors in the Valley.

This donation, in addition to the generous support via the Community Foundation Spirit Campaign, reflects the value our local community places on education.

The Education Legacy Fund supports all students in the valley, including homeschoolers and educational institutions. We are grateful to all of our donors who make this possible!

For more information visit our website: ELFCC.ORG.



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Event with the
Co-responders"

Tom Manzione, Ph.D. &
Jaclyn Manzione, M.S.

Tues., March 25th
Noon - 1 p.m.

West Custer County Library
Community Room

GUEST SPEAKERS

Tom Manzione, Ph.D.
Jaclyn Manzione, M. S.

TOPIC:
COGNITIVE
DISSONANCE

Have you ever felt a little dazed & confused? It's pretty common! People generally like to have their beliefs and feelings lined up, so when they don't match, it can make us feel uneasy. This tricky feeling is called cognitive dissonance-it's what happens when we hold two different beliefs or values at the same time. Come join us to learn more!

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Boulder On High ‘Smug Alert’ Over Trump’s NOAA Layoffs

by Jon Caldara,
CompleteColorado.com

Losing your job sucks.

We all empathize with people who get laid off, as we should, including the formerly untouchable federal government workers.

What was it Ronald Reagan once said? “A recession is when your neighbor loses his job; a depression is when you lose yours.”

I’m guessing you’ve lost a job or two to layoffs, reorganization, or economic changes. I sure have, because that’s what happens in the private sector, all the time.

As painful as it is, might federal workers be getting the adulating they need? Could it possibly help them empathize with the private workers their regulations, mandates, bureaucracy, and taxes have made unemployed?

In my elitist hometown of Boulder, where an absurd percentage of people make their money from government jobs or contracts, there is an entitled sense that pedestrian worries like “job security” are for the little people, not the sanctified, command-and-control class.

Smug alert in Boulder

Last week’s nearly all-white public temper tantrum on the lawn of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s prime real estate drew an estimated 1,000 people to virtue

signal their superiority more so than protest layoffs.

Interesting NOAA doesn’t headquarter on much cheaper land in a much less expensive town. If they were in Lamar, what would the demonstration look like?

From its mountaintop perch overlooking Brazil’s Rio de Janeiro is the 100-foot-high Jesus statue “Christ the Redeemer.” Boulder has a similarly worshiped religious icon perched above the city. Nestled in front of the majestic Flatirons is the pink cement slab building of the National Center for Atmospheric Research, NCAR.

No other buildings are allowed on our precious open space except this huge edifice to government. If its sign said “Exxon,” instead of “NCAR,” Boulder mobs would tear it down so the land could return to nature. But we don’t mess with religious symbols.

What struck me about the NOAA protest was the pure elitism of its messaging. They seemed completely unaware, as all of Boulder is, it reeked of “we are the educated, credentialed class and without us you riffraff would be lost.”

Here’s a quick sampling of the handheld placards waved, see if you can spot a theme:

Hands off science! Trust science! Support science! Respect science! Stand for science! You

can’t fire science! Science makes America great! Science = real!

Subtle, ain’t it.

We got it, Boulder. Scientists are the high priests of your faith. And we have absolutely no right to demand a better return on their work.

A false dichotomy

These signs drip with the self-importance of the social engineering class, removed from reality of where the money that feeds them comes from. They have become an overfed entitlement class of their own.

Scientists are supposed to be good with numbers. I mean, after all, they’re not journalists. Since 1950, our population has a bit more than doubled, but government employment has gone up nearly five-fold. What’s the science behind that?

Given our debt is at a never-before-seen 120% of GDP, their jobs are paid with money borrowed from our great grandkids. Doesn’t the science say there has to be a reckoning?

Doesn’t science say the sooner we tackle unbridled government spending the less pain there will be?

Like the well-spoken elite who populate Hollywood, academia and the legacy media like NPR, these people have no realization they are the reason President Donald Trump was overwhelmingly reelected. They

SLUDGE from page 1

Round Mountain is paying Denali \$300,000 to dispose of the sludge at Mr. Knopf’s ranch. (The cost is very low due to the short distance to the dispersal site.) Dave said that if they can’t use Mr. Knopf’s ranch, and the sludge has to go out-of-county, the cost would skyrocket to \$1.5 to \$2.0 Million! Dave noted that Round Mountain does not have the money for that (not even close) and if that was the only option, the project would probably have to be canceled and Custer County would be in serious trouble with CDPHE as our current waste treatment is obsolete and out-of-compliance. This would also halt any new customers for Round Mountain.

In other words, a total disaster.

We talked to Commissioner Bill Canda about this and he was aware of it. (Bill lives near the application site.) Canda said that no Special Use Permit would be needed as it is a fertilizer application which ranchers do all the time with various companies that supply solid and liquid fertilizer to increase hay production. Bill noted that fertilizer application is a standard, non-regulated ranching/farming practice.

We will have to see how this plays out with P&Z, as the source fertilizer is a bit different than commercially prepared solid and liquid fertilizers. However, since it has been repeatedly tested and passed all standards, there shouldn’t be a problem.

The bottom line is that Round Mountain needs to use Denali, and a local ranch, to dispose of this pond sludge for it to go forward with its “last hope” waste treatment project due to the cost of having it dispersed out of county.

Folks, if we don’t get this done, we could be in big trouble financially.

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Matt Troyer: 719-221-8940

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Custer Senior Center Menu

Monday, March 17

#39 Corned Beef Brisket

Parsley Buttered New Potatoes

Cabbage & Carrots

Spinach Salad w/Mandarin Oranges

Apple

Tuesday, March 18

#22 Chicken a la King

Green Peas

Salad w/Lite Ranch

Raisin Nut Cup

Orange

Thursday, March 20

#51 Hot Turkey Sandwich

Whipped Potatoes

Asparagus Amandine

Pineapple Mandarin Compote

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 mo. mtg (year-round) 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 Mtg @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 @Sangre
de Cristo Fellowship, 120 Jerry Dr. Westcliffe. Holly
703-338-4100 or Rene at 719-371-7076

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



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CCSO Co-Responders' Corner

Mind-Bending Maneuverability

by Jaclyn & Tom Manzione

Mental flexibility is an important mental skill that allows people to adjust to changes, solve problems in creative ways, and view situations from multiple angles. This capability is critical for making sound decisions, managing emotions, and learning effectively. Commonly known as cognitive flexibility, it refers to the brain’s ability to transition between different thoughts, adapt to new circumstances, and tackle challenges from various approaches. Mental flexibility helps us respond to unforeseen challenges and encourages creative thinking beyond rigid mental patterns.

Intellectual flexibility is a vital skill that allows individuals to recognize and value a range of beliefs, ideas, and perspectives. It enables a deeper understanding of various viewpoints and encourages respect for differing opinions. This willingness to consider alternative perspectives not only promotes a greater comprehension of diverse opinions but also boosts the ability to empathize. Consequently, cognitive flexibility is important for enhancing social interactions and

creating more significant connections with others.

Cerebral flexibility is a crucial quality that allows people to adjust to changes that arise during a task, facilitating the creation of more effective options. This ability promotes the idea that life does not have to adhere to a set storyline, indicating that straying from it does not impede one’s chances for success or fulfillment.

Mental flexibility is essential for both the public and law enforcement officers. It allows them to adapt to changing circumstances, make quick decisions, and maintain emotional resilience in high-pressure situations.

Sheriff Smith promotes adaptability by empowering his deputies to act as “agents of change,” highlighting their role in creating innovative solutions for community challenges. By incorporating deputies as change agents in the planning and execution of law enforcement strategies tailored to the community’s unique needs, law enforcement can enhance its credibility significantly. A notable method in this regard is commonly known as problem-oriented policing.

This approach concentrates on pinpointing and tackling specific issues within the community through cooperative efforts between the citizenry and law enforcement.

Deputies serve as catalysts for transformation by exploring new methods to engage with our community. They collaborate with the public to comprehend and address the fundamental causes of criminal behavior. This strategy fosters support for creative solutions and results in meaningful change by leveraging the insights and experiences of deputies engaged in the reform initiative.

In our fast-paced and demanding world, it has become more emergent for both the public and law enforcement personnel to develop the capability of mental flexibility. This skill, which allows individuals to adjust their thoughts and actions based on new information or evolving situations, is vital for successful communication and resolving issues. We invite you to adopt an adaptable and agile mindset in your thinking!

Co-responders are available to assist at CCSO 719-783-2270 Option 1.

Come and Worship

Christian Science 9:30 a.m. Worship <i>8 Bassick Place, Westcliffe</i> Church of Christ 9:30 a.m. Bible Study 10:30 a.m. Worship <i>818 Ohio Street, Silver Cliff</i> 719/783-4601 Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints <i>240 Ridgeline Dr, Westcliffe</i> 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 <i>0157 County Rd. 27A</i> Cotopaxi 719/942-3526 Community United Methodist Church 8 a.m. & 10 a.m. Worship <i>202 S. 6th Street, Westcliffe</i> 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 <i>20326 Hwy. 50, Cotopaxi</i>	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 <i>410 S. 6th Street, Westcliffe</i> Pastor Josh Olsteen 719/783-2498 High Country Mennonite Church 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:45 a.m. Sunday School <i>103 N. Adams St, Westcliffe</i> 719/783-9045 Huerfano Community Bible Church 10:30 a.m. Sunday Worship 7 p.m.: Thursday Bible Study <i>603 Leon Street, Walsenburg</i> (719) 251-9053 Hope Lutheran Church 2 p.m. Worship 3:15 p.m. Bible Study <i>3rd & Powell Streets, Westcliffe</i> 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. <i>830 Bridge St., Canon City, CO</i> Pastor Sean Meagher 719/276-0863	Our Lady of the Assumption Roman Catholic Church <i>Diocese of Pueblo</i> 11 a.m. Sunday Mass 10 a.m. (2nd Tuesday of month) Mass 10 a.m. Wednesday Mass 5:30 p.m. Thursday Mass <i>109 S. 5th Street, Westcliffe</i> 719/783-3507 Our Lady of Mt. Zion Catholic Church 11 a.m. Mass, 2nd & 3rd Sunday of month <i>210 S. 2nd St, Westcliffe</i> 719/783-2491 Praise Community Church Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Praise & Worship 10:45 a.m. <i>215 N Pikes Peak Ave. , Florence</i> 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 <i>3rd & Rosita Streets, Westcliffe</i> 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 <i>Diocese of Pueblo</i> Saturday Mass 4 p.m. Highway 69, Gardner Bldg. Mickey. 719/746-2037	Sangre de Cristo Cowboy Church <i>Pastor: Mike Shields</i> 10 a.m. Sunday School Bible Study 11 a.m. Worship Last Sunday of Month: Potluck at Noon sangredecristocowboychurch.com also on Facebook <i>60260 Hwy 69, Westcliffe</i> 719/232-5372 Sangre de Cristo Fellowship 9 a.m. Meet & Greet 9:30 a.m. Service <i>120 Jerry Drive, Westcliffe</i> 719/783-0903 Sangre de Cristo Seminary Chapel 10 a.m. Worship <i>6160 County Rd. 130, Westcliffe</i> 719/ 371-1822 Valley Bible Fellowship 10 a.m. Worship <i>116 Hermit Lane, Silver Cliff</i> 719/581-7572 Wetmore Baptist Church 9:45 a.m. Sunday School 10:45 a.m. Worship 6 p.m. Worship <i>Junction of Hwy 96 & 67, Wetmore</i> 719/371-1230 Wetmore Community Church 9 a.m. Sunday School 10 a.m. Worship <i>699 County Rd. 395, Wetmore</i> 719/784-0596
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Send Church updates to sdc.sentinel@gmail.com
(719) 783-3360

Jesus said:

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.
I give them eternal life, and they will never perish,
and no one will snatch them out of My hand.
My Father, who has given them to Me,[fn] is greater than all, and
no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand.
I and the Father are one.”
John 10: 27-30 ESV

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MARCH SCHEDULE

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Courthouse Bldg. (Rosita Rd. Entrance)

West Custer County Library
209 Main Street Westcliffe, CO 81252
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Saturday: 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

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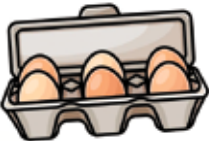
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The deadline for getting your information into the Classifieds is Monday at 4 p.m. for that week's edition.

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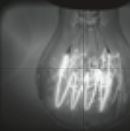
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Events

March 14, PI Day Fundrasier
Pie(s) available for purchase on 3/14 in the Community Rm.
West Custer County Library

March 15, 8 a.m. Valley Bible Fellowship
Men's Breakfast Open to all Men of the Community, 116 Hermit Lane, Silver Cliff

March 15, 1 p.m. Post Office Ranch Bull Sale
Chaffee County Fairgrounds, Poncha Springs

March 19th, 1 to 5 p.m. Musical Instrument Petting Party.. This hands-on event ages 6-99. Library Community Room

March 22, 12-2 p.m. \$25 to enter \$15 to Taste
Chili Cookoff Fundraiser for American Legion, Lange Hall, 312 S. 3rd Street, Westcliffe. **To Register:** Christy Schram call/text: (513) 317-7647 or email: armychic21t@gmail.com

Local Mountain News & Notices



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Tony's MVP's Receive Gift Cards



Reagan Shank
MVP - Cotopaxi game

Trinity Downing
MVP - League Tournament

Each MVP with Tony's Pizza owner, Johnny Winton Photos by Lea Grundy



Chris Mullet
MVP - Cotopaxi game & League Tournament

Creed Ingram
MVP - League Tournament

Tony's Player of the Week

Lily Bomgardner was chosen as our athlete of the week for HS Track and Field. She exhibited true leadership while persevering through adversity. She encouraged and cheered for her teammates even when she was not competing in the event she wanted. Track is all about setting goals for yourself and striving to achieve those goals, but when you fall short it can be extremely frustrating. Lily was disappointed in not reaching what she set for herself, but she looked beyond herself to be an enthusiastic teammate! We are very proud of her!



St. Patricks Day Essay Contest \$100 1st Prize Deadline March 17— see page 17

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will.

Romans 12: 1-2 NIV

KIDS Friday, March 14, 2025 St. Patrick's Day

In a few days we will be eating corned beef and cabbage and maybe even drinking green beer and wearing of the green. Why do we celebrate St. Patrick's Day and who exactly was St. Patrick. That is the topic for this week's article.

Let's get started, St. Patrick was not Irish, he was born in Great Britain and it is believed to have died on March 17, around 460 A.D. While the exact date and place of his birth is still debated the general consensus is that he was born in Roman Britain, which included present-day England, Scotland and Wales. He was raised in a Christian family but his faith did not play a big part in his life at that time.



Approximately at the age of 16 he was captured by Irish pirates and taken to Ireland as a slave. During his captivity, he was forced to work as a shepherd and endured harsh conditions. It was during this time that his faith was rekindled and grew stronger. After six years of captivity, he had a dream that urged him to escape to Britain, and so he followed this urge, managed to escape and returned to Britain. It was then that he dedicated himself to the study of Christianity and became a priest. He then felt called to spread the teachings of Christianity, especially to those who had held him captive. He returned to Ireland as a missionary, and spread the Word, establishing churches, building monasteries and ordaining priests.

Now, he is the patron saint of Ireland. St. Patrick's Day is a day for people to come together and celebrate their Irish pride. It is celebrated with parades, music, dancing and wearing green attire. There are many traditions associated with St. Patrick's Day the most known symbol is the shamrock which he used to explain the concept of the Trinity to the people. According to legend, St. Patrick used the three leaves of the shamrock to represent the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit – three distinct entities that are united as one divine being.

St. Patrick's life, work and teachings continue to captivate people around the world. His story is one of inspiration, resilience and faith. His legacy is celebrated not only in Ireland but also across the globe.

by Audrey Slater. Sources: <https://www.history.com/topics/st-patricks-day/who-was-saint-patrick>, <https://the-irish-parlor.com/who-was-st-patrick-and-why-is-he-celebrated/> Postcard By Ellen H. Clapsaddle - Missouri History Museum, see : <http://images.mohistory.org/image/81E91440-5B04-CC19-811C-9B7008D6D88B/original.jpg>

Sangre de Cristo Sentinel • Westcliffe, Colorado

CORNER

Custer County School District C-1 WEEK of March 17 thru March 20 2025		
	Breakfast	Lunch
	Cereal Oatmeal Mixed Fruit, Yogurt Milk	Reubens Roasted Potatoes, Carrots Fruit Choice of Milk
Tuesday	Breakfast Sandwich Yogurt Fruit Choice of Milk	Carnitas Rice, Corn Sante Fe Egg Roll Fruit Choice of Milk
Wednesday	Breakfast Burrito Yogurt Fruit Choice of Milk	Lasagna Salad Choice of Milk
Thursday	Biscuits and Gravy Fruit Choice of Milk	Pork Stir fry, Raman Noodles Egg Roll Fruit Choice of Milk

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

Local Mountain News & Notices

Musical Instrument Party

Experience Music Up Close at the High Mountain Hay Fever and West Custer County Library “Musical Instrument Petting Party”

Press Release
Join us for a hands-on musical instrument experience to celebrate a new community program!

Westcliffe, CO – (March 19) – Get ready to bow a fiddle, pluck a guitar, strum a ukulele, and pick a banjo at the High Mountain Hay Fever and West Custer County Library’s **Musical Instrument Petting Party** on **March 19th, from 1 to 5 p.m.** This hands-on event, taking place in the **Library’s Community Room**, is a unique opportunity for kids of all ages– from 6 to 99 –to explore a variety of musical instruments and learn from talented local instructors.

The Petting Party will kick off the **Hayseeds Instrument Library**, a new musical education and enrichment program sponsored by the **High Mountain Hay Fever Festival (HMHF)** and the **West Custer County Library District (WCCLD)**. The program is designed to provide families in the Wet Mountain Valley with borrowing privileges to a wide range of instruments and to music education resources.

The **Hayseeds Instrument Library** will allow library cardholders ages 6 and up to check out instruments like ukuleles, guitars, mandolins, fiddles, and banjos – all free of charge. Instrument checkouts come with free individual and group lessons, making it easier than ever for community members to dive into music-making.

“The Petting Party is just the beginning of what we plan to be year-round musical experiences for the community,” said Heidi Clare, HMHF board member and world-famous fiddler. “With the Hayseeds Instrument Library, we’re opening up new opportunities for people of all ages to discover the joy of making music. Whether you’re a beginner or looking to expand your skills, we want everyone to experience the magic of playing an instrument.”

This initiative expands on the highly successful **Hayseeds Music Camp**, held annually during the **HMHF Bluegrass Festival**, and will include special musical events throughout the year for library patrons and instrument borrowers. “My children have learned to play banjo and

guitar and sing as a direct result of the Hayseeds Music Camp and the wonderful instructors who are part of it,” said Janet Rivera, Hayseed Parent. “It’s truly changed our lives for the best. We’re thrilled that the camp is expanding into the Hayseeds Instrument Library with year-round instruction and activities!”

Event Highlights:

Hands-on opportunities to try a variety of instruments including fiddle, guitar, ukulele, and banjo.

Live demonstrations from experienced local musical instructors.

Free access with a library card to the **Hayseeds Instrument Library** for families to borrow instruments and take lessons.

A chance to connect with others in the community and share a love of music.

The **Musical Instrument Petting Party** is open to all ages, and the event is completely free to attend. Families are encouraged to stop by, explore the instruments, and enjoy this special musical experience.

For more information about the Petting Party or the Hayseeds Instrument Library, please contact Michael Hayes at (719) 315-1151 or email at hayseedslibrary@gmail.com

About the High Mountain Hay Fever Festival
The High Mountain Hay Fever Festival (HMHF) is an annual bluegrass festival that brings musicians and music lovers together for a celebration of live music, workshops, and community engagement in the Wet Mountain Valley. HMHF is dedicated to promoting music education and preserving bluegrass traditions.

About the West Custer County Library District
The West Custer County Library District (WCCLD) is a community-focused library system offering a variety of programs, resources, and services to the residents of West Custer County. The library is committed to fostering a love of learning and providing enriching experiences for all ages.

Booster Club Bobcat Corner



Come out and support your Custer County Bobcats!

All games and dates are subject to change without notice.

Wednesday, March 12:
1 pm HS Baseball @ HOME vs Buena Vista

Thursday, March 13:
4 pm HS Baseball @ HOME vs Kiowa

Saturday, March 15:
9 am HS Track @ Banana Belt Classic at Pueblo - Dutch Clark

Thursday, March 20:
4 pm HS Baseball @ Kiowa (away)

March 24 - 30: Spring Break!

Come support the Bobcats Concession Stand at every Home game!

Bobcats Scoreboard!

Friday, March 7:
HS Boys Varsity Basketball Regional Tournament in Ordway, vs Holyoke: 52-61, loss

Saturday, March 8:
HS Track @ CSU Early Bird at Pueblo CSU:
There were 44 teams in attendance and we were 1 of 7 1A/2A schools. Many events had over a hundred participants! 7 PR's (personal records)!!!

For the first meet - that is pretty incredible!
Hayden Hampton: 10th in the Triple Jump, 20th in the 100m, 22nd in the 200m

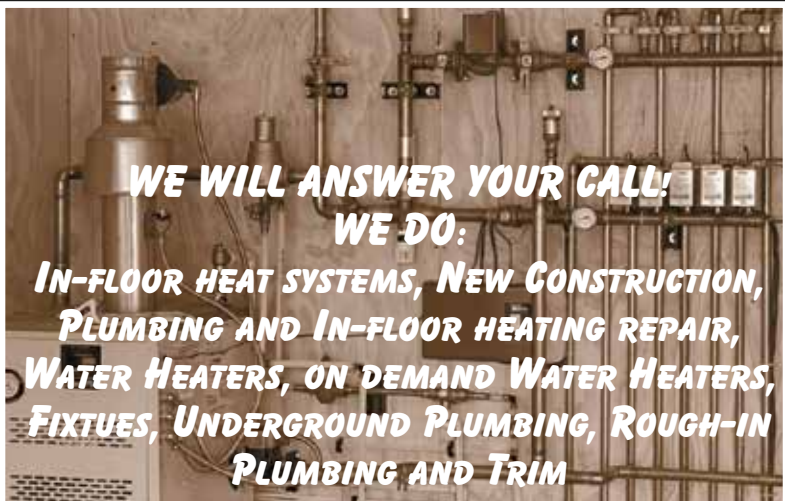
Girls 4x200: Liz Ergo, Lily Bomgardner, Reagan Shank and Hayden Hampton - 14th

Layna Jones: 14th in the Triple Jump

Reagan Shank: 18th in the Long Jump, 30th in the 200

Ivy Carichner: 21st in the Triple Jump

Liz Ergo: 24th in the 300 hurdles, 26th in the 100, 27th in the 100 hurdles



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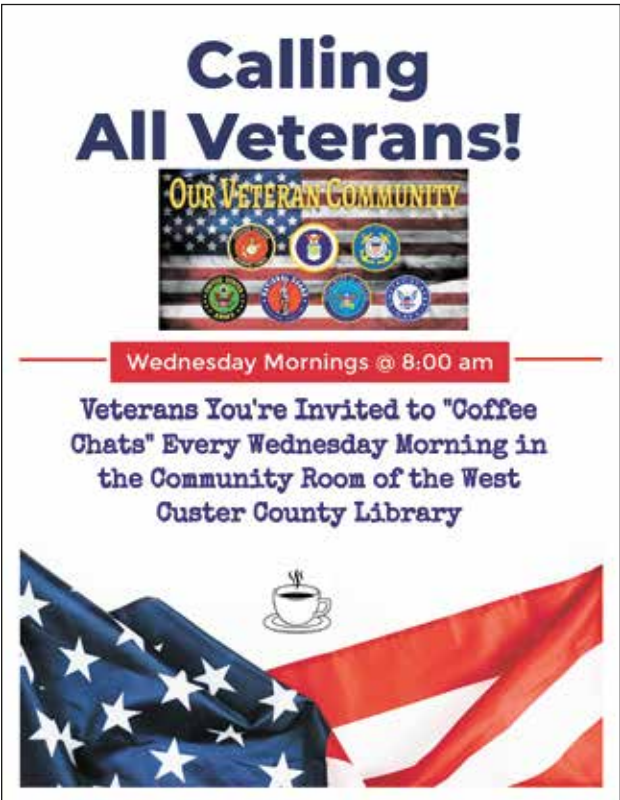


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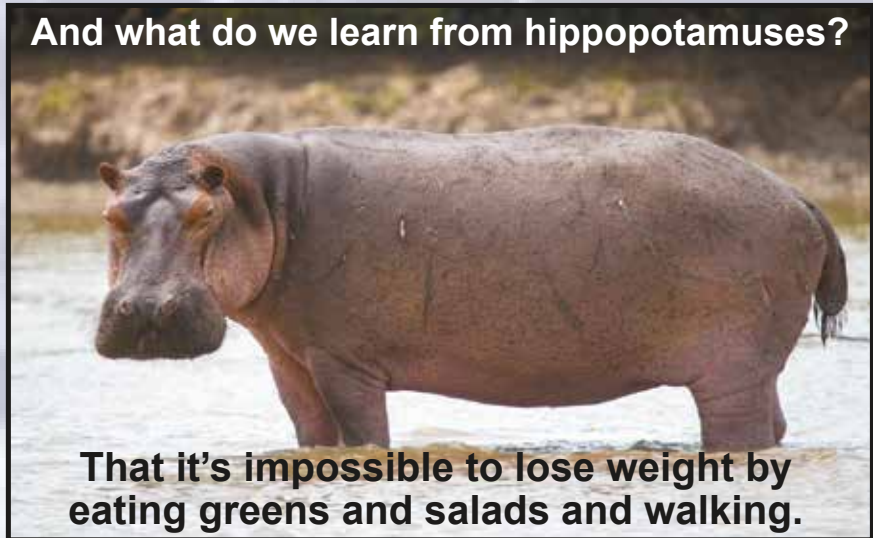
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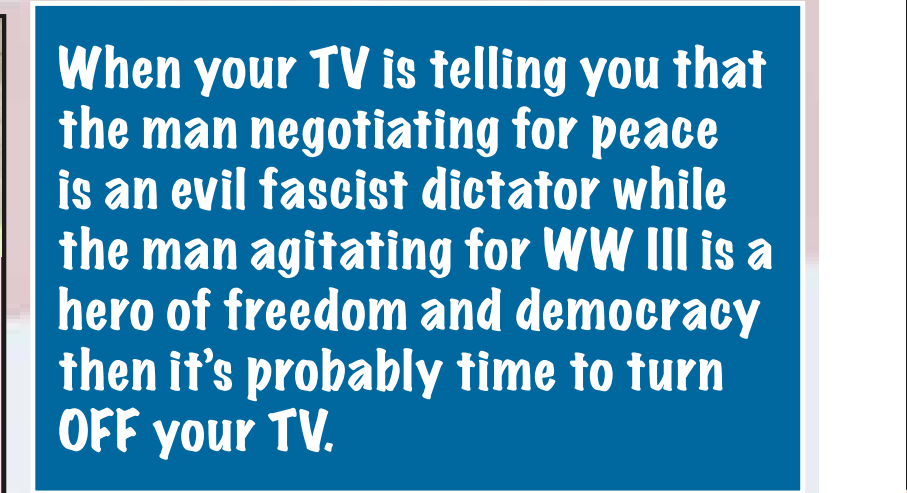
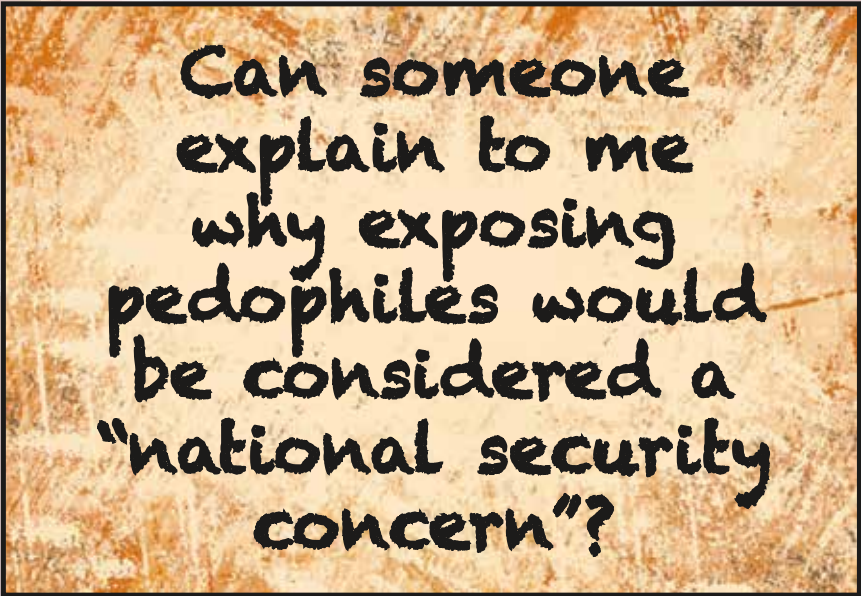


Calling All Veterans!
OUR VETERAN COMMUNITY
Wednesday Mornings @ 8:00 am
Veterans You're Invited to "Coffee Chats" Every Wednesday Morning in the Community Room of the West Custer County Library

Memes to Make U



e Us Peasants Smile





Colorado State News



Mr. Johnston goes to Washington, and Now Faces Jail for Denver's Unconstitutional Sanctuary Laws

by ColoradoPeakPolitics.com

Mayor Mike Johnston had an answer for everything during Wednesday's congressional oversight hearing on Denver's sanctuary city laws.

Unfortunately, it was to questions he was never asked, and that only served to anger an already frustrated Congress working to plug the holes of the Biden era mass migration system that has cost this country billions and crippled an already struggling immigration system.

Under the watchful eyes of high-priced lawyers paid upwards of \$2 million to cover Johnston's rear for this hearing, the mayor insisted under oath he's not violating the law by refusing full cooperation with federal ICE agents to turn over migrants already in police custody.

All four mayors admitted to hiring lawyers before their appearance, which will be useful because a congresswoman from Florida promptly reported them to the Justice Department after the hearing for breaking with federal law.

Three laws in fact. And when Johnston and other mayors from New York City, Chicago, and Boston were asked about the Supremacy Clause in the Constitution that requires states to follow federal law, they feigned ignorance.

Constitution? What's that?

The entire hearing was an embarrassment of riches for these leaders of major U.S. cities.

The highlight of the six-hour hearing was when U.S. Rep. Jim Jordan called out Johnston for lying when he insisted that Denver police honored immigration requests to take custody of violent criminals in a reasonable manner.

Jordan had all the details of the dangerous situation that resulted in a law enforcement officer and the prisoner getting injured as a result of Denver's sanctuary law.

Jim Jordan just ripped the Mayor of Denver APART for five minutes straight.

"Who's Abraham Gonzalez?"

Mayor Johnston: "He is an individual that was released from the county jail on Friday in the City and County of Denver."

Jordan: ...Venezuelan gang member arrested by Border Patrol on September 20th, 2023, released into the country by the Biden administration. A few months later, he's arrested in your city... And the rest is epic.

— George (@BehizyTweets) March 5, 2025

It was the best five minutes on C-SPAN this session.

Colorado Republican U.S. Rep.

Jeff Crank of Colorado Springs finally got a chance to follow up several hours later and pushed Johnston to fix the city's policies that resulted in those injuries and puts the public at risk of harm.

Asked repeatedly if he would allow for the safe transfer of prisoners inside the jail between officers, instead of turning them loose in the parking lot in the hopes ICE can't catch them, Johnston refused to budge.

The best Johnston offered was to meet with ICE about Denver's dangerous practice.

It's common sense – in no case should a transfer between local law enforcement and ICE involve uncuffing an illegal alien and releasing them to the "streets."

Denver Mayor Mike Johnston is putting law enforcement at risk.

Today from @GOPoversight pic.twitter.com/K0DIGZ3PIp

— Rep. Jeff Crank (@RepJeffCrank) March 5, 2025

Johnston and other mayors went on to make the ridiculous claims that crime in their cities magically decreased when Biden's border busters rolled into town, as if their mere presence had supernaturally soothed the souls of criminals everywhere.

Johnston of course was hand-picking a few specific statistics while ignoring others.

"Migrants did not bring a wave of crime to Denver. In fact, crime went down." -Mike Johnston

This is categorically FALSE.

cc: Tren de Aragua pic.twitter.com/iR4sxJB2Uo

— Congressman Gabe Evans (@repgabeevans) March 5, 2025

Violent crime is actually up in Denver from 2023 to 2024. @TheCityofDenver changed this dashboard and removed / reclassified some of the violent crimes.

— Do Better Denver (@dobetterdnvr) March 5, 2025

The committee wasn't fooled when Johnston and other mayors insisted migrants not only reduce crime, but don't commit as many crimes as U.S. citizens.

Republicans pointed out that when cities have policies that prohibit police from asking a suspected criminal in custody about their immigration status, they have no earthly idea what the actual migrant crime statistics are.

MIC DROP MOMENT

Johnston has no idea how many of the 6,400 violent crimes in his own city last year were committed by illegal immigrants because sanctuary city policies protect them over Coloradans. @RepGabeEvans is holding CO

Dems accountable

— Congressman Gabe Evans (@repgabeevans) March 5, 2025

Johnson insisted several times his sanctuary city was following the law when it comes to crime and illegal migration, but which laws? Colorado and Denver's sanctuary city laws? Or conflicting federal immigration laws?

The upshot is, Johnston and the other mayors can expect the Justice Department to pursue charges against them for failing to follow federal laws.

I just referred the sanctuary city mayors to the Department of Justice for CRIMINAL investigations based on evidence from their own comments and policies, proving that they were breaking federal law. Open borders ideologies hurt people on both sides. If you hold federal office and are breaking the law, you'll be criminally investigated by the DOJ.

— Rep. Anna Paulina Luna (@RepLuna) March 5, 2025

The committee would also be right as well to pursue charges against the mayors for perjuring themselves under oath.

Please see: <https://coloradopeakpolitics.com/2025/03/05/mr-johnston-goes-to-washington-and-now-faces-jail-for-denvers-unconstitutional-sanctuary-laws/>



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Colorado State News



Judge Rules Christian Preschool Should Get State Funding Despite Conflicts with State Anti-Discrimination Laws

By Jenny Brundin,
Colorado Public Radio

A Denver federal court decided that Colorado can't punish a rural Christian preschool that participates in the state's universal preschool program despite conflicts between its hiring practices and the state's anti-discrimination laws.

The ruling allows the Darren Patterson Christian Academy, which runs Busy Bees Preschool in Buena Vista, to continue to receive state funding to participate in Colorado's Universal Pre-school Program, which guarantees every 4 year old in the state at least 15 hours per week of free preschool.

The ruling is the second in Colorado on the issue of religious preschools participating in the state's universal preschool program and whether they are allowed to exclude either LGBTQ+ families or staff when the schools are taxpayer funded.

The attorney general's office had no comment on active litigation.

When the Darren Patterson Christian Academy joined the state's UPK program, it signed Colorado's non-discrimination agreement. But it argued it didn't want to be forced to hire LGBTQ+ employees or other individuals who don't share its Christian faith. It further argued that it shouldn't have to change school policies based on the school's religious beliefs about sexuality and gender—including those that relate to restroom usage, pronouns, dress codes, and student housing during expeditions and field trips.

The school is one of only a few Christian schools in Chaffee County, in west central Colorado.

The state argued that for the school to receive funding, it had to comply with the state's anti-discrimination laws. The school, represented by the Alliance Defending Freedom, sued the Department of Early Childhood in 2023, which runs the UPK program, for not issuing it a religious exemption. It alleged the demand to change its religious

practices infringed on its protected First Amendment rights.

In his 15-page ruling, U.S. District Judge Daniel Domenico, who was appointed by President Donald Trump in his first term, said the preschool should continue to receive funding and be allowed to maintain its hiring practices in line with its religious beliefs.

"I do not doubt the harm that discrimination may cause to the precocious preschoolers who understand the concept, or that religious parents with gay or transgender children may suffer if the plaintiff is permitted to exclude them from its preschool. But the state's effort to prevent that harm does not permit it to abridge plaintiff's First Amendment rights," he wrote.

The Alliance Defending Freedom said in a statement that the government can't force a school to surrender its religious character and beliefs to participate in a public program.

"Darren Patterson Christian

Academy has been serving Chaffee County families for over 40 years," said attorney Jeremiah Galus. "Yet Colorado officials tried to force it to abandon its religious beliefs—the very reason parents choose to send their kids to the school—to receive critical state funding. The court's ruling is a resounding win for First Amendment rights."

The judge found that the Colorado Department of Early Childhood allows exemptions from "quality standards" to ensure there are different types of preschools—religious, home-based, and school or center-based—but offered "no convincing explanation" for penalizing the school for adhering to his religious beliefs.

"The fact that the state recognizes conditions could exist in which it would exempt a preschool from the quality standards, but does not consider Plaintiff's religious convictions sufficiently compelling to do so here, triggers strict scrutiny."

In a separate case ruling in June,

a different federal judge ruled that Catholic preschools participating in the state's UPK program can consider religion when enrolling families. The ruling, however, does not allow preschool providers to discriminate on the basis of other protected classes such as sexual orientation and gender identity, rejecting most of the claims made by two Catholic preschools that filed a lawsuit against the state in 2023. Lawyers for the preschools have appealed a portion of that ruling to the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

Nearly 40,000 children are currently participating in the state-wide program. Fewer than 1,000 children attend 40 faith-based programs.

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Please see: <https://www.cpr.org/2025/02/25/judge-sides-with-christian-school-colorado-universal-preschool-funding/>

Liberty Rocks - 2025

Tuesday, March 18th

Tony's Steak & Tavern

Tony's Mountain Pizza's Full Menu will be offered

— All are welcome —

Meet & Greet and Dinner begins at 5:30 pm

Presentation begins at 6pm

Come eat, discuss, engage, and learn

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Jay Temple, Geologist

To discuss: Rare Earth Minerals, Hardscrabble Landslide, General Questions

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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Forest Service Closes Majority of Pike National Forest to Target Shooting, Sparking Legal Questions

by F. Riehl, Editor in Chief, ammoland.com

Colorado – The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) has finalized a sweeping ban on dispersed recreational shooting – where forest visitors set up targets and practice shooting in an undesignated, undeveloped location – across 73% of the 1.1 million-acre Pike National Forest, a move that has drawn significant opposition from 2nd Amendment advocates.

The decision, part of the agency’s Integrated Management of Target Shooting Project, aims to address what officials call “unacceptable risks to public safety” as the forest sees increased use from hikers, cyclists, and off-roaders.

Under the new policy, over 800,000 acres will be off-limits to dispersed target shooting, while six designated shooting ranges will be developed with noise abatement features and safety measures. The closures will be implemented in phases, with areas near Rampart Range

Road, previously subject to emergency orders, among the first to be restricted. The agency insists that the plan balances public safety, resource management and recreational shooting opportunities.

“This decision marks the transition from one era of recreational shooting into the next,” said Douglas County Board of Commissioners Chair George Teal, who supports the ban. The move has also been praised by the Southern Shooting Partnership, a coalition of government and utility agencies that have worked for years to address shooting-related conflicts in the region.

However, gun rights advocates argue that the ban is a clear violation of the Second Amendment.

The Mountain States Legal Foundation’s Center to Keep and Bear Arms has filed an official objection, challenging the Forest Service’s authority to restrict firearms-related activities on such a massive scale.

“By restricting the people’s right to engage in dispersed target shooting within the Pike National Forest, the USFS is attempting to regulate arms-bearing conduct in violation of the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution,” the foundation’s objection states.

Critics argue that the ban disproportionately punishes law-abiding shooters while failing to address enforcement issues. *“Target practice is one of the most basic uses of a firearm and is an integral part of being a responsible gun owner,” said Greg Sutherland, a Colorado gun rights advocate working with the Mountain States Legal Foundation. “This move unfairly restricts safe, law-abiding target shooters while providing no real evidence of safety concerns.”*

The Forest Service defends its decision, asserting that the closure is necessary due to increased user conflicts, environmental concerns, and at least one confirmed fatality linked to recreational shooting.

“The agency claims the new shooting ranges will provide a safer, more controlled environment while preserving public access to firearms training.

Opponents, however, are skeptical about the feasibility of the plan.

“They are talking about consolidating shooting that previously took place over 800,000 acres into a handful of shooting ranges,” Sutherland said. “There is no guarantee that more than three ranges will even be built, nor that they will be able to handle demand. The numbers just don’t add up.”

Under the Supreme Court’s 2022 Bruen decision, gun rights organizations argue that any restriction on firearm-related activities must align with historical traditions of firearm regulation.

“There is no historical precedent for this kind of restriction on public lands,” said Mountain States Legal Foundation in a statement. “The Forest Service must justify its regulation in accordance with the Second

Amendment, and so far, they have failed to do so.”

The Forest Service maintains that its decision does not infringe on the right to bear arms but rather delineates where target shooting may take place. However, enforcement remains a key concern, with critics questioning how effectively the government can monitor compliance across such a vast area.

For now, the battle over, dispersed shooting, in Pike National Forest appears far from over. With legal challenges mounting, the Forest Service’s plan may soon face judicial scrutiny as Second Amendment advocates prepare to fight what they see as an overreach by federal authorities.

(Editor/GG: Maybe Trump’s new people will reverse this nonsense.)

Please see: <https://www.ammoland.com/2025/02/us-forest-service-closes-majority-of-pike-national-forest-to-target-shooting-sparking-legal-objections/>

SANGRE DE CRISTO
SENTINEL

WHERE TO PURCHASE THE PAPER

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Dutch Pantry & Deli
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SDC Sentinel Office
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St. Patrick’s Day Youth Essay Contest

All youth below age 18 who reside in Custer County, Colorado are eligible to participate.

Two first prizes of \$100
Two second prizes of \$50

In the early 400 a.d., a Christian youth named Patrick, who lived in Britain, was kidnapped by Irish pirates and sold into slavery as a shepherd in Ireland, where he was starved and mistreated. Still, in his loneliness, Patrick’s faith was kindled, and he heard God speak to him.

Patrick miraculously escaped and encountered many adventures. After returning home, he travelled to Europe for seminary and was eventually consecrated a bishop. He then returned to Ireland to fulfill the scriptures in Matthew 28:18-20, which Christians today call The Great Commission.

How to Participate in this essay contest

1. Read up on the story of St. Patrick’s life, and study Matthew 28:18-20 in the Bible

2. Write an essay on the topic Patrick of Ireland and the Great Commission. Apply that to today. Use your best imagination!

3. Write around 600 words but as many as you need

4. Use your best spelling, punctuation and composition

5. Email your entry to joannelcanda@gmail.com by March 17

6. Participants must be residents of Custer County, Colorado at the time of the contest

7. One first prize and second prize each for age groups 12- and up and 11 and under

Questions? Call Joanne Canda at 719-371-3277
St. Patrick’s Anglican Church Westcliffe

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Local Mountain News & Notices

House Bill 1026: Ending Copays for Prisoners Digs Fiscal Hole Deeper

by Cory Gaines,
Complete Colorado

As the old saying goes, when you find yourself in a hole you should stop digging. Colorado is currently in something of a fiscal hole, one that has gone up quite a bit lately as Medicaid cost numbers roll in. The state’s budget shortfall has ballooned from hundreds of millions of dollars in January to estimates now a little above a billion.

If this were your household, and you were responsible with your money, one of the first things you’d likely do is start limiting how much you spend. That’s not the case at the state capitol, where they’re still furiously digging.

Some skin in the game

House Bill 25-1026, titled “Repeal Copayment for Department of Corrections Inmate Health Care” is a perfect example. The title might at first (if you’re anything like me) leave you with a question. Do prison inmates make copayments for health care? Interestingly, yes. Despite being wards of the state, there are cases where they bear a tiny cost for some care. The bill has already cleared the Democrat-controlled House Judiciary Committee,

It’s helpful to back up and talk about the way things are now before moving forward to see what the bill would do. Inmates do not pay a cent for most ordinary health care. They do, however, get charged a

small fee (ranging from \$3 up to \$5 with a few exceptions such as visits related to chronic health conditions) for self-declared emergency visits, self-initiated visits to the dentist, or for making an appointment and not showing up.

Sounds pretty reasonable—especially the fee for not showing to an appointment. You want care that’s not an emergency or routine? Pay just like anyone else. And besides, how could a prison inmate miss an appointment other than by choice?

House Bill 1026 would remove any and all copays, for any reason, and dump those costs onto taxpayers. The bill’s fiscal note estimates that in the fiscal year (2025-26) the bill would “...decrease the amount of state revenue required to be refunded to taxpayers by \$157,179 per year.”

Those ‘free’ phone calls

When I first heard about this, it brought to mind a 2023 bill that shifted the cost of inmate phone calls from the prisoners themselves and onto taxpayers. This program has proven so popular that the demand well exceeded the original estimates in the fiscal note. As of my last check it was close to \$600K over budget right now and slated to go about five times over the original projections in a year.

Turns out when you offer people things for “free,” they take it.

I can’t help but think that if we completely remove what modest restraints already exist on voluntary prisoner health care, that the modest sounding \$150K estimate might take a similar jump. If someone else is paying and I’ve got not much else to do, why not?

State budgets can be complex things, but the current fiscal hole is not. If you can manage a household budget, you can understand exactly what is going on here: Colorado simply has a mismatch between how much we’re bringing in and how much is going out.

I am continually astounded how clueless lawmakers can be. Are they this thoughtless with their own personal finances or is it just with other people’s money? Perhaps no one is paying attention to how these little freebies for favored constituencies add up across time and with each other.

Whatever the case, it’s time to put down the shovels and stop making the hole deeper.

Cory Gaines is a regular contributor to Complete Colorado. He lives in Sterling on Colorado’s Eastern Plains and also writes at the Colorado Accountability Project substack.

Please see: <https://completecolorado.com/2025/03/06/house-bill-1026-freebies-inmates-digs-fiscal-hole-deeper/>

LEGAL NOTICES

NOTICE OF CANCELLATION OF REGULAR ELECTION BY THE DESIGNATED ELECTION OFFICIAL FOR THE WET MOUNTAIN FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN by the Wet Mountain Fire Protection District, Custer County, Colorado, that at the close of business on the sixty-third (63rd) day before the election or thereafter there were not more candidates for Director than offices to be filled, including candidates filing affidavits of intent to be write-in candidates; therefore, the election to be held on May 6, 2025, is hereby cancelled.

The following candidates are declared elected:
Chris McKellip 4 Year Term
Roger Squire 4 Year Term

WET MOUNTAIN FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

By: /s/ Teri Munson
Designated Election Official

Published the week of: March 10th, 2025
Published in: Cañon City Daily Record, Sangre de Cristo Sentinel,
Wet Mountain Tribune

Posted: District’s polling place

Designated Election Official’s office
County Clerk and Recorder’s office
Filed: Division of Local Government

PUBLIC NOTICE

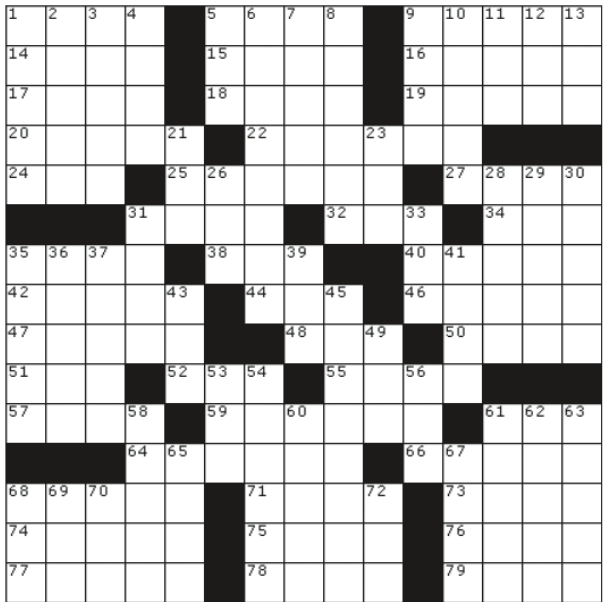
The Westcliffe Planning Commission needs to fill a vacancy on the Commission. The member must be 18 years of age or older and must live within the Town of Westcliffe limits. If interested, please submit a letter of interest to the Town of Westcliffe at P.O. Box 406 or Patterson Hall – 1000 Main Street, Westcliffe, Colorado 81252.

Letters of interest must be submitted on or before Friday, April 11, 2025, by 5:00 p.m.

Erin Christie
Town Clerk
Town of Westcliffe

Published March 14, 21, 28 and April 4, 2025
Sangre de Cristo Sentinel
Westcliffe, Colorado

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS

- 1 Beat it!
- 5 Factor of ten
- 9 Fry lightly
- 14 Launder
- 15 Vivacity
- 16 Dined
- 17 Yearn
- 18 Loan
- 19 Man shall not live by ____ alone
- 20 Ply

22 Overly (2 wds.)

- 24 Possessive pronoun
- 25 Can ____ (kitchene gadget)
- 27 Star
- 31 Last word, often
- 32 Western Athletic Conference
- 34 Mayan language
- 35 College (abbr.)
- 38 Snacked
- 40 White poplar
- 42 Mesh
- 44 Melancholy

DOWN

- 1 ____ buckler
- 2 Computer memory enhancer
- 3 Tribe of Israel
- 4 Biblical “you”
- 5 Eastern state
- 6 Periodic table residents
- 7 Authoritative list of scripture
- 8 One of the apostles
- 9 Compass point
- 10 Brother of Moses

- 11 Shoshonean
- 12 Thirst quencher
- 13 Goal
- 21 Male cat
- 23 Epoch
- 26 Pod vegetable
- 28 Last letter of Greek alphabet
- 29 Legitimate
- 30 Last words of prayers
- 31 Wood tool
- 33 Taxi
- 35 Once more
- 36 Long, skinny boat
- 37 Predict from an omen
- 39 Consume
- 41 Hotel furniture
- 43 Santa’s helper
- 45 Using eight tone scales
- 49 Annex
- 53 Most basic
- 54 Fix a pet
- 56 Males
- 58 Slanderer
- 60 Water retention
- 61 Mr. Ryan
- 62 Vigorously
- 63 Collection of sacred books
- 65 Vend
- 67 Word meaning father
- 68 Time zone
- 69 Tiff
- 70 Kimono sash
- 72 Arid
- Puzzle key on page 7**

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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.



Custer County Board of Commissioners

ELECTED BOARD

District 1 Bill Canda (CHAIR)

Cell 719-431-9979 Bill@custercounty-co.gov

District 2 Paul Vogel song

paul@custercounty-co.gov

District 3 Lucas Epp (VICE CHAIR)

Cell 719-371-9267 Lucas@custercounty-co.gov

The Liberty Tree

Religion, The Constitution & Culture

State, National, & World

The Daily Jot

Daily reporting and analysis of current events from a biblical and prophetic perspective.

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.

The real disinformation campaign

A recent series of town halls held by Republicans in various states are being reported as grass roots opposition to Trump government accountability efforts. In reality, they are staged events where mainstream media sympathetic to Marxist Democratic resistance can make it appear that there is a majority of Americans that are against Trump. This is revealed in a recent story by the *Washington Free Beacon* citing red-district protests against Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) were actually organized by left-wing groups. This is once again exposing how the news media and Marxist Democratic Party operatives work together to weaponize disinformation to gaslight the American public.

The *Free Beacon* reported on February 25, “When angry voters confronted Rep. Rich McCormick over DOGE at a town hall held in the Georgia Republican’s deep-red district, the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and CBS cited the scene as proof of emerging bipartisan “backlash” over Elon Musk’s efforts to slash government spending. CBS included a quote from one of the protest’s organizers, Maggie Goldman, describing her only as a McCormick constituent.” In reality, she is a self-described “Democrat and Political Activist” who coordinated and organized volunteers for Pete Buttigieg’s presidential campaign. In the 2020 election, she served as a “ballot cure” volunteer with the Democratic Party of GA “ensuring that voters in the general and runoff elections could fix errors with their rejected absentee ballots.”

The *Free Beacon* continued: “Across the country, similar protests played out at House GOP town halls and district offices. The demonstrations drove mainstream media coverage of brewing backlash against the Trump administration as the lower chamber left Washington, D.C., for a week-long recess. Well-funded liberal organizations organized many of them. The George Soros-funded groups *Indivisible* and *MoveOn* were at the center of the demonstrations. Both groups launched national “mobilization” efforts targeting the “Trump-Musk Agenda” and the “Trump-Musk coup” during the recess period.” *MoveOn* said, “MoveOn members and allies will show up at congressional-led town halls and congressional offices across the country, targeting House Republicans whose votes will be crucial in opposing Trump and Musk’s harmful policies.”

Both organizations are implying that Musk and Republicans are using the government as “a piggy bank for their own gain.” The media are reporting these themes overtime. Meanwhile, a Harvard-Harris poll conducted on February 19-20 of 2,443 registered voters indicated 76% of voters support DOGE’s efforts to reduce government waste. Romans 2:1 says, “For on whatever grounds you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things.” Herein, the media, the Democrats and their Marxists support organizations are trying to make you think that Trump is fomenting a coup when they are the ones who doing such. The proof is in the government graft and corruption that DOGE has found and who benefited from it. This is another example of the disinformation designed to deceive Americans.

Sources:

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Bill Wilson

Dailyjot.com Printed with permission.

Gender Transition Surgery

Associated with Heightened

Mental Health Issues

by Joshua Arnold,
The Washington Stand

Americans who struggle with gender identity are “at significantly higher risk for depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation, and substance use disorders” if they undergo gender transition surgery, according to a study published in the *Oxford Academic Journal of Sexual Medicine* on February 25th. Yet the study, conducted by researchers from the Baylor College of Medicine, the University of Texas Medical Branch, and the University of Texas Health Houston, failed to draw the most straightforward conclusion due to ideological blinders.

The study found that males with gender transition surgery were 120% likelier to have depression (“25.4% vs. 11.5%”) and 388% likelier to have anxiety (“12.8% vs. 2.6%”) than males who had gender dysphoria without surgical intervention. Gender dysphoric females were 56% likelier to have depression (“22.9% vs. 14.6%”) and 48% likelier to have anxiety (“10.5% vs. 7.1%”) if they had undergone gender transition surgery.

These results had superlative statistical significance (“P<0.0001”) due to the study’s enormous dataset. The researchers analyzed 107,583 “U.S. patients aged ≥18 with gender dysphoria” from the global TriNetX database “between June 2014 and June 2024.” They assessed mental health outcomes “over two years post-surgery using clinician-verified ICD-10 [International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision] codes.”

These findings are consistent with other recent studies showing a correlation between gender transition surgeries and mental health issues. An April 2024 study funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) found that people with a history of gender transition surgeries had much higher rates for PTSD, suicide attempts, and suicides than people without such a history. (However, this comparison was not among adults with gender dysphoria but adults with an emergency room visit — a far less meaningful comparison.)

However, these more recent results undermine earlier studies suggesting that gender transition surgeries provided positive mental health outcomes.

Returning to the *Oxford Academic* study, the most obvious conclusion to draw from its findings is that gender transition surgeries fail to work as advertised. The widespread model of “gender-affirming care” (GAC) is premised on the notion that medically altering the body of a gender dysphoric person to appear more like a member of the opposite

sex is the best way to relieve his or her mental distress. As the fullest expression of such medical interventions, gender transition surgery should — if this theory is correct — provide gender dysphoric individuals with the fullest relief from their mental distress.

Yet, according to this large study, people who have undergone gender transition surgeries are still more likely to experience serious mental health issues, indicating that the surgeries did not relieve their mental distress. In fact, all else being equal, those who have undergone gender transition surgery appear to be more distressed than those who have not.

Thus, these findings suggest that medical professionals would best serve the mental health of people with gender dysphoria by *not* performing gender transition surgeries on them.

This obvious conclusion is not necessarily ironclad. One reasonable counterargument is that gender transition surgeries are usually reserved for gender dysphoric people with the most acute mental distress; therefore, we would expect that members of the group who underwent gender transition surgery would have experienced a higher rate of mental health issues even before surgery due to an element of self-selection.

Yet this argument doesn’t undermine the obvious conclusion so much as it highlights an inherent limitation in the study. To truly discern the effects of gender transition surgery on mental health outcomes, the study would have to measure mental health outcomes before and after surgery and measure the rate of change with accompanying measurements for a control group over the same period. (An even better methodology would conduct randomized control trials to minimize the opportunity for self-selection, but the American medical community jumped right over this step in their zeal to implement the GAC model.)

To put the counterargument another way, the data collected for this study does not rule out the theoretical possibility that the gender transition surgeries measured here actually improved mental health outcomes for those who underwent surgery, even though they still had far more mental health issues than other people with gender dysphoria. But proving this theoretical possibility would require different data than that analyzed by this study.

Researchers committed to “following the science” would not reject the obvious conclusion to which their findings point based on a theoretical objection their data do not address.

Alas, the research team did not arrive at this obvious conclusion.

Instead, they wrote that their findings “suggest the necessity for gender-sensitive mental health support following gender-affirming surgery to address post-surgical psychological risks.” Even this conclusion calls into question the utility of gender transition surgeries. If mental health issues persist after surgery, what medical benefit is there to justify the inherent risks and complications?

Yet the research team’s assumptions precluded this fruitful line of inquiry. In a section labeled “background,” they wrote, “Transgender individuals face heightened psychological distress, including depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation, partly due to stigma and lack of gender affirmation.” This claim assigns sociological reasons for psychological maladies, placing their treatment beyond the realm of their medical expertise. It also exposes an ideological commitment to affirming gender transitions and removing social stigma against transgenderism.

Even this background statement is undermined by the study’s findings. If “stigma” against transgender identity is measured by public outcry, then one of the hottest cultural flashpoints is the debate over males with fully intact genitalia exposing themselves in gyms, locker rooms, and similar private spaces reserved for women. If the psychological distress associated with gender dysphoria were truly due to social stigma, then surgeries that remove male sexual organs would, at least in part, take away the stigma, thereby reducing the psychological distress. But that is not the case, at least according to this study.

Despite the researchers’ evident ideological preferences — or, perhaps, the framing necessary to get the research published — this study takes its place in a growing constellation of scientific literature that throws doubt on the GAC model that has captured American medical institutions. Whatever framing or context accompanies it, the core finding is that people with gender dysphoria who have gender transition surgeries report far higher rates of mental health issues than people with gender dysphoria who do not have such surgeries. Such results should cause health care professionals to question whether gender transition surgeries have any medical benefit at all.

Please see: <https://washingtonstand.com/commentary/gender-transition-surgery-associated-with-heightened-mental-health-issues-study>

(Editor//lv: To read the study summary yourself, go to <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC11063965/>)

Democrats Threw America’s Daughters Under the Bus on Girls’ Sports

by Suzanne Bowdey,
The Washington Stand

When you’re as unpopular as today’s Democrats, the typical response is to try to find a way back into voters’ good graces. Not so for this party, which seems amazingly determined to stay in America’s doghouse. Instead of shedding their trans extremism, Democrats are clinging to it — ignoring the message 80% of the country is sending and killing any dream of a political comeback in the process.

Monday’s vote on girls’ sports protections should have been an easy lift in a nation that overwhelmingly rejects the idiocy that allows biological boys onto our daughters’ teams. But, as disillusioned Democrats have come to learn, nothing is easy for Minority Leader Chuck Schumer’s (D-N.Y.) party — a fact that this movement’s champions still can’t believe. “Do they have kids?” former San Jose State University volleyball player Brooke Slusser demanded to know. “If this were your daughter, how would you feel watching her lose opportunities, face unfair competition, and be put at risk all while knowing you had the power to stop it?” the teammate of trans-identifying Blaire Fleming asked. “... [I]t’s just not fair. I feel like I could go on and on to them about it. I just don’t see how they could support it.”

But to the dismay of Slusser — and millions of other athletes fighting this same injustice — Democrats unanimously turned their backs on the women they claim to represent, cementing their fate in the Senate for the third straight time. The legislation’s sponsor, Senator Tommy Tuberville (R-Ala.), knew it was a steep climb. “We’re going to have to get to 60 votes,” he pointed out on Megyn Kelly’s show before the vote, “and we’ve got a lot of work to do. We have 53 Republicans.” And while President Trump did sign an executive order reinforcing Title IX, the sad reality is that it “only last[s] as long as the president is there,” the legendary coach warned.

When Tuberville started talking about the boys overtaking girls’ teams, he got emotional. “It is a disgrace,” he said, then repeated it. “What’s going to happen is we’re going to end up not having women’s sports, because parents are not going to allow their kids to dress in dressing rooms, take showers with biological boys, or they don’t want them to compete against them because of being a safety factor. ... Now is the time to act on this,” Tuberville insisted. “We can’t wait any longer. [Title IX] has been decimated by the Biden and the Democrats and all the far-left progressives.”

And yet, the party responsible could only manufacture absurd

reasons to vote no. “What Republicans are doing today is inventing a problem to stir up a culture war and divide people against each other,” Senator Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii) argued on the House floor. It was a pathetic deflection even for Democrats, whose own base supports the measure by an eye-popping 67%.

“Name and shame them all,” former All-American swimmer Riley Gaines posted on X next to a list of the 45 senators who voted no. “The Democrats’ war on women continues,” she warned. “Never ever let them gaslight you into thinking they care about women’s rights.”

After an election decided by this issue, the border, and inflation, it defies imagination that Joe Biden’s party could only muster two votes out of a possible 260 in the House and Senate for a policy so uncontroversial everywhere else that most people wonder why Congress is even debating it. But then, maybe that’s the problem.

As Doreen Denny, senior advisor for Concerned Women for America, told *The Washington Stand*, “We keep hearing about Democrat disarray. Today’s Senate vote on the Protection of Women and Girls in Sport Act only proves it. An issue that commands the support of 67% of its party should be a no-brainer. Instead, Senate Democrats have thrown female athletes under

the bus by siding with radical special interests over women’s hard-fought Title IX rights.”

This “no” vote, Denny said, fails women athletes again “by denying equal opportunities for safe sports, safe spaces, and an equal playing field on the basis of sex. They continue to obstruct a victory demanded by 80% of Americans by embracing trans ideology over women’s rights.”

The Democrats’ betrayal is even more astounding against the backdrop of momentum Americans are witnessing in the states. More than half (27) have passed either outright laws or advisory policies making biological sex the determining factor for sports — and Georgia is on the verge of becoming 28. The statehouse passed the Riley Gaines Act last Thursday by a lopsided 102-54, bringing the South closer to a full legislative sweep.

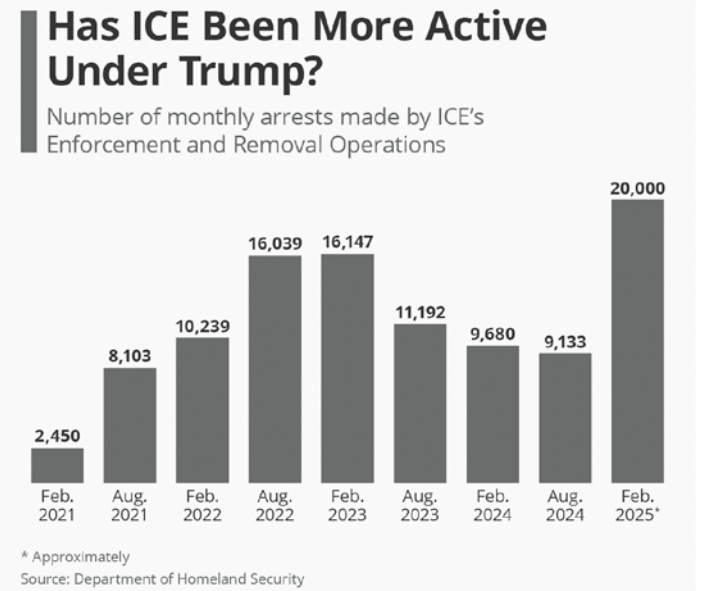
They understand, as Tuberville does, that this “landslide will keep going” unless people act. “I grew up in this business and coaching. I saw what it did for young girls, older girls. It’s created leaders across this country. And we’re absolutely devastating [them]. ... I don’t know what Joe Biden was thinking,” the Alabaman shook his head, “or was he even thinking? Or [were] any of the Democrats when they thought this was the right thing to do?” he wondered.

Other GOP senators were equally disgusted by the outcome. “The vast majority of Americans have rejected the farce of men pretending to be women playing in women’s sports,” Senator Tom Cotton (R-Ark.) underscored. “But not Senate Democrats! Senate Democrats STILL want to force girls to compete against men pretending to be women.”

Conservative leaders like Family Research Council President Tony Perkins continue to marvel at the Left’s insistence on swimming against the moral tide. “There is one border the Democrat Party has secured — the ideological border around their party,” he observed. “Common sense could not penetrate their high walls of gender delusion.”

Their reckoning will come, but that’s of little comfort now. While Denny applauds all the White House is doing, she recognizes the limits of the executive branch’s power. “President Trump has boldly seized the moment to correct this injustice,” she told *TWS*, “but it will take Congress to ensure that women’s hard-fought rights under Title IX are protected for the next generation.”

Please see: <https://washingtonstand.com/commentary/senate-democrats-throw-american-daughters-under-the-bus-on-girls-sports>



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1776

The Second Amendment Corner

Liberty's Line in the Sand

2025



MOLON
LABE

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

Firearm Background Check System Should It Be Abolished?

by Dan Wos,
ammoland.com

To some people, firearm background checks are accepted and considered a way to prevent bad guys from getting guns. They're completely wrong, and here's why.

The background check system, otherwise known as the "government hijacking of a God-given right and selling it back to you as a government-issued privilege," is unconstitutional and dangerous to law-abiding citizens.

As we inch our way toward state-to-state reciprocity with constitutional carry in our major cities, we recognize that many states not only require a government-issued permission slip to carry a gun but also make it almost impossible to obtain that permit. Even if you can make it through the rat maze of training, fees, background checks, storage requirements, magazine capacity limitations, and a list of other constitution-violating requirements, most of society is off limits to you and your firearm because many state gun laws have deemed public and even private places, gun free zones.

The idea of undergoing and passing background checks as a prerequisite to exercising the 2nd Amendment should have never been a thought even in the darkest corners of the most communist minds of the most radical left-wing ideologues, not only because it violates the rights of American citizens, but also because it puts undeserving Americans in legal jeopardy and in physical danger.

According to the Government Accountability Office, in 2017, the NICS background check system denied 112,090 people the right to purchase a firearm. Of those 112,090 denials, only 12,710 were investigated. We have to ask ourselves: If over 112,000 people were denied but only 12,710 investigations took place, wouldn't that be clear evidence that the system is failing and falsely denying good people their right to keep and bear?

It gets worse. That same year, and from that group of 112,090 denials, there were only 12 prosecutions for the crime of attempting to purchase a firearm. Now the anti-gun crowd says, "See, we stopped 12 mass shootings!" Well, there are problems with that argument.

First of all, do we have no regard for the 112,078 people who were caught up in the poorly run background check system? What happens to those people? Well, the anti-gun crowd couldn't care less about the people who are falsely denied their 2nd Amendment rights. As well as being falsely labeled a criminal and refused the ability to purchase a gun, good folks who are denied must also jump through hoops, make appeals, and wait. Then, they have to wait some more because we know how efficient government agencies operate. By some estimates, approximately 80% of the NICS denials are never even appealed, often because the person denied is unable to navigate the appeals process or is unable to afford a lawyer to help them. In the meantime, good people are rendered unarmed and helpless by an unconstitutional process that should never have existed in the first place.

What about the 12 prosecutions in 2017? Were they mass murderers? And if they were, why weren't they in jail? The background check system is created under the guise of stopping violent criminals from purchasing firearms, but if a person has done something so

heinous that they lose their rights, wouldn't that crime be enough to keep them in jail? And if not, why not? Why are they able to walk among us? It would seem the problem has less to do with guns and more to do with a criminal justice system that works to keep a violent element on our streets. The background check system, however, has been much more effective at preventing law-abiding citizens from possessing firearms than criminals, and we can see that by simply looking at the numbers.

Now, you might remember the anti-gun crowd cheering in the media that the number of firearm purchase denials reached the highest number yet in the year 2021. That year, there were approximately 300,000 background check denials. This was great news to the gun grabbers because all they really care about is disarming their political opposition, but did the percentage of false denials change?

With a huge increase in firearm purchases after the left-wing riots of 2020, the FBI claims that its denial rate is 99.8% accurate. Mysteriously, the Government Accountability Office has still not

posted their findings for 2022, but you're supposed to believe that the FBI went from a .01% success rate to a 99.8% success rate, and you are now safe from false denials. John Lott from the Crime Prevention Research Center has claimed that the exact opposite is true, and approximately 99% of firearm purchase denials are false positives, meaning good people are being denied their rights for no reason.

After watching the NICS system deny thousands of good people over the years, you're supposed to believe that now, magically, the firearm background check system is functioning as it should. Well, we're not buying it for a minute. We know the system is falsely denying good people their right to own firearms, and the system needs to be abolished.

Our Founding Fathers didn't say, **"...the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed... as long as you go through a background check system designed by people who don't want you to have a gun."**

Please see: <https://www.ammoland.com/2025/03/should-the-firearm-background-check-system-be-abolished/>

PSA Dagger Micro 9mm Pistol: A Review

by Travis Pike, ammoand.com

Palmetto State Armory's entrance into the world of the micro compact wasn't a surprise. SIG started the trend in 2018, and everyone has been playing catchup since then. The PSA Dagger Micro is an evolution of the Dagger series into a more compact, easier-to-carry, but still loaded-for-bear option.

The PSA Dagger Micro 9mm pistol features a full-length grip with a compact optics-ready slide. Externally and internally, the guns are very similar, but the Dagger Micro adds a few different twists.

The Dagger Micro – What's on the Inside

The PSA Dagger Micro isn't stuck with a 10-round single-stack magazine. PSA developed its own Dagger Micro magazine that holds 15 rounds instead of the typical 10. The Dagger Micro magazines are an interesting polymer-metal hybrid design that outclasses the competition.

These magazines work in the G43X, by the way. They aren't the first 15-round G43X/G48 magazine. Shield Arms creates all metal mags that offer the same capacity. The difference is the need for a metal magazine release. Due to their hybrid design, the

Dagger Micro mags don't require a different magazine release.

I got a handful of the mags to test various of them to ensure they remain reliable. It's a radical departure from the other manufacturer's magazines and deserves to be a major part of the Dagger Micro's evaluation.

More Than the Magazine

The Dagger Micro comes ready with a Picatinny rail and an optics cut for Shield RMSc optics. PSA makes various Dagger models, so I wouldn't be surprised to see alternative options in the near future. The RMSc is the most popular for small guns, and tons of optics exist for this footprint. A big bonus of the Dagger Micro comes from the sight height. Most RMSc-cut optics seem to co-witness without the need for taller sights.

PSA went for a unique frame for the Dagger Micro. The rear of the gun features a more aggressive, hand-protecting overhang. The trigger guard also has a higher undercut to provide the most comfortable high grip possible. At the bottom of the grip, we have relief cuts to grip and rip should a complicated malfunction get the magazine stuck in the gun.



PSA Dagger Micro 9mm Pistol



PSA Dagger Micro 9mm Optics-Ready Pistol

The trigger on the PSA Dagger Micro is also a departure from similar pistols. The trigger shoe is split in two, and the bottom portion of the trigger must be pressed so that the weapon can fire. PSA also went the extra mile and included metal sights with the Dagger Micro.

You get all this, plus a soft carry case for \$339.99.

The Dagger Micro at the Range

The Dagger Micro features an excellent and svelte grip that fits my hands quite well. I'm not a huge nerd for grip angle and all the somewhat useless drama people who can't shoot opine about. Still, I do enjoy it when a gun feels nice in my hand. You can hold the gun quite high without any discomfort.

A high grip translates into a comfy recoil experience. There is no rubbing on the middle finger or slide bite present. We get a bit of snap with every shot. A short barrel and lightweight gun aren't going to handle like a Shadow 2. It's snappy but controllable and isn't painful.

With standard 115-grain plinker's grade ammo, you'll have no

**PSA DAGGER
see page 21**

Henry Supreme Lever Action: The Lever Action Gun You Never Knew You Needed

by Ammoland
Editors and Staff,
ammoland.com

There’s something about a lever-action rifle that just feels right—smooth, nostalgic, and cowboy cool. But what happens when you take that old-school charm and mix in some modern firepower? Enter the Henry Supreme, a lever-action rifle chambered in 5.56 NATO that takes AR-15 magazines. Yes, you read that right.

Mag-fed lever actions have had a rough history. But Henry? Henry makes some of the best lever guns in the world, so would this rifle be any different?

Old-School Feel, Modern Performance

Right out of the gate, the Henry Supreme looks clean. It keeps that classic lever-action profile but updates it with an internal hammer, a threaded barrel for suppressors, and, of course, AR-style mags. That means it’s not just a ranch rifle—it’s a varmint slayer with reach. Traditional lever guns in .45-70 or .30-30 are powerhouses, but they’re not exactly known for stretching past a couple hundred yards. This



rifle? We were making 600- and even 700-yard hits.

Shooting this thing is addicting. The action is buttery smooth, and despite my initial skepticism, cycling rounds felt natural—even with a fully loaded magazine. Admittedly, when the mag is full, you’ll feel more resistance, but once you get past that, it’s nothing but lever-gun joy.

Accuracy That Surprised Us

The Henry Supreme has been through its paces, and let’s just say it exceeded expectations. Using 77-grain Black Hills ammo, the rifle produced sub-MOA groups. That’s bolt-gun accuracy from a lever-action rifle. At 100 yards, they were stacking rounds on top of each other. If you’re looking

for a precision rifle with a cowboy aesthetic, this might just be it.

Practical Uses? Absolutely.

While this rifle is undeniably fun, it’s also practical. Think about it—lever actions have always been great ranch guns. Now, you have one that shoots 5.56, uses standard-capacity mags (if your state isn’t run by communists), and can be suppressed. This makes it an excellent truck gun, home defense rifle, or coyote killer. It’s fast, accurate, and capable of handling threats at close range and beyond.

If you’re into varmint hunting, this rifle might be the perfect solution. Whether you’re dealing with coyotes, prairie dogs, or hogs, the flat-shooting 5.56 round

combined with Henry’s accuracy makes for an incredibly capable setup. You get the benefit of quick follow-up shots with a mag-fed system, plus the versatility to run different bullet weights depending on your needs. Pair it with a suppressor, and you’ve got a quiet, lethal tool for keeping pests in check without disturbing the entire county.

the Henry Supreme is a must-have. It blends nostalgia and innovation in a way that actually works. Sure, it’s not replacing your AR for duty use, but as a fun range gun, ranch rifle, or even a self-defense tool, it holds its own. And let’s be honest—there’s just something cool about slinging a lever gun and ringing steel at 600 yards.



Cutline: Henry Lever Action Supreme Rifle

The only downside? Reloading isn’t as smooth as an AR-15. Without a flared magwell, seating a fresh mag can be tricky under stress. But let’s be real—if you’re buying this gun, you’re not planning on running tactical reloads under night vision goggles. It’s a lever gun. Load it, run it, and have fun.

Final Thoughts: Worth It?

If you love lever actions but want something a little more modern,

Henry nailed this design. Some might be skeptical, but by the end of testing in this video, Micah didn’t just like it—he hated how much he loved it.

(Editor/GG: Noooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo!!!!!!!!!!)

Please see: <https://www.ammoland.com/2025/03/henry-supreme-lever-action-the-lever-gun-you-never-knew-you-needed/>

PSA DAGGER from page 20

problems and won’t develop a flinch. Some hotter 124-grain +P loads will ensure you feel that snap and acknowledge that muzzle rise.

I fired a Bill drill with 115-grain FMJs and landed my six shots in 2.7 to 3 seconds on average. It’s not my fastest, but it’s not bad for a brand-new gun and holster combo. I use the Bill Drill to illustrate the gun’s recoil and ease of control.

The Bill Drill consists of firing six rounds into a rectangular target as fast as possible from the draw. Firing six rounds as fast as possible into a small target is a great way to test recoil and recoil control. Even when going fast, I always felt like I controlled the gun. I was never lucky and passed the drill because I yanked the trigger fast enough and didn’t walk off target.

If I add a red dot, I can also imagine that time shrinking because dots are faster.

Shooting Straight

A dot would improve speed and



PSA Dagger Micro 9mm Pistol

likely accuracy. For a micro-compact handgun, the Dagger Micro doesn’t disappoint in the accuracy department. The sights are plain but functional. It’s likely the most common sight arrangement we see on modern handguns.

The big three-dot iron sights aren’t bad. They are standard and better than you deserve from a sub-350-dollar gun. Align the three dots and start shooting. They aren’t high visibility and aren’t the fastest option, but we are splitting hairs. Where they tend to suffer is at increased distances.



Their size starts to obscure targets at 25 yards quite a bit. When most of the target is covered by the sight and the target is small, it’s tough to hit. At 25 yards, you can

still put them into the chest of an FBI Q Target at 25 yards. That’s acceptable for most use cases of this gun.

At 15 yards, I fired for accuracy. With dedicated slow fire, I was capable of producing 3-inch groups pretty easily. If I rested the gun and used something besides the cheapest bulk 9mm I could find, I could probably shrink that group.

Run and Gun

The full-length grip of the Dagger Micro makes reloading much easier than your average-sized Micro Compact. Most micro-compact handguns have a fairly short grip, and my palm and pinky will often pin the magazine into the grip and prevent it from dropping free.

That’s not a problem here. I can reload the Dagger Micro quite quickly. The mags drop without a problem, and I can slam one home, hit the slide release, and get back on target in what seems like a heartbeat.

In going to one-handed manipulation, the snappiness of the pistol rears its head. Dear lord, do I suck with my non-dominant hand. Luckily, I’m good with

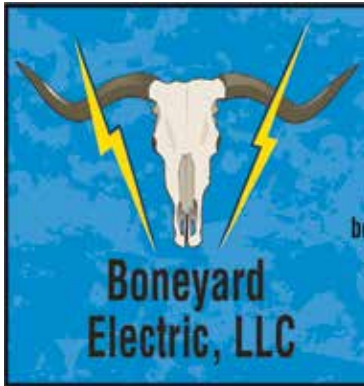
my dominant hand and could shoot a 3.7-second Bill Drill with no misses. I had to slow down with one hand, but it’s given me something to work on.

To the Mattresses

The Dagger Micro works well as a gun and is accurate, controllable and reliable. Outside of the range and on the waist, it carries nicely. The longer grip makes drawing easier for me, and the short barrel makes it comfy to carry IWB or well-hidden when carried in a high OWB position. It’s lightweight and thin enough to disappear and not to poke and prod.

PSA’s goal was to produce a competent carry pistol, and they’ve done just that. My highest praise goes to the magazine design. I had no noticeable problems with the six magazines I had on hand. As a gun, it’s a functional micro compact option in that X configuration that people seem to like. Plus, it’s less than 350 dollars. That makes the Micro Dagger a certified banger in my eyes.

Please see: <https://www.ammoland.com/2025/03/psa-dagger-micro-9mm-pistol-review/>



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Nunaga: Ten Years of Eskimo Life: A Book Review

(Includes a Polar Bear Defense)

by Dean Weingarten,
ammoland.com

Nunaga is extremely well written, a riveting story of a young man from Scotland who goes to Canada in 1955, seeking fortune and adventure. He answers an ad for fur traders by the Hudson Bay Company.

In 1955, eighteen-year-old Duncan Pryde answered the Hudson Bay Company ad. “Fur traders wanted for the far north,...single, ambitious, self-reliant young men wanted...” Pryde lived the Eskimo life for years, becoming adept at survival in the Arctic with a dogsled, snow knife, rifle, and harpoon, using Eskimo techniques. He earned a worldwide reputation for being a genius in the Eskimo language. He fathered children with Eskimo women as part of the Eskimo social wife exchange culture. The draft version of the book is said to have been cut back considerably because of too much sex. This correspondent does not recall exactly when he first read *Nunaga*. It was decades ago.

The book includes an episode in which Duncan Pryde shoots a polar bear at six feet in defense. His rifle was a Savage model 99 in .250/3000 caliber.

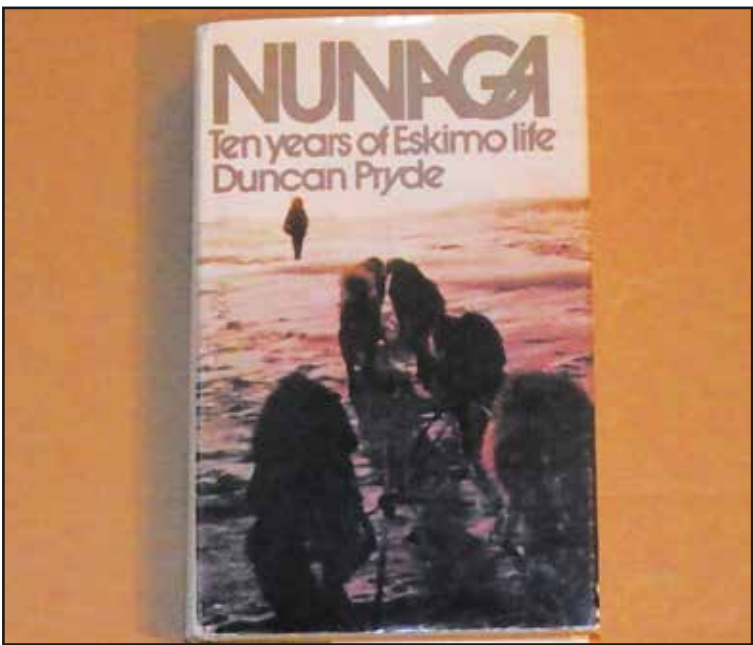
Studies of defenses against bears have come to occupy this correspondent’s time. A copy of *Nunaga* was obtained to evaluate the polar bear shooting. It was worth the time to determine if

the event was included in the Polar Bear/Human Information Management System (PBHIMS), obtained by *AmmoLand* with a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. The PBHIMS was created with taxpayer dollars to gain an understanding of polar bears and human interactions, including conflicts in the Arctic. This famous event, from a credible source in a very popular and widespread title, was somehow missed.

After nearly dying in a canoe trip along an icebound shoreline, Duncan and his companion find narrow access to shore in a dense fog. With great risk, they manage to enter and find a safe but small beach. There is steep but climbable access to get off the beach. Duncan’s companion goes up to see if he can observe a Dew Line outpost they had spotted earlier. Duncan decides to stay on the beach in a tent. Sometime later, Duncan hears a sound. He thinks it is his companion. He speaks, then yells, expecting to be answered.

Duncan looks out of the tent and sees a large polar bear six feet away, next to the canoe. The polar bear sees him. Here is how Duncan Pryde described the event p. 264:

“It [polar bear] pawed at the ground and I pawed at the inside of the tent, trying to locate my rifle. Finally my hand closed over it and I eased my shoulder



Nunaga: Ten Years of Eskimo Life by Duncan Pryde 285 pages, 1971, Walker Publishing Company, Inc. New York, 1972 American edition. Available at Amazon from about \$10 used.

back inside the tent so I could get both hands on the gun. I levered a cartridge into the chamber, and in the silence between me and the bear, the click was the loudest sound in the world.

The bear turned toward me and reared up. I still wasn’t sure what it would do, but it was so close if it decided to come my way, there would be little time for me to do anything. I swung the rifle up and fired. I shot it right through the heart with a .250/3000, and it flopped over against the canoe with a high pitched scream like a woman’s.”

Nunaga is an epic biography of high adventure in the Arctic as it transitioned from dogsled to snowmobile. Duncan was eventually elected to the Northwest Territories council as a representative for the Eskimos in the area from 1966 to 1970. *Nunaga* is full of Duncan Pryde’s ten years in Eskimo culture. It is foundational reading for anyone attempting to understand what has happened in the Canadian Arctic. He is remembered as the foremost expert on the Eskimo language, pronunciation and grammar. On [Amazon](#), an anthropologist who conducted research in many

Eskimo villages says: “No other source matches *Nunaga* in first-hand knowledge of Eskimo life.”

One of the things this writer found is Duncan Pryde’s evaluation of accounts by Farley Mowat, the widely debunked author of the fraudulent work “*Never Cry Wolf*”. Pryde mentions Mowat on page 33:

“When Farley Mowat claims in his books and articles that he went to the Arctic and in a matter of a month or two was able to speak a basic form of Eskimo and discuss shamanism and religion, I just can’t believe him. I know that when he came to Baker Lake he didn’t communicate at all in Eskimo.”

It is another data point about Farley Mowat as an unreliable fabulist who said, “I never let facts get in the way of a good story.”

Duncan Pryde has impressive credibility. His reputation for accuracy is worldwide. Pryde joins numerous others who have impeccable reputations to point out exaggerations and fabrications published by Mowat.

If you are interested in fact and real-life Arctic adventure, *Nunaga* is a fascinating read.

Please see <https://www.ammoland.com/2025/02/nunaga-ten-years-of-eskimo-life-book-review-polar-bear-defense/>

RMWSD from page 1

the grants for this project if it was to be implemented. The electrocoagulation system has been used in the mining and oil industries for a long time. The problem is that there were only a couple of waste treatment facilities that were using it and that was not enough to convince the State of Colorado to approve the innovative technology.

Overtime, however, through sheer determination and hard work Round Mountain (RMWSPD)

made progress with the state and with DOLA and are now on the verge of implementing a pilot project funded with DOLA grants and a company called EPIC (Environmental Policy Innovation Center). No funds from RM will be used in the pilot program. This is about to be approved by CDPHE (Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Updates will be issued as progress is made.

Project #3 - The Reservoir

Project Number Three is a state mandated requirement from the Colorado Division of Water

Resources for Round Mountain to build a reservoir. There is much history and many details that have led to this requirement by the state.

In the interest of space we will get to the point directly. Over a number of years Round Mountain has used water that they were technically not entitled to. It was for this reason that they had to purchase the Johnson Ranch to help in the augmentation plan.

At this point it has been determined that a reservoir be built to continue in the assistance to the augmentation plan. The site is about one mile

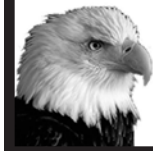
south of the town of Westcliffe near the Gallery well, a Round Mountain property. The design of the reservoir is now ready for approval by the state. The total cost of this project is about three and a half million dollars of which seventy five percent is already funded. One of the partners in this venture is the Upper Arkansas River Conservancy with Round Mountain owning two thirds of the venture. The reservoir will occupy approximately nine acres of land and this project is scheduled to break ground in the summer.

Finally, Round Mountain has a parcel of land about forty acres on which they are currently discharging treated residual sludge. As soon as the wastewater treatment plant is fully operational the plan is to tie up with a solar company to use the land for a solar farm and thus create a new income stream for the district.

The Round Mountain Water and Sanitation District has made significant progress in recent months and promises to be on target to meet all their short and medium term goals.

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HOWARD
from page 1

top-secret Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, Studies and Observations Group, which ran cross-border operations in Laos, Cambodia and North Vietnam.

On December 30, 1968, Howard, then a Sergeant First Class, was in charge of a platoon made up of Americans and Vietnamese soldiers who were on a mission to rescue another team of soldiers who were missing in enemy-controlled territory in Laos.

Once a helicopter inserted the platoon at its specified landing zone, the team moved out, only to quickly be attacked by a much larger enemy force. During the initial firefight, Howard was wounded and his weapon was destroyed.

“My hands were all blown up and burned,” Howard said in a 2003 Library of Congress Veterans History Project interview. “And I couldn’t stand up.”

Howard couldn’t walk, but when he saw his platoon leader, 1st Lt. James Jerson, lying seriously wounded in an exposed area, he didn’t hesitate to crawl through a hail of gunfire to get him. As he was trying to help Jerson, an enemy bullet hit one of Howard’s pouches, which detonated several magazines of ammunition and blew him several feet away.

After a few minutes, Howard realized he wasn’t too injured, so, with the help of a fellow sergeant, he continued his mission to drag Jerson back toward the platoon, which was in disarray because of the attack. Howard then rallied the remaining men into a more organized defense.

“I said, ‘We’re going to establish a perimeter right here, and we’re going to fight or die,’” Howard said of what he told the men who remained.

He said he had the platoon put out strobe lights to identify where they were and call in air support, which arrived to help suppress the enemy around them so the team could make it through the night.

“There was a tributary running off a creek and so [the enemy] had to come across that little tributary to get to our position and fight,” Howard said, explaining that the waterway helped them to better defend their hastily made position.

For the next few hours, Howard ignored his own wounds and crawled from position to position, helping the wounded and encouraging the other members of the platoon to keep fighting. With the help of air support, they successfully repulsed several enemy attacks and were finally in sufficient control enough to allow a quick landing of rescue helicopters before sunrise.

Howard personally made sure all the men, dead and alive, were loaded onto the helicopters



Army Sgt. 1st Class Robert L. Howard, front left, poses for a photo during a deployment to Vietnam. Howard is a Medal of Honor recipient and one of America’s most decorated soldiers.

Army photo



Cutline: The Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, Studies and Observations Group was activated, January 24, 1964, to function as a joint special operations task force in Vietnam. The 5th Special Forces Group was the largest source of volunteers for the unit.

Army photo

before he got into one himself to leave the bullet-swept landing zone. Sadly, Jerson, who Howard fought hard to save, died on the ride to safety.

“That hurt me worse than being shot up, seeing that lieutenant die,” Howard told the Veterans History Project.

According to Army Special Operations Command, only six of the 37 platoon members survived the battle. If it weren’t for Howard’s bravery, it’s likely no one would have come home.

Howard was evacuated to a field hospital for recovery. He said that’s where he learned that he’d been recommended for the Medal of Honor.

“In a way, I felt bad because I didn’t feel that I was worthy of the Medal of Honor for that action because I was not successful in doing what the colonel had directed me to do, and that was to find the team that had been surrounded and captured or killed by the enemy,” Howard told the Veterans History Project. He said he later learned some of those men survived and were taken as prisoners of war.

Howard remained in Vietnam and, in December 1969, commissioned as an officer after receiving a direct appointment from the rank of master sergeant to first lieutenant. He’d reached the rank of captain by February 1971 when he learned he was finally being sent home from Vietnam to receive the Medal of Honor.

In late February 1971, Howard was flown to Washington, D.C., where his wife, Tina, and two daughters, Melissa and Denicia, joined him. On March 2, President



Army leaders unveil a plaque dedicating the Special Operations Command Korea campus in honor of Army Col. Robert L. Howard at a ceremony outside the SOCKOR headquarters building on Camp Humphreys, South Korea, April 16, 2021.

Photo by Air Force Master Sgt. Anthony A. Enomoto

respectively. Howard earned eight Purple Hearts during his career, along with numerous other honors. According to Army Special Operations Command, he is the most decorated soldier to have served in Vietnam.

Over the next two decades, Howard continued with his impressive career. He received a bachelor’s degree from Texas Christian University in 1973 before earning two master’s degrees from Central Michigan University in the early 1980s.

for the Department of Veterans Affairs. He also often spoke with students and troops about the importance of service and the fight for freedom. In the 2000s, he was inducted into the Ranger Hall of Fame and the Army Aviation Association of America Hall of Fame.

Howard spent his last few years living in San Antonio. He died on December 23, 2009, at a hospice in Waco, Texas, after suffering from pancreatic cancer. Howard is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

Howard’s name is remembered in various ways throughout the Special Forces community. In 2013, the 5th Special Forces Group headquarters building at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, was named Howard Hall in his honor, and a plaque dedicating the Special Operations Command Korea campus to him was unveiled at Camp Humphreys, South Korea, in 2021.

An overpass along I-85 near Auburn University in Alabama was also named for Howard. In December 2024, a book about his life, “Beyond the Call of Duty: The Life of Colonel Robert Howard,” was published.

Please see: <https://www.defense.gov/News/Feature-Stories/Story/Article/4014615/medal-of-honor-monday-army-col-robert-l-howard/>



Army 1st Lt. Robert Lewis Howard receives the Medal of Honor from President Richard M. Nixon during a White House ceremony, March 2, 1971.

From Congressional Medal of Honor Society

Richard M. Nixon presented him with the nation’s highest honor for valor during a White House ceremony.

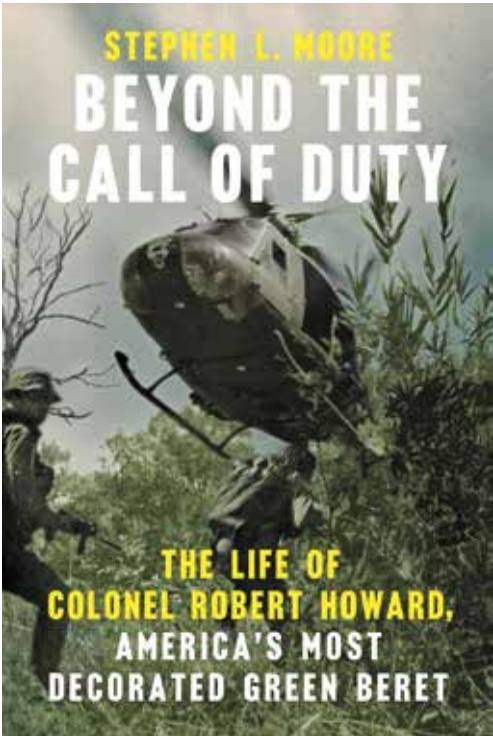
“When I received that honor, I felt that I was sharing it with members of my family that had sacrificed their lives in the Second World War,” Howard said, referring to three of his uncles who died in the conflict. “I try to always maintain the dignity and the honor of having it bestowed upon me.”

Howard’s five tours in Vietnam totaled 55 months in combat, which led to him being wounded 14 times. Between 1968 and 1969, during a 13-month period, Howard was recommended for the Medal of Honor two other times. Those recommendations, however, were downgraded. Instead, he received the Distinguished Service Cross and the Silver Star — the second- and third-highest military awards,

His years of airborne expertise were also put to good use when he took part in two John Wayne movies, making a parachute jump in the 1962 film “The Longest Day,” and as an airborne instructor in 1968’s “The Green Berets,” according to his Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs biography.

Howard eventually divorced, got remarried and had two more children, Roslyn and Robert Jr., the latter of whom went on to serve in the Army.

Howard retired on September 30, 1992, after 36 years of service. For 14 years after that, he worked



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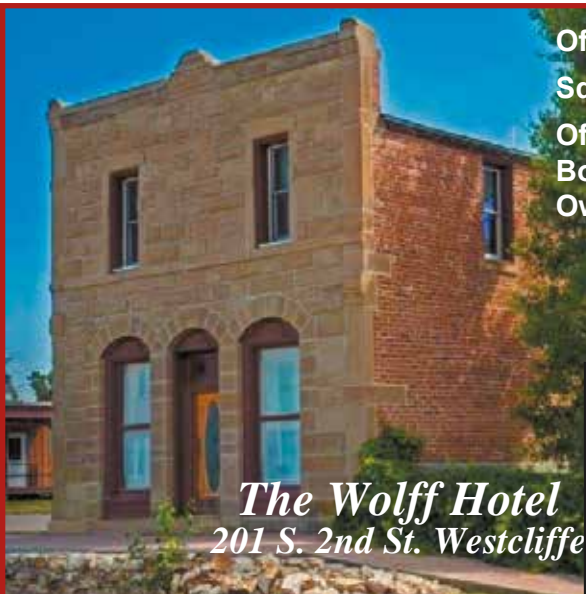


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Fraud, Child Sex Changes, Healthcare For Illegals — Dems Spent Years Expanding Medicaid Beyond Recognition

by Ireland Owens,
DailyCallerNewsFoundation.org



Democrats’ push to massively expand Medicaid over the past several years has turned the program into something nearly unrecognizable.

A series of reports have outlined the growing list of problems at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), including improper payments, healthcare funds being used for non-medical expenses and able-bodied adults receiving funds meant for Americans who may desperately need it. Former President Joe Biden’s CMS massively expanded Medicaid benefits during his sole term, driving Medicaid spending up from \$734 billion at the beginning of his term to \$871.7 billion in 2023.

“The big thing that’s sort of missing is [Medicaid’s] role of covering able-bodied adults in this,” Edmund Haislmaier, a health care policy expert at the Heritage Foundation, told the *Daily Caller News Foundation*. “Medicaid was originally set up to cover what we would call vulnerable enrollees, basically people who could not work and could not expect to have other sources of income or [medical] coverage. So you’re talking about poor children, low-income senior citizens, and disabled people. That is the core focus, and it’s also been expanded to include poor pregnant women over the years. What happened with the Affordable Care Act (ACA) is it was further expanded [Medicaid]

to include able-bodied adults below a certain income level.”

A provision under the ACA, which was signed into law by former President Barack Obama in March 2010, called for Medicaid to be expanded to provide coverage for adults under age 65 with incomes up to 138% of the federal poverty level. Roughly 35 million able-bodied adults were enrolled in Medicaid programs while not working as of May 2023, according to estimates from the Foundation for Government Accountability, a conservative think tank.

Similarly, the Obama-Biden administration also oversaw sweeping expansions to Medicare coverage by abolishing a rule in 2014 preventing Medicare from funding sex-change surgeries. Obama’s administration also expanded coverage for sex-change procedures in 2016 through their interpretation of Section 1557, a non-discrimination provision of the ACA, which helped pave the way for Medicaid funds to be used to cover sex-change operations in certain states.

From January 2018 to September 2023, 16 states funneled over \$165 million toward so-called “gender transition services.”

“The argument that we and others make is ‘look, why is the federal government giving states more money for covering people who have other options, like getting a job and getting coverage privately, and less money for people who need it the most, like disabled people,’” Haislmaier added. “That’s something that should be fixed in reforms.”

Biden also encouraged states to propose waivers to broaden

Medicaid coverage during his presidency, resulting in the CMS approving some states’ requests to use Medicaid funds to pay for non-medical expenses for some individuals, such as rent, air conditioning and food. In April 2024, the federal government approved a request from Massachusetts to use Medicaid funds to pay for up to six months of temporary housing for eligible families and pregnant individuals who are MassHealth members residing in the emergency shelter system.

In the waning weeks of Biden’s presidency, his administration’s CMS also granted Vermont approval to use Medicaid funds to cover the cost of rent for some homeless individuals in the state.

For fiscal year 2025, Medicaid programs are projected to cost roughly \$656 billion, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

Notably, the U.S. spends more on healthcare per individual than any other similar country, with health expenditures per person costing \$12,555 in 2022, which was over \$4,000 higher than any other high-income country. The rate of improper Medicaid payments in 2024 was 5.09% — or \$31.10 billion — 79.11% of which was the result of insufficient documentation, according to the CMS.

House Republicans on February 25th advanced a budget resolution calling for major reductions to overall federal government spending, but Congress has not yet made any specific proposals involving Medicaid. Many Democrats have repeatedly said that Medicaid funding is at risk of

potential cuts by Republican lawmakers, despite President Donald Trump recently emphasizing that he does not want to see any drastic changes to the program.

While Republicans on the House Ways and Means Committee circulated a list of possible cuts to Medicaid funding in recent weeks, the potential cuts were primarily focused on removing illegal migrants from eligibility, which they claimed could save up to \$35 billion over the course of a decade.

Trump told Fox News’ Sean Hannity during a February 14 interview that Medicaid will not be “touched” aside from cases of fraud or illegal migrants found to be misusing the program. Still, Democratic lawmakers have continued making claims in recent weeks that Medicaid funding is in peril.

Democratic House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries claimed in a February 27 post on X that some Americans would have healthcare “ripped away” from them due to House Republicans’ budgetary agenda. Moreover, during Trump’s address to a joint session of Congress on Tuesday, several Democrats attempted to protest the speech by holding up signs that read “Save Medicaid.”

The Biden-Harris administration presided over enormous government spending, which some economists have claimed partially contributed to the rapidly-expanding U.S. federal deficit and widespread inflation. Trump has made weeding out any unnecessary spending and waste at federal agencies a cornerstone of his presidential agenda as part of a wider effort to save American taxpayers money, which has thus

far faced massive opposition from Democrats.

In light of Biden’s Medicaid expansions, some Republican lawmakers have called for drastic reforms to CMS in recent weeks, including Republican Texas Rep. Chip Roy, who claimed in a February 26 post on X that Medicaid is being “abused” by able-bodied individuals “gaming the system,” also noting that Congress has the responsibility “reform” the program.

Similarly, Republican Kansas Sen. Roger Marshall wrote in a February 27 social media post that the U.S. “must return Medicaid to its intended purpose of helping those in desperate need,” and North Carolina Republican Rep. Greg Murphy wrote in Thursday social media post that possible reforms to Medicaid are about “prohibiting able-bodied individuals from abusing the program and states like California getting their Medicaid house in order.”

“Republicans have not been as good about reforming [Medicaid] as they should be,” Haislmaier told the *DCNF*. “They have been more about budget cutting. What you need to do with this is not approach it as a budget issue, you need to approach it as ‘how do we reform this program to better serve people who need it?’ And frankly, to move off of it the people who don’t need it.”

The CMS did not respond to a request for comment from the *DCNF*.

Please see <https://dailycallernewsfoundation.org/2025/03/06/fraud-child-sex-changes-healthcare-for-illegals-dems-spent-years-expanding-medicaid-beyond-recognition/>



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