

BOCC: P&Z Drama! Director Placed on Admin Leave, County Sick/Vacation Time, R&B Update

by George Gramlich,
News and Commentary

The May 15, 2025 Custer County Board of County Commissioners’ (BOCC) regular meeting was held at the All Aboard Westcliffe meeting room and started around 9 a.m. All three Commissioners were in attendance: Chair Bill Canda and members Lucas Epp and Paul Vogelsong.

In Commissioner Items, Epp stated that it was Peace Officers Memorial Day and flags will be flying at half mast. Epp then read the names of all the Deputies and Posse members in the Custer County Sheriff’s Office.

Canda, again, said the County’s TV transmitter on Hopeless Hill is still having problems. They might need a new unit. (It is still under warranty.) Canda then talked about how Road & Bridge will be changing how they maintain roads. Instead of just grading them, they will be spending the time and

money to upgrade the roadbeds and compacting them. They are currently working on Copper Gulch Road. Canda noted that speeding on Copper Gulch Road is a big problem and the SO will be addressing that.

In New Business, the two-week Accounts Payable amount was \$192k. Epp read off the payables that were over \$5k and explained each one. *(Very informative.)*

Next Item was a request by a landowner in the North Creek area to have the BOCC endorse his efforts to have his pond there declared an official Fire Suppression Pond by the state. This is a long, process *(of course, it is Colorado)* and the first step is to have the BOCC endorse it. After a long discussion, the Commissioners agreed to endorse the effort.

The next Item was a request by the Planning Commission to have Kit Shy become an alternate member

of the Planning Commission committee. This was approved.

Epp then reviewed the meeting schedule for the BOCC. Going forward it will be on Wednesdays however, due to a conflict, there will be a BOCC meeting on Thursday, June 19th.

The next Agenda Item was a doozy. It was about sick and vacation time accruals for the County’s employees. The policy was changed last year and the accruals for some employees are in question. Human Resources Director Bob Smith explained the complicated situation with County Attorney Dan Slater adding color. Epp had proposed a plan to solve the issue. After a huge discussion, it was approved.

In Public Comments, local citizen, Jimmy “The Plumber” McMahon had some questions for the regal Commissioners. Jimmy first asked how the “Finance Department’s

software is going?”. (That is, the CIC financial system the county converted a few years ago. There have been constant issues with it.) Epp responded, “that is going to change”, meaning that the Commissioners intend to replace it at some point with a different one. One of a multitude of reasons why, is that the Treasurer’s Office is going to get a new system which won’t work with the current one we have.

Jimmy then asked, “Are we trying to find another auditor?” *(The Commissioners agreed to get a new auditor a while back and was supposed to have put out an RFP to find one. The current auditor, Sam DiNardo and his crew have been our auditors for over 10 years. It was agreed before that the County should be changing auditors every three to five years for safety’s sake and getting “new eyes” on our operation. In the private sector,*

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A Colorado School District Puts Girls Sports Off Limits to Biological Boys

by Sherrie Peif,
CompleteColorado.com

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo.

Colorado’s 18th largest school district, located about 15 miles northeast of Colorado Springs in El Paso County, appears to be the first to unilaterally develop transgender athlete regulations in adherence to recent presidential executive orders.

Saying that “there are inherent differences between boys and girls, meaning biological males and biological females” the Falcon 49 school board last week enacted a new policy specifying in part that “classification of sports team participation by biological sex is therefore necessary to preserve and promote equal opportunity for District 49’s female athletes.”

The policy, titled Preserving Fairness and Safety in Sports, goes on to state: “Allowing boys to compete in girls’ sports is part of a broader attempt to debase the entire category of ‘woman’ and transform laws intended to protect sex-based opportunities into laws that hurt girls by undermining their identity, are inherently unfair, and denigrating to their rights.”

A spokesperson for the Colorado High School Activities Association

(CHSAA) said the policy itself will not prevent the district’s schools from participating in organized sports, despite the organizing group’s bylaws expressly allowing for transgender athletes to compete across biological sex lines.

CHSAA “follows state law regarding participation of transgender students in interscholastic athletics and activities. Our bylaws reflect and align with Colorado’s legal framework, while also recognizing the authority of local schools and districts to make decisions in accordance with their own policies and community values,” said Amanda McClure, CHSAA’s director of communications. “CHSAA does not have a bylaw that mandates a school or district to permit or deny participation by transgender athletes. Instead, we acknowledge the rights of both member schools that choose to allow transgender participation and those that do not, so long as their policies are consistent with applicable law.”

Biological sex is defined in the district’s policy as “an individual’s physical form as a male or female based solely on the individual’s reproductive biology and genetics at birth.”

GIRLS SPORTS
see page 5

Memorial Day Services

Cañon City- The Annual Memorial Day Ceremony at Greenwood Pioneer Cemetery in Cañon City is **Saturday, May 24, 2025**. The ceremony will start at 11a.m. at the Cemetery, which is located on South 1st Street.



Silver Cliff- The American Legion Post 170 family is presenting the 19th Annual Memorial Day observance at the Silver Cliff Community Park on **Monday, May 26, 2025** from 10 to 11a.m. The Speaker will be Charles Bogle. The public is invited to attend this special occasion. (More information on page 3.)



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*Your word is a lamp
to my feet
and a light to my
path.
Psalm 119: 105 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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Key Personnel

George Gramlich - President & Managing Editor
George.Gramlich.sdc@gmail.com

Fred Hernandez - Vice President
FredHer8@proton.me

L. Vass - Secretary and Asst Editor / Graphics Layout
sdc.sentinel@gmail.com

Katherine Brencley - Advertising Coordinator
SentinelAds1791@gmail.com

Office Support

Accounting Services
Bookkeeper.sdc@gmail.com

Yvonne Phillips
sdc.sentinel@gmail.com

Mailing & Delivery

Galen Studebaker

Sentinel Founders

Mike Hess
George Gramlich
Mary Seifert
Rob Canterbury
Katherine Brencley

Sentinel Honor Roll

Dan Bubis
Jackie Bubis
Carol Clemenson
Scott Clemenson
Barbara Napolitan

Contributors

Audrey Slater
Mtn. Photo in Logo
by Peggi Collins

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website <https://SangreDeCristoSentinel.com>

Medal of Honor Recipient
Charles Calvin Rogers
The Battle for Fire Base Rita

by The Giant Killer

When the Fire Base was about to be overrun by the enemy, he met them with a Bayonet and an Assault Rifle!

When asked to conjure in one's imagination the image of a fearless soldier, fighting with fervent ferocity in hand-to-hand combat and battling relentlessly against wave after wave of attacks despite suffering multiple wounds, one would not usually associate the image of such a warrior with the stereotype of a college mathematics major or an aspiring priest.

Yet in the heat of a close quarters battle, in the thick of a furious firefight in which life and death hang by the most fragile and tenuous of threads, stereotypes often fall to pieces, and indeed can be blown completely apart.

The math major and aspiring priest in question was Major General (then Lieutenant Colonel) Charles Calvin Rogers, and the battle in which he earned a Medal of Honor for his tremendous valor, fortitude, and courage occurred in the Vietnam War, on November 1, 1968.

Rogers had joined the United States Army in 1952. By the time of his tour of duty in Vietnam, he was serving as the commanding officer of 1st Battalion, 5th Artillery, 1st Infantry Division.

In 1968, he was thirty-nine years old, and while he had served in the army for some years, front line combat was not something he



had seen very much of, at least not up until the fateful evening of October 31.

That, however, was something that would change very drastically when the clock ticked past midnight that night. Stationed at Fire Base Rita, a forward fire base in the jungle near the Cambodian border, Charles Rogers' main duty was to provide artillery support to infantry.

Little did he know that he and the artillery troops under his command would end up involved in as ferocious and savage a bout of fighting as any jungle patrol was likely to see.

Shortly after midnight, the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) launched an all-out assault on Fire Base Rita, determined to overrun it and take control of the artillery weapons stationed there.

If this objective proved unattainable, then their secondary goal was chillingly simple: obliterate the fire base entirely, along with all American troops there.

In the dead of night, Fire Base Rita was subjected to a sudden and vicious bombardment of mortars, rockets and RPGs, launched from the surrounding jungle.

As if the mortar and rocket assault wasn't terrifying enough, the surreal red glow of hundreds of flares revealed an even more horrifying spectacle: a full frontal infantry assault was being launched.

Hundreds of battle-hardened North Vietnamese troops poured out of the jungle in waves in a near-suicidal frenzy, utterly determined to overrun the base, whatever the cost.

Medal of Honor
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Local Mountain News & Notices

Memorial Day Service

Press Release

The American Legion Post 170 family is presenting the 19th annual Memorial Day observance at the Silver Cliff Community Park on Monday, 26 May 2024 from 10 a.m. to 11a.m. The public is invited to attend this special occasion. This year’s observance includes keynote speaker Charles Bogel Col. USAR (Retired).

Ceremonies offer introduction, recognition and thanks to all Veterans who have served and currently serving our Country. Military Honors will be presented with three rifle volleys, taps and placing the Colors at the soldiers cross. The National Anthem and Amazing Grace will be presented by the Our Lady of the Assumption Church Choir. Following the ceremonies refreshments will be served by the Auxiliary Unit 170.

State Bound



Bobcat Track bound for State Competition. L to R: Grant Rusk, Hayden Hampton, and Levi Carichner. All three Bobcats placed well. See page 10
Courtesy photos from Custer County Schools

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Silent Signature, Rising Resistance: HB1312 Becomes Law, But Parents Vow to Fight On

by Jen Schumann, The Rocky Mountain Voice

(Editor/GG: We had to edit this excellent piece due to length and graphics. See the link at the end for the whole thing.)

Gov. Jared Polis signed House Bill 25-1312 into law on Friday, May 16, without a press conference, social media announcement or public ceremony.

While the bill, known as the "Kelly Loving Act," was hailed by progressive lawmakers as a milestone for transgender rights, many Coloradans who opposed the bill say the governor's quiet signature is a telling indication of just how controversial the legislation had become.

Parental rights groups and faith-based organizations who protested HB25-1312 throughout the session say the final version still undermines their fundamental freedoms. They argue the amendments stripped from the bill prove public pressure worked – but insist what remains is a direct threat to families, schools and the Constitution.

Erin Lee, one of Colorado's most visible parental rights advocates, reacted immediately after the bill was signed.

"@GovofCO has just signed HB 1312. He did it at the end of the day on Friday, because he is a coward who knows this is the most controversial bill OF ALL TIME and the people are (at least) 90% against it," Erin Lee posted on Twitter/X.

Erin for Parental Rights @Erin4Parents

@GovofCO has just signed HB 1312.

He did it at the end of the day on Friday, because he is a coward who knows this is the most controversial bill OF ALL TIME and the people are (at least) 90% against it.

Even Gavin Newsome vetoed this bill's equivalent in CA.

We will not stop fighting this. We will ensure those who pushed it are never re-elected. The fight against 1312 and the downfall of those who shoved it down our throats has only just begun.

What Polis signed—and what it still does

Among the provisions now codified into law:

- Section 6 requires that if a school or district chooses to adopt any name-use policy, that policy must be inclusive of all reasons a student might adopt a name different from their legal name. The law does not include any requirement to notify or consult parents.
- Section 8 updates the Colorado Anti-Discrimination Act (CADA) to include "chosen name" and "how the individual chooses to be addressed" as protected elements under the definition of "gender expression." This applies to schools, employers, public accommodations, and housing.

On the same day HB25-1312 was signed into law, Rep. Brandi Bradley posted a video breaking down what she called the bill's most dangerous sections, urging voters not to be fooled by its amendments. She specifically warned that the new language around "chosen name" could expose businesses and individuals to uncertain legal liability.

"Don't trust the bill summary— it never changes, even when the bill does... They're lying to you when they say the bill is fixed. It came back from the Senate worse than before," stated Rep. Brandi Bradley.

What was removed—and why critics still aren't satisfied

Polis allies removed two of the most hotly contested provisions before final passage:

- A proposed shield law to protect out-of-state transgender-identifying minors seeking treatment in Colorado was stripped and replaced with a non-binding legislative declaration.
- Language directing family courts to consider a parent's affirmation or rejection of a child's gender identity was entirely cut.

While some lawmakers touted these removals as proof of compromise, Lee called the changes a "smokescreen."

"The end result of 1312 is exactly the same... The amendments and changes were intended to be a smokescreen to confuse the voters and to gaslight our argument around parental rights," said Lee.

Erin for Parental Rights @Erin4Parents

PSA: 1312 is NOT better! Yes, they manipulated some language. Polis threw up a smokescreen of amendments to gaslight and confuse us.

But the intent and end result of the bill summary on 1312 REMAINS THE SAME. The monsters who pushed this bill still got everything they wanted. Polis thinks he fended us all off. So keep the pressure on him to veto!!! Pressure works — just because they passed the bill (and even if he signs it) — we are still winning. Still unifying around their insanity. Still shining a spotlight. Still taking ground. Still keeping the enemy on notice. Keep going.

What changes when: new timelines spelled out in law

- Immediately in effect:
 - o CADA expansion to include chosen names and preferred forms of address as protected characteristics (Section 8)
 - o Name policy inclusivity in schools (Section 6)
 - o School dress code flexibility: Students must be allowed to choose from any uniform options available (Section 7)
- Effective October 1, 2026:
 - o Expanded name and sex designation changes on driver's licenses (Section 11), ID cards (Section 12), and documents for those not lawfully present (Section 13) to allow three changes without a court order
 - o Repeal of one-time limit on amending gender designation on birth certificates (Section 10)

The quiet signature that sparked louder outrage

On Friday night, Lee highlighted how another Democrat governor had handled a similar bill very differently. "Even Gavin Newsom vetoed this bill's equivalent in CA," Lee posted.

A few hours later, Sven Scharpen, an advocate for autistic youth and vocal opponent of HB25-1312, released a video urging immediate action from parents and faith leaders.

"Parents, get your kids out of school right now. Churches, you need to stand up and fight for truth," Scharpen stated.

Sven Scharpen @sven_scharpen

My statement on HB1312 being signed:

We will not comply! Parents, get your kids out of school right now!

HB 1312 see page 8



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Local Mountain News & Notices

Silver Cliff Welcomes Arkansas Valley Flywheelers for Annual Tractor Pull

Press Release

The 2025 Silver Cliff Tractor Pull will be held on Saturday, June 21st and Sunday, June 22nd, at the Silver Cliff Park. The pull starts at 11 a.m. on Saturday, 10 a.m. on Sunday, and is free to spectators.

For those wanting to participate, registration is from 8 to 10 a.m. on Saturday and 9 to 10 a.m. on Sunday. Insurance is required to participate, and the fee is \$20. If you'd like to join the Arkansas Valley Flywheelers, a yearly membership is \$15 per household. (Membership is not required if this is the only pull you'd like to participate in.)

The Arkansas Valley Flywheelers join together to restore and preserve for posterity

machinery that accompanied the machine age of the 19th and 20th centuries. Such machines may include animal powered, external and internal combustion, farm equipment, military equipment, autos, trucks, tractors, toys, crafts, and other complementary equipment, materials and collections.

For the Silver Cliff Tractor Pull, there are six different weight classes ranging from 0 to 7,501 and up. Tractors can be as new as 1990 with a maximum of 100 horsepower.

Please visit our website at avflywheelers.com for more information and the pull form which explains the years, classes, etc. We hope you'll join us for this year's Silver Cliff Pull!

Have a Tourniquet in Your Vehicle

Press Release
The Custer County Sheriff's Office

—May 19, 2025

This weekend Custer Sheriff's Deputies responded to three separate motorcycle crashes. Our thoughts and prayers are with the riders who fortunately all survived the serious crashes. These crashes occurred in the area between Wetmore and Mackenzie Junction encompassing the area commonly known as Hard-scrabble on Highway 96 in eastern Custer County.

In one crash, Sunday evening, an off-duty deputy happened to drive up to the downed motorcycle first and called 911. The friends of the downed rider asked the deputy for a tour-

niquet. The deputy had one tourniquet in his personal car. Additional on-duty deputies arrived and described the injuries as life threatening. The deputies described one leg as "partially amputated" and one arm "partially amputated". Before the response was over, we applied a total of FOUR tourniquets to get the bleeding completely stopped.

If you ride a motorcycle, wearing a helmet is critical to ensuring your survival if you make a mistake and crash. Right up there with a helmet in life saving importance, is a tourniquet attached to your jacket for quick access. Do you have a friend or loved one who rides a motorcycle? If so consider buying them a tourniquet to protect them when they ride

especially in rural areas like Custer County where an ambulance must travel a long distance to reach the patient. Consider taking the Stop the Bleed <https://cms.bleedingcontrol.org/class/search> class so that you can help yourself and others who need help after a traumatic incident. You cannot use a belt successfully as a tourniquet. It won't get tight enough to stop the bleeding on injuries like this above the femur, or fully lock in place.

We bought our tourniquets for our deputies from Snakestaff Systems. You can also find tourniquets at sporting goods stores and firearms dealers. Are you going on a motorcycle ride this coming holiday weekend? Buy that tourniquet today.

Veterans Rescue Ranch Activities

Veterans Rescue Ranch is hosting a Veteran's Dinner at The Pines Ranch on Friday, May 23rd. Christy Schram will speak about her new book and life the army. All veterans are welcome and the dinner is free for them. 5-8 pm. RSVP 513-317-7647

On Saturday May 24th, EvenPulse is hosting their 3rd Annual event for the Westcliffe Community on their train-

ing - Optimal Performance under Stress. The training has been taught to active duty, law enforcement and first responders for over 20 years with 65,000 people trained. People will learn valuable skills for self-regulation of stress, day to day, moment to moment. Childcare and lunch are included. This event is offered as a fundraiser for Veterans Rescue Ranch so donations are welcome. RSVP Text or Call 303-990-2324.

BOCC from page 1

three to five years is normal, and in some industries, mandatory.) Epp responded by saying that there is no state rule for how many years a county can use the same auditor and that we should change every five years. Then he started waffling about getting a new auditor, saying, in essence, you don't know what you are getting with a new auditor and that DiNardo goes into a lot of detail. (But they all do. It is their job. Bottom line: it sounds like they are not actively looking for an auditor to replace

DiNardo for this year. Remember, they agreed to find another auditor last fall. It is like eight months later...)

The Commissioners then went into Executive Session re a personnel matter.

Coming out of the long ES, Epp made a motion that Planning & Zoning Executive Director Dorothy Carsten be placed on paid administrate leave immediately until May 28th. Epp said on that date the BOCC will decide what to do.

And that was that. Another episode in the continuing saga of Happy Valley.

GIRLS SPORTS from page 1

Under the new policy, athletic teams in the district will be divided into three categories: boys, girls or co-ed, and stipulates that boys cannot compete on girls' teams, girls cannot compete on boys' teams, locker rooms are not interchangeable, and hotel rooms will not co-mingle biological boys with biological girls.

The policy makes it clear that, despite possible conflict with Colorado anti-discrimination laws, the action was taken after a presidential executive order that the school board believes would put its federal funding in jeopardy if they did not comply.

President Trump announced in Executive Order 14201 (February 5, 2025) that "it is the policy of the United States to rescind all funds from educational programs that deprive women and girls of fair athletic opportunities, which results in the endangerment, humiliation, and silencing

of women and girls and deprives them of privacy."

District 49 is currently suing the state over those anti-discrimination laws.

Although CHSAA's bylaws state that "Member schools shall ensure that all students have equal access and opportunities to participate in activities and athletics without unlawful discrimination based on disability, race, creed, color, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, national origin, or ancestry," McClure said that "CHSAA has never imposed any penalties or sanctions on a member school or district based on its local transgender participation policy. Our approach has always been rooted in collaboration, respect for local governance, and adherence to Colorado law."

Please see: <https://completenesscolorado.com/2025/05/14/colorado-school-district-girls-sports-off-limits-biological-boys/>

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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 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
10 - 11 a.m. Women’s Veteran Coffee Social
West Custer County Library Community Rm.,
209 Main St. Westcliffe
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
9 a.m. Women’s Bible Studay at First Baptist Church
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.
9:45-11:45 a.m. The Posse Ladies Bible Study SUMMER
3 meets - June 18, July 23, August 20 **@**
305 County Road 159, 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 a.m. Mens’ Prayer Breakfast at First Baptist Church

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



Suspect Arrested in Assault of a Parishioner at St. Michael's Church

Press Release

The suspect in the early morning of May 3 assault of a parishioner at St. Michael’s Church, in Cañon City, was arrested today after officers were able to establish probable cause to obtain a warrant for the arrest of Delaney Sam (25), of Cañon City. Mr. Sam is being held without bond in the Fremont County’s Sheriff’s Office until he can see a Judge and be advised on charges. He is being held on the following charges:

- 2nd Degree Assault -F4

- Menacing- F5
- Possession of an Illegal Weapon- M1

On May 3, 2025, at approximately 2:51 a.m., officers were dispatched to St. Michael’s Church located at 1016 Mystic Ave., on report of a suspicious person. On arrival, offices contacted a 51-year old male party who reported he had been assaulted. The victim gave an initial statement and was transported to St. Thomas More hospital where his injuries were treated.

Over the next several days, Officers collected video surveillance footage and evidence and developed information on the suspect. Officers eventually identified the suspect as Mr. Sam.

Chief Schick expressed his pride in the officers’ efforts in investigating the case, identifying the offender, and making the arrest. Although this appears to be random acts of violence, our community and officers took it seriously, fueling their efforts to resolve the case. I think the community can feel a little safer this evening with the violent offender off the streets of Cañon City.

HB 1312 from page 4

Churches, you need to stand up & fight for truth! Autistics, I will fight for you, I will be your voice, I will be your charismatic leader, and I will make sure you’re safe!!

Gov. Polis signed HB25-1312 on Friday, May 16 at 11:12 a.m. – but made no mention of it publicly. A day later, he released a 22-second video celebrating nine signed bills. HB25-1312 wasn’t one of them.

The movement that won’t back down

Opponents of HB25-1312 see the governor’s silence as proof their resistance mattered – and as fuel to keep going.

The Colorado Parent Advocacy Network posted Friday night: “We warned you... we will not back down.”

Colorado Parent Advocacy Network@CPANColorado

Well, we warned you, and now it’s official.

@GovofCO, with all eyes on you, you signed HB25-1312—trampling our Constitution, our parental rights, and our freedoms. But make no mistake—WE, THE PARENTS, will not back down. We will fight to protect our children from those who seek to undermine our families and silence our voices.

9:40 PM · May 16, 2025

Less than an hour after Polis posted his recap video omitting HB25-1312, Lee made it clear the fight wasn’t over.

“This can go one of two ways... Colorado has driven over the edge of a cliff. But a bunch of us grassroots warriors grabbed the bumper and are holding on by a thread... We’re not going to fix it overnight, but we CAN bring it back from the brink. This is a tipping point. As goes Colorado, so goes the nation... What’s it going to be?” challenged Lee.

Whether or not HB25-1312 is ultimately challenged in court, its passage appears to have galvanized a movement – one that insists the governor can sign bills quietly, but the public will respond loudly.

Please see: <https://rockymountaininvoice.com/2025/05/silent-signature-rising-resistance-hb1312-becomes-law-but-parents-vow-to-fight-on/>

Custer Senior Center Menu

Monday, May 26

Closed Memorial Day

Tuesday, May 27

#90 Swedish Meatball

Whipped Potatoes w/Beef Gravy

Chopped Spinach

Orange Bran Muffin

Thursday, May 29

#57 Lemon Baked Fish

Scalloped Potatoes

Spinach Salad w/Mandarin Oranges

Malt Vinegar Banana

WW Bread w/Butter

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 \$4 suggested donation per meal is appreciated, but not required. All menus subject to change.

Come and Worship

Christian Science
9:30 a.m. Worship
8 Bassick Place, Westcliffe

Church of Christ
9:30 a.m. Bible Study
10:30 a.m. Worship
818 Ohio Street, Silver Cliff
719/783-4601

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints
240 Ridgeline Dr, Westcliffe
Pres: 719/214-4589

Cody Park Community Church
9:30 a.m. Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Worship
Tues, 8:30 a.m., Prayer Mtg.
Wedn. 7 p.m. Bible Study
0157 County Rd. 27A
Cotopaxi 719/942-3526

Community United Methodist Church
8 a.m. & 10 a.m. Worship
202 S. 6th Street, Westcliffe
719/783-2511

Cotopaxi Community Church
9:45 a.m. Sunday School
11 a.m. Worship
6 p.m. Wedn. Bible Study
PastorSteveHolcomb@gmail.com
20326 Hwy. 50, Cotopaxi

First Baptist Church of Westcliffe
9:30 a.m. Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Fellowship
10:45 a.m. Worship
4:30 p.m. Wedn. AWANAS
410 S. 6th Street, Westcliffe
Pastor Josh Olsteen
719/783-2498

High Country Mennonite Church
9:30 a.m. Worship
10:45 a.m. Sunday School
103 N. Adams St, Westcliffe
719/783-9045

Huerfano Community Bible Church
10:30 a.m. Sunday Worship
7 p.m. Thursday Bible Study
603 Leon Street, Walsenburg
(719) 251-9053

Hope Lutheran Church
2 p.m. Worship
3:15 p.m. Bible Study
3rd & Powell Streets, Westcliffe
Pastor Dan Kletke 719/783-2323
Lange Hall 719/783-2561

Living Stone Calvary Chapel
Saturday evenings: 5:30 p.m.
Sunday Mornings: 9 a.m. & 11a.m.
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Pastor Sean Meagher 719/276-0863

Our Lady of the Assumption Roman Catholic Church
Diocese of Pueblo
11 a.m. Sunday Mass
10 a.m. (2nd Tuesday of month) Mass
10 a.m. Wednesday Mass
5:30 p.m. Thursday Mass
109 S. 5th Street, Westcliffe
719/783-3507

Our Lady of Mt. Zion Catholic Church
11 a.m. Mass, 2nd & 3rd Sunday of month
210 S. 2nd St, Westcliffe
719/783-2491

Praise Community Church
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Praise & Worship 10:45 a.m.
215 N Pikes Peak Ave., Florence
719/784-1184

St. Luke's Episcopal Church
10:30 a.m. Worship & Eucharist
11:30 a.m. Fellowship
8:30 a.m. Prayer Service, Thursdays
3rd & Rosita Streets, Westcliffe
719/783-2477

St. Patrick's Anglican Church
11 a.m. Worship
403 S. 2nd S., Westcliffe
925/339-0175 or 719/783-2500

Sacred Heart Catholic Church
Diocese of Pueblo
Saturday Mass 4 p.m.
Highway 69, Gardner
Bldg. Mickey. 719/746-2037

Sangre de Cristo Cowboy Church
Pastor: Mike Shields
10 a.m. Sunday School Bible Study
11 a.m. Worship
Last Sunday of Month:
Potluck at Noon
sangredecristocowboychurch.com
also on Facebook
60260 Hwy 69, Westcliffe
719/232-5372

Sangre de Cristo Fellowship
9 a.m. Meet & Greet
9:30 a.m. Service
120 Jerry Drive, Westcliffe
719/783-0903

Sangre de Cristo Seminary Chapel
10 a.m. Worship
6160 County Rd. 130, Westcliffe
719/ 371-1822

Valley Bible Fellowship
10 a.m. Worship
116 Hermit Lane, Silver Cliff
719/581-7572

Wetmore Baptist Church
9:45 a.m. Sunday School
10:45 a.m. Worship
6 p.m. Worship
Junction of Hwy 96 & 67, Wetmore
719/371-1230

Wetmore Community Church
9 a.m. Sunday School
10 a.m. Worship
699 County Rd. 395, Wetmore
719/784-0596

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.

Romans 8: 18-19 ESV





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Events

May 1-31, Sangres Art Guild ~ Light and Motion Art Show, 3rd Street Gallery, 59000 N. Hwy 69

Friday, May 23, 7 - 8 p.m.
Custer County Schools BACCALAURATE East Gym

Saturday, May 24, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Custer County Senior Graduation @ Henrich Football Field

Saturday, May 24, 1 p.m.
Memorial Day Weekend Parade on Main Streets To participate email dena@bearridgewestcliffe.com OR call or text Dena@719-371-5503

Saturday, May 24, KLRZ Block Party on 2nd St after the parade

Saturday, May 24, 11 a.m. and 9:30 p.m.
SJO Sun Observing Hour & evening Public Star Party @Smoking Jack Observatory next to the Bluff

Monday, May 26, 10 a.m.
Memorial Day Observance at Silver Cliff Park 1099 Fourth St.

May 31st, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Flea Market Beckwith Ranch @ 64159 Highway 69 N, Westcliffe

Classifieds

Announcements

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

OUTDOORSMANS DAYS
August 8th & 9th 2025
Pathfinder Regional Park Florence, CO
VENDORS WELCOME
for more information go to coloradooutdoorsmansdays.com or call 719 275-4077

For Sale

ORGANIC EGGS and Meat
Call the Egg Lady (719) 371-5497

Garage Sale

GARAGE SALE in alley 400 block S 2nd Street 9am-3pm, Sat, May 24
No junk - gardening, storage, quilts, wallpaper, frames, picket gate, vanity, household, good misc.

Help Wanted

Sangre de Cristo Sentinel

We Need Local people to Report on LOCAL News
Stop by Tues - Wedn. 9-3, Fri. 9-12
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talpost170westcliffe@gmail.com
(719) 783-2462 westcliffepost170.org

Custer County Community Sharing Food Pantry
120 N. 3rd St. Fri. (719) 783-2994
OPEN First 3 Fridays of the month 11 – 2 p.m.

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

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

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

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

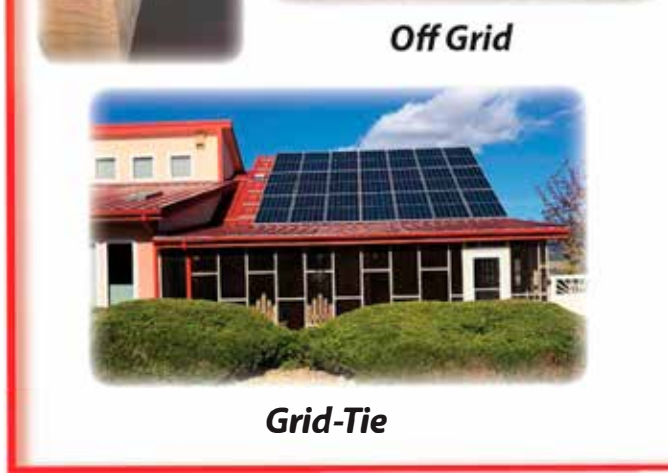
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Regional 719-276-5488 Local Office 719-275-2351

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(719) 618-8266 vso@custercounty.co.gov
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(719) 783-9138
Tue. – Fri.: 10 a.m. – 5:30 p.m..
Saturday: 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

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Local Mountain News & Notices



Grant Rusk continued his great season finishing in a four-way-tie for second place at the State Meet with a jump of 21-02.50, which also broke the school record.
Photo by Jennifer Russ Photography

Impressive Performance for Bobcats at State



Hayden running the 400 meter and accepting her 8th place Medal.



KIDS Friday, May 23, 2025 Royal Gorge Route Railroad



Just west of Cañon City is the Royal Gorge. It is a canyon of the Arkansas River. It begins at the mouth of Grape Creek about two miles west of central Cañon City and continues in a west-northwesterly direction for approximately six miles until ending near U.S. Route 50. Being one of the deepest canyons in Colorado, it is also known as the Grand Canyon of the Arkansas River, with a maximum depth of 1,250 ft. It is quite a tourist attraction, including the Royal Gorge Bridge and Park.

Cañon City was founded in 1860 to exploit possible mineral deposits in the area. In 1877, silver and lead were discovered in nearby Leadville, prompting a race to build rail access to the area. On April 19, 1878, a construction crew from the Santa Fe began grading for a railroad just west of Cañon City. The D&RG sent crews to the same area but were blocked by the Santa Fe graders in the narrow canyon. This brought about the Royal Gorge Railroad War, two years of warfare between the two companies. Finally, the D&RG completed its line and leased it for use to the Santa Fe for a 30-year period.

In the 1890s the Royal Gorge Railroad route was used as a passenger route with as many as four trains per day going through the gorge. Passenger train service on the main line was discontinued in 1967. Rio Grande continued freight service through the gorge as part of their Tennessee Pass subdivision until 1989, when the company merged with the Southern Pacific Railroad, and the Southern Pacific took control of the gorge line.

In 1998, the Royal Gorge Route Railroad was reestablished and has become a premier destination attraction carrying guests through the Royal Gorge each year. Today more than 100,000 travelers from around the world ride the Royal Gorge Route Railroad, enjoying the delicious meals and breathtaking scenery.

by Audrey Slater. Sources: : https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Gorge_Route_Railroad, <https://www.royalgorgeroute.com/about-us/royal-gorge-history/> Photo: <https://www.colorado.com/historic-places-districts/royal-gorge-route-railroad>

Sangre de Cristo Sentinel • Westcliffe, Colorado CORNER

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons[fn] of God..
Romans 8 :14 ESV

Bobcats Scoreboard!

Thursday-Saturday, May 15-17:
Celebrations from the STATE Track Meet:
🐾 **Grant Rusk:** 2nd in High Jump, 3rd in Triple (one inch from breaking the school record), and 3rd in long jump (breaking his own school record!)
🐾 **Levi Carichner:** 7th in the 200 (school record!)
🐾 **Hayden Hampton:** 8th in the 400m
Good work! Congratulations!

Booster Club Bobcat Corner



Come out and support your Custer County Bobcats!
All games and dates are subject to change without notice.

HUGE SHOUT OUT
to the Spring Sports Coaches!
Bobcat Baseball:
Head Coach: Eddie Crispe
Assistant Coaches: Brandon Bradford & Tara Simmons
Bobcat Track & Field:
Head Coach: Joy Parrish
Assistant Coach: Kristin Cunningham
Thank you for all you do!

Investigation Results in Superintendent's Dismissal, Teacher Evaluations Complete, School Board Continues with Policy Updates, Board Position Opening

by Laura Vass

Custer County School District C-1 Regular School Board Meeting on May 13th, began at 4:30 p.m.

All School Board members were present except Brad Davis who is moving out of the county and turned in his resignation. After a few changes to the agenda, to include removal of the Executive Session, the public was given their opportunity to speak.

Lea Grundy encouraged people to stay for a full meeting as she has been doing, noting that she has found that Facebook is not the best place to get information. She said she had requested the criminal background records so she could understand the issue with the administration. As such, she thanked the Board for doing their due diligence in this matter.

A student and parent expressed disappointment that the football Coach resigned.

School Counselor Troy Bomgardner expressed concern about the turnover in recent years and asked that the Board give some grace to the Superintendent and Principal (who were on paid leave pending investigation) and questioned if the Board broke policy in not doing reviews of the Superintendent in September and December. (Superintendent Peck was given his review in January, in agreement with his contract.)

Teacher, Lauri Yarger, expressed some frustration about short notice (30 days) between First and Second readings of the policies. She said she printed everything from First readings and Second readings and compared them in order to see any changes. (The Board and committee were not aware that changes were not visible in the website upload process. CASB model policies have no changes.) Ms. Yarger's policy concerns were put on the agenda for next month.

Board Secretary and Policy committee member Jennifer Kriegh explained the policy update process: First reads downloaded from CASB contain no changes for the first read. 2) The Policy committee updates formatting and makes suggestions. If the policy pertains to a department it is shared with the department. Any time someone communicates suggestions to the Board, those policies are given discussion time either at the committee meetings or at the Board meetings. First readings are up for a month. Second readings are also posted for a month and these are redlined if there is a change, with wording in green if there are attached suggestions. If a policy pertains to a department it is shared with the department. Yarger said, "It feels like you are skipping community and teacher input." The policies are posted on the district website for community access.

(Note: The policies have been worked on for the entire school year through a committee that includes the Superintendent, a school Board member, someone from the community, a teacher, etc. and the process works pretty well. If something doesn't seem right, contact the Board. This would have easily cleared up questions and alerted the Board and committee of a problem. It turns out that some document transfers from one program to another, ie. Google docs to Word instead of PDF, on some computers/printers, do not retain the redlining. The committee will explore ways to remedy this issue.)

Some of the policies being updated were noted as approved in minutes of the last few years but they were not formatted or uploaded and there is no record of what was adopted for those policies. So they must be redone.

Under CORRESPONDENCE TO THE BOARD, a letter was read from a parent thanking the Board for their "swift and fair action"

and commending them for their "actions with administration."

"You did not assume "guilty until proven innocent" (which has been the ongoing theme of some outspoken community members and local reporters in their unhealthy attitude and unsubstantiated accusations toward the Board). This is a serious situation which definitely warrants investigation. The decision to put administration on paid leave during the course of the investigation is fair and appropriate since the safety of students should always come first and until an investigation is completed, we do not know whether or not the current administration has been negligent in their duties to protect our students and follow state laws. Only a complete and thorough investigation can give us these answers and alleviate these concerns. I have said before and will say again, my fondness for any administrator does not supersede my need for that administrator to adequately perform the duties of their office, especially with regard to student safety."

Under BOARD OF EDUCATION AND SUPERINTENDENT ACCOUNTABILITY, acting Superintendent and Principal, Walt and Lori Cooper gave a presentation on how the process works for background checks: Licensed and non-licensed staff are different. The first is done and updated via CDE. Those background checks are consistently monitored. For non-licensed staff, the administrator does the background checks through the CBI portal and must also monitor and request updates.

The status of teacher evaluations was noted. Peck previously told the Board that evals were current. Elementary teacher evals were completed by the elementary principal. For middle school and high school, no evals had been entered this school year, so Mrs. Cooper had to force close the eval processes in the system (creating a start over) in order to conduct

end of year evals. Lori said she had conducted 14 planned and 10 spontaneous evals for the secondary teachers. (What a feat! Evals are now complete.)

The current list of hires was properly updated. The Board was misinformed by Peck that licensing was correct. The acting Superintendent completed the correct licensure process for two high school teachers, a third was not eligible for licensing.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEM changes included: accepting the resignation of Brian Bills, Health PE teacher, and Mrs. Longfallow's move from 5th Grade to Art teacher.

The Board approved meeting minutes for April 8, 16 and 29, accepted resignations from Mari Raley, Fourth Grade, Brian Bills-Health PE, Clayton Stallones Jr., HS head football coach, and Candice Stipanovic - SPED Paraprofessional. New hire approvals included: Deborah Matcham, Stephanie Gasseling, Jodi Price as Elementary teachers, Kristi Giste-Barnes -Title 1, Bethany Hogg Elementary (Alt Licensure) and Alan Paxton - MS head baseball coach.

Other items approved under Consent Agenda included, MOU with Pueblo Community College Gateway Program, Approval of Non-Probationary Certified Employee Renewal: Carrie Smith, and Approval of Administrative Renewals: Sydney Benesch, Principal.

Consent Item H approved 20 First readings of Policies. (Note: these are taken from CASB and are not altered) Second readings were approved as amended. (The amendment removed several policies from the list so they could be further evaluated. (Policies dropped were 4)BEDH - Public Participation at School Board Meetings, moved to the next meeting as a Discussion Item, 5) BG - School Board Policy

Process, and 6) BG-R - Policy Adoption.

Under STAFF REPORTS, COMTSS has a new statement change on Logical Discipline which takes effect in 2026. Transportation head Traci Terry reviewed the recommendations from the State on Bus replacements. The district continues to maintain current buses.

Stacy Terrill; For CCKC, a Family Fun Day is planned for June 14th, and she noted Silver Cliff also has a fun day in the works.

Mr. Cooper said BOCES has four well-qualified candidates for director. BOCES will choose a candidate at the meeting on May 14th.

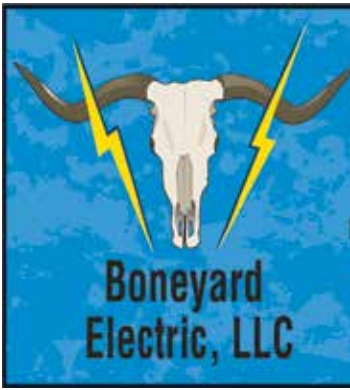
For Legislative, Jennifer Kriegh noted the 4-year average funding process for school budgets, and a coming requirement on cell phone use and policy but didn't have final details.

The FINANCIAL REPORTS were given by Charlotte Lindaman. The Budget hearings have been done (twice) and on June 24th a resolution will be up for adoption. The budget draft is posted for all to review.

Under DISCUSSION ITEMS & PRESENTATIONS, Acting Superintendent Walt Cooper gave an update on Y25-26 staffing. He explained the Adjunct Licensure process. There is a statewide shortage of teachers applying for jobs and it's not just rural districts. Custer County Schools has no applicants for Math teacher, High School counselor, or the Tech Position, which is now listed as Industrial Arts to broaden the applicant pool. Advertising will be increased.

Cooper said (twice) that for the Budget they need to restructure

SCHOOL BOARD
see page 14



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Owner

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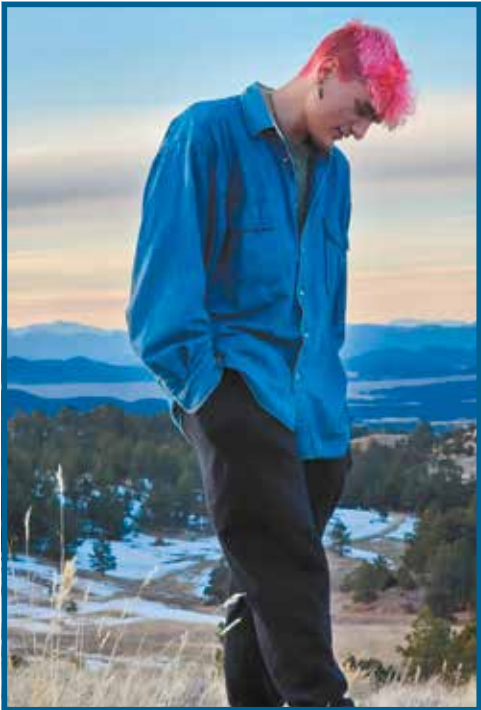
Summer Reading!

FREE Foam Party Kickoff June 3rd!
10 - 11 am @ Hermit Park

West Custer County Library Snacks & Crafts!



Bobcat High School Commencement



Jacksyn Adamov



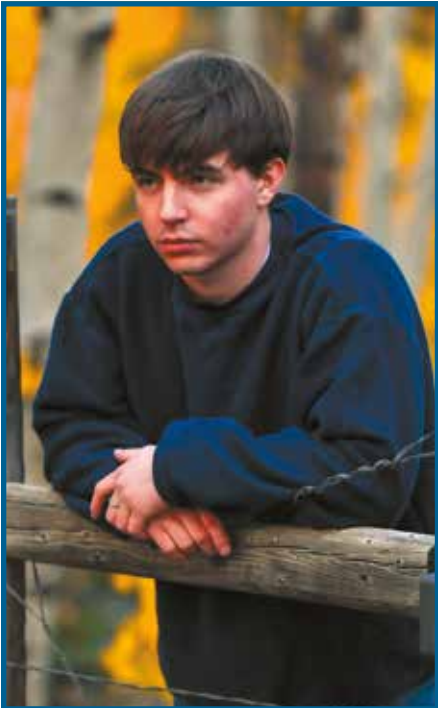
Lily Bomgardner



Ivy Carichner



Cecilia Constantine



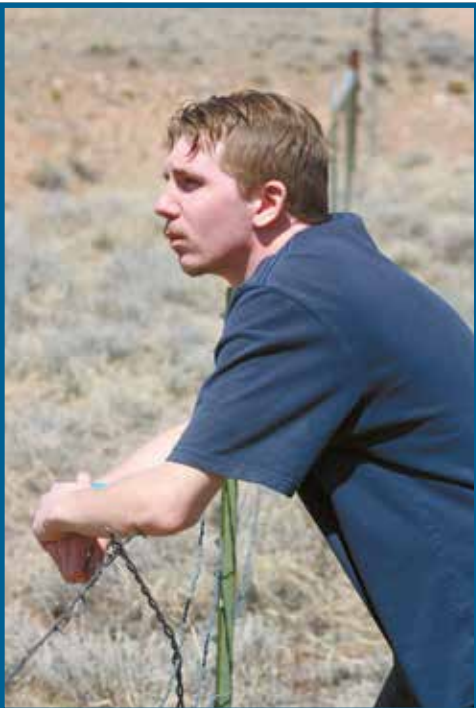
Michael Flynn



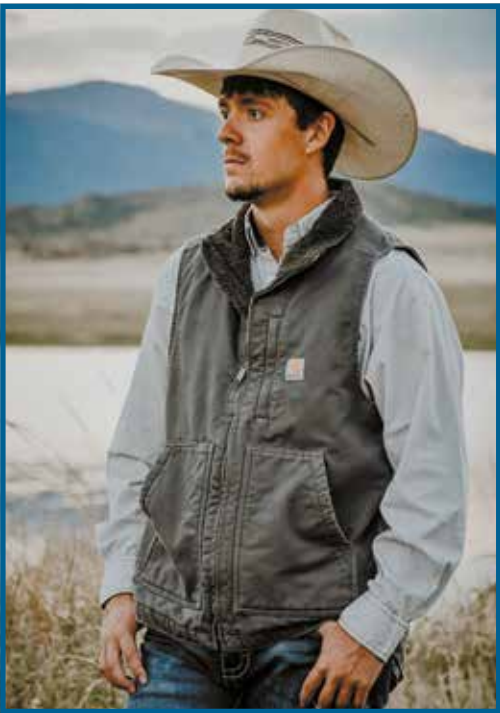
Wyatt Grundy



Reagan Hatfield
President



Madison Honaker



Christopher Mullett
Vice President



Avierly Olguin



Austin Scholl



Kenneth Simpson

School Class of 2025

May 24, 2025



Robert Constantine



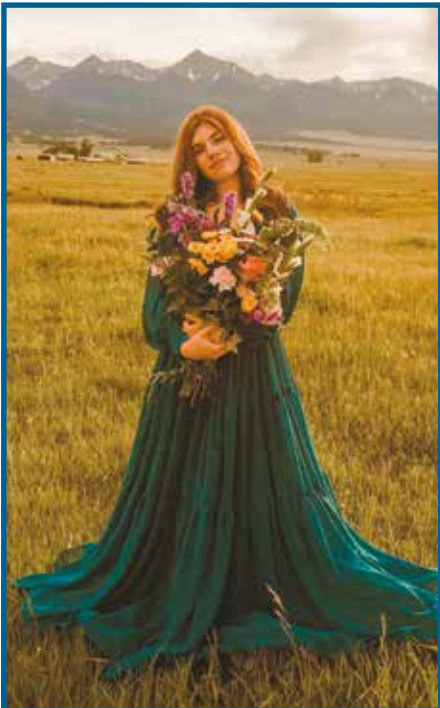
Jordan Craig



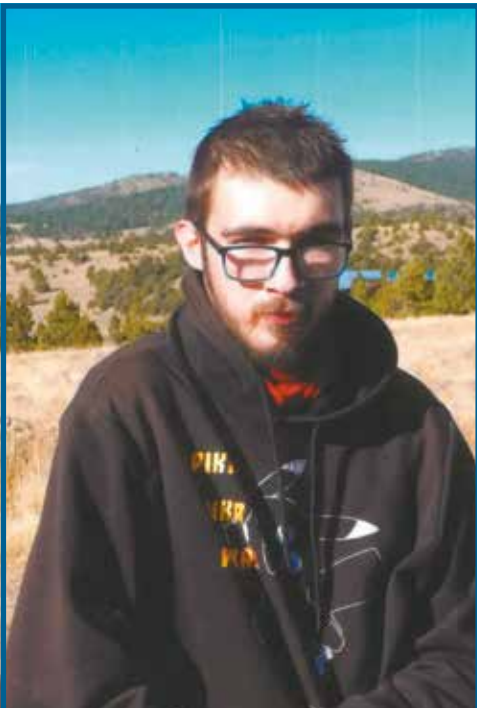
Elizabeth Ergo



Isabella Ferron
Salutatorian



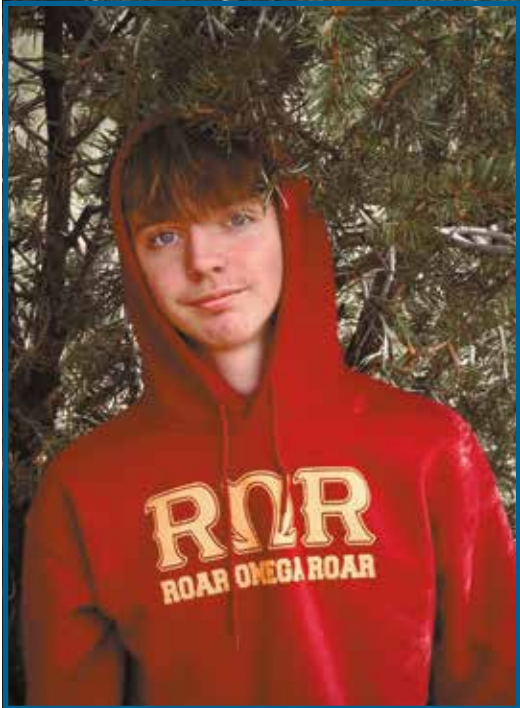
Kenna Ingram
Valedictorian



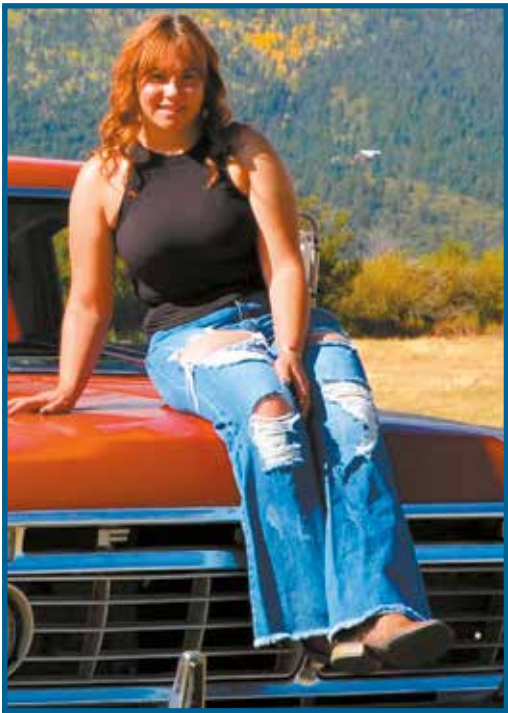
Avery Jewell



Cora Kane



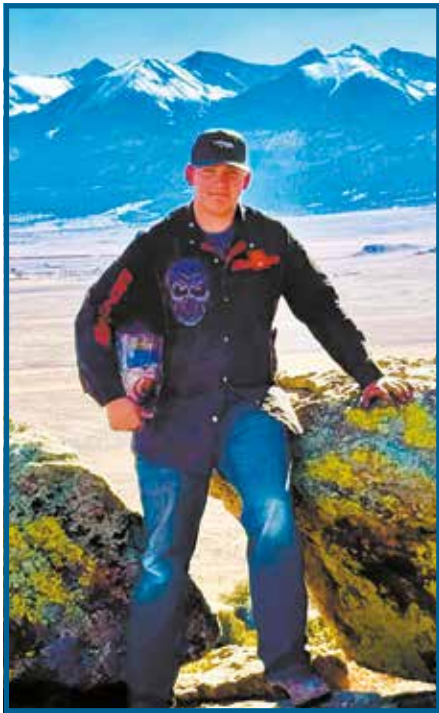
Ryan Kriegh



Madeline Staley



Paul Wiest



Jacob Wilroy

Flower
Carnation
Colors
Dark Skies Theme:
Dark Blue,
Purple, Yellow
Song
“Freebird”
by Lynyrd Skynard
Quote
Sic iitur ad astra:
“Thus you shall go
to the stars”

SCHOOL BOARD
from page 11

with a placeholder for another position because combining athletic director with middle school principal or high school principal is not viable. (Note: Until this year, we had one principle and an athletic director. Now there are two principal positions, Grade school and MS/HS.)

The District lost its appeal on the FAMI leave case (Dept. of Labor). This issue

dates back to June 2022 when the District opted out (which is allowable) but the then administration failed to register their opt out and were automatically opted in. Now back premiums are owed. Cooper said he'll engage with staff and explore relief for fees, fines, and penalties. (Reggie thanked Charlotte who represented the District well in both hearings.)

Under ACTION ITEM "Consider Actions In Response To Investigations of District Policy Violations", the Board read an opening four-point statement:

- At our meeting on April 16, the Board placed two employees on paid administrative leave pending an investigation after learning of potential violations of law and policy in connection with the District's hiring processes.
- At our direction, Acting Superintendent Cooper retained Shelly Landgraf with Pure HR Solutions to conduct an independent investigation.
- The Board received the investigation and findings from Ms. Landgraf yesterday.
- As the governing body of the District, the Board is responsible for reviewing the investigation findings and determining whether there has been a violation of law and/or policy, and, if so, taking the appropriate personnel action.

The Board then presented the action for approval and went into discussion.

For Investigation of District Policy Violations concerning HS Principal McCormick, the Board refers the decision over to the acting superintendent.

Next was Investigation of District Policy Violations by Superintendent Thom Peck.

In discussion, Director Cameron Fiore read his comments to the public. He explained the issue and his opinion succinctly. Below is an excerpt:

"The Superintendent and Principal knowingly hired personnel, that according to the State of Colorado and Board policy, are disqualified from ever working in a Colorado School. These disqualifications are outlined in CRS 22-32-109.8 (6.5) and District Policies GCE GCF-R, GDE_GDF-R.

These statutes and policies include but are not limited to: any crime of violence, felony child abuse, unlawful sexual behavior, an act of domestic violence, a felony drug offense, and others. State law also specifically calls out any offense in any other state, which if committed in Colorado would meet these definitions and would be disqualifying.

Let me be clear...the law says If any of these items are in an employee's or applicant's record, they are disqualified from working in our school period. And...with full knowledge that there were disqualifying records in the background checks, the Superintendent chose to disregard both Colorado law and District Policy and hired them any-

way, without any due regard to the potential consequences that their decision would bring."

"And while there are those in the community who seem to have an opinion about everything the Board is doing, these people do not and cannot possess all of the facts necessary to even have an opinion. But that doesn't seem to stop them from just making stuff up."

"From the very first Board meeting, Thom has established a consistent pattern of lying to and trying to manipulate the Board. Teachers have come forth stating similar concerns. All of this is documented in public record. Including the recent investigation, where he was caught lying to the investigator. So, when we say that Thom has a record of lying to the Board, that is a factual and documented record."

(If you would like to read Cameron's full statement, see this article on our website at www.sdcsentinel.com.)

(During the discussion, School Board President Foster gave a statement, following Mr. Fiore. This is also available on our website.) Below is an excerpt:

"I didn't follow through on my conscience two months ago. Doing so prioritized the easy things Thom does, like being nice, telling people only what they want to hear and quoting book characters at the end of the day. This allowed his weakness in decision making to move beyond frequently choosing to ignore district policies to disregarding and violating state statute. We are all very lucky to simply be arguing about a man and overpaying his performance."

There is nothing fun about holding people accountable. It's what our service as Board directors requires us to do.

Risk and potential consequences matter. Thom's decision to hire and then lie to the Board in both open meeting and email about background checks put the entire school at potential risk. Demanding accountability is our job. And most especially in a situation like this."

The Board voted to end Thom's contract.

Next up was Resolution 25-10 - Accepting Resignation of Board of Education Member Brad Davis and Declaring a Board Vacancy. Foster read Brad's short letter in which he said he would be relocating soon to another county, necessi-

tating his resignation. The Board accepted his resignation and set the process and dates in motion for finding a replacement to finish out the term Joseph McCarthy was elected for. McCarthy resigned during his first year. The position ends November 2025.

(For information on being considered for the position, please see page 17 of this issue.)

Other Action Items considered and approved were; Employee Benefits Program and Broker of Record (Colorado Educators Coalition) for 2025-2026, District Property and Casualty Insurance Renewal with Glatfelter Underwriting Services, Inc., and Receipt of Proposed Budget for FY 2026.

Adoption of Policies (Second Reading) was next. Because a few policies have been clawed back for further review, the reader should go to the district's website for a list of adopted policies.

Of note, were the removal of the Policy "CBD - Superintendent's Contract" which does not need to be in policies.

Amended policies that passed included; EBBA-R - Prevention of Disease/Infection Transmission changes on Second reading; Taking universal precautions statement added. EEAFB-R - Use of School Vehicles by Community Groups Passed with Change recommendations from the Transport Director added. 26) EEAEA - School Transportation Vehicle Operator Requirements and Training (Language change to "all drivers" instead of "school transport operators." BID/ BIE-School Board Member Compensation, expenses, Insurance and Liability. (Note: The "rumor" and "reporting" that the school Board is seeking monetary compensation for their role, was and is untrue.)

GBGH-1-R - Emergency Leave Bank Operation was placed back on the First read list because it had never been approved for First read after FAC request to make changes.

EHB - Records Retention passed. This is a placeholder or approval "to have a policy". The committee will look at this in the fall because it doesn't exist in the policy manual. Policy will be based on the state archive system. By passing of the Second reading—the Board agrees the district will in the future adopt a policy.

The next Regular Board meeting is on June 3, 2025, at 4:30 p.m. in the School Library.



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Colorado State News



The Future of Colorado Hangs Between Boom and Blackout

by Michael A. Hancock,
Commentary, Substack

There’s a difference between dreaming big and hallucinating. Colorado’s progressive legislators have yet to figure that out.

Once a beacon of frontier grit and entrepreneurial promise, Colorado is drifting into a twilight of self-imposed stagnation. This isn’t the result of some unforeseeable external shock. No. The decline is being engineered — brick by legislative brick — by a political class more interested in social signaling than in fostering economic vitality.

The question isn’t whether Colorado faces a reckoning. The question is whether we will admit the cause before we hit the wall.

Let’s start with energy, the lifeblood of any serious economy. Colorado holds a wealth of natural resources—oil, gas, coal, and uranium— all of which can power its future. But instead of leveraging these resources to fuel jobs, industry, and growth, the legislature has adopted an almost theological hostility to anything that predates a solar panel. In the name of “climate

justice,” lawmakers have erected a regulatory maze designed not to guide development but to strangle it.

Permitting delays for oil and gas development in the DJ Basin are measured in years, not months. The Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, whose name now feels like a cruel joke, functions more like a Soviet planning ministry than a steward of responsible extraction.

The result? Billions in private investment are being shelved or shipped to friendlier states like Texas and North Dakota. Jobs that would have gone to Colorado families are going elsewhere. Tax revenues that could have built schools and fixed roads are evaporating.

This is not climate policy. This is economic vandalism.

And if oil and gas are being targeted for political extinction, nuclear power — the most potent, scalable, carbon-free energy source we possess — remains mired in hesitation and delay. There is no meaningful urgency to match the scale of our energy needs.

Colorado was once home to the Fort St. Vrain nuclear facility, a pioneering effort in high-temperature, gas-cooled reactor technology. But instead of building on that legacy, the state now treats nuclear energy as if it were radioactive in more than just the literal sense.

While other states — Wyoming, Utah, and Alaska — are racing to explore modular reactors and revive nuclear as a cornerstone of grid reliability, Colorado’s legislature has responded with the urgency of a sloth on sedatives.

Proposals to study, pilot, or discuss nuclear innovation are routinely shelved, smothered in committees, or buried under performative environmental hearings. It’s as if the legislature is more afraid of upsetting activist donor bases than of watching the state’s power grid collapse under the weight of unreliable renewables.

Nuclear could be Colorado’s ticket to a prosperous, high-tech, clean-energy future. Instead, the state is sleepwalking toward scarcity — a future of rolling blackouts and soaring utility bills,

all while pretending that virtue signaling on windmills will light the homes of six million people.

And it doesn’t stop with energy. Consider housing. With sky-high home prices and a shortage in the tens of thousands, one might expect the legislature to unleash the market, reduce regulatory burdens, and encourage private development. Instead, lawmakers are enamored with price controls, density mandates, and rent regulations — policies that have failed spectacularly everywhere they’ve been tried, from New York to San Francisco.

The result is tragically predictable: fewer units, slower construction, and higher costs.

Ask any developer trying to build in Colorado, and you’ll hear a common refrain: the process is broken. The cost of entry has become prohibitive between environmental impact statements, zoning gauntlets, and the ideological landmines buried across local councils.

This is not how you grow a state. This is how you fossilize it.

Then there’s the question of labor. Colorado has one of

the country’s most aggressive regimes of mandated wage hikes and employer mandates.

Every year brings a new round of workplace experiments — paid leave, scheduling mandates, “equal pay” litigation traps — all designed to show how deeply the legislature cares about workers. Except they never stop to ask what happens when employers leave. Or don’t hire in the first place. Or automate. Or move to Wyoming.

Progressivism, once a movement that claimed to champion the working class, now treats employers like enemy combatants.

The economic consequences are predictable and visible: small businesses shuttering, investment slowing, and families leaving. Yes, people are voting with their feet — and increasingly, they’re voting “no” on Colorado.

And what is the state spending its growing tax haul on while driving the engines of growth into the ditch?

BOOM and BLACKOUT
see page 23



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Colorado State News



Colorado's Forced March to Energy Uncertainty, Part 2

Part 2 of 2

by Amy Oliver Cook, Complete-Colorado.com

From last week:

The seeds of instability

Colorado's energy shift began in 2004 when voters narrowly approved Amendment 37, requiring that 10% of electricity from large investor-owned utilities (IOUs) like Xcel and Black Hills come from renewable sources by 2015. It was the first voter-approved renewable mandate in the nation.

Republican Governor Bill Owens (1999–2007) opposed fuel source mandates and instead championed reliable energy resources such as coal, natural gas, and the transformative innovations of directional drilling and hydraulic fracturing. He recognized that these energy sources were vital to job creation, economic growth, and a dependable, affordable electric grid.

The Bill Ritter era

In 2006, Democrat Bill Ritter was elected governor on a “New Energy Economy” platform. It was more than a slogan—it was a top-down reordering of Colorado's energy priorities. In 2007 alone, Governor Ritter signed over a dozen bills reshaping energy regulation.

One of the most impactful was House Bill 07-1037, which quietly transformed the mission of the Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC). Before, the PUC followed a least-cost principle—requiring utilities to select the most affordable, reliable resources. HB 1037 allowed regulators to consider non-quantifiable factors like social and environmental values.

PUC Chair Ron Binz championed

this new approach, shifting the commission away from ratepayer protection and toward regulatory activism. He also blurred ethical lines. In 2010, Binz helped craft and implement House Bill 10-1365, which mandated coal plant retirements in favor of natural gas. He negotiated cost recovery deals with Xcel Energy outside public hearings.

Binz did not seek reappointment and later withdrew his 2013 nomination to head the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) amid bipartisan opposition. Yet his legacy lives on in a PUC that prioritizes politics over prudence.

During his tenure, Ritter signed 57 green energy bills, including House Bill 10-1001, which raised Colorado's renewable energy mandate to 30% by 2020. Ritter called it “a template for the country.” In August 2010, Colorado's current PUC Commissioner and former head of the Governor's Energy Office (now the Colorado Energy Office) Tom Plant, reported:

“HB10-1001 will create new markets for locally developed renewable energy, it will further grow our utility scale renewable energy markets, it will mean millions of dollars in property tax revenue to our counties, *it will create tens of thousands of new jobs*, and it will do all of this while ensuring quality and safety of installations and *without increasing the cost of electricity to the bill payer.*” [emphasis mine]

The green jobs never came, but the cost increases did. As *The Gazette* reported: “Colorado fails as the epicenter of green energy,” citing empty industrial parks and shuttered factories once billed as job engines.

Hickenlooper: The balancing act Gov. John Hickenlooper (2011–

2019), a geologist by training, took a more balanced stance. He defended fracking, filed a lawsuit to block Longmont's drilling ban, and supported methane rules and groundwater testing.

Though he backed renewable energy, he resisted turning energy policy into a battleground. He tried to walk a tightrope—promoting clean energy while maintaining fossil fuel production. That moderation drew criticism from both the left and right.

Polis: From markets to mandates

Candidate Jared Polis campaigned for governor on transitioning to 100% renewables by 2040—claiming it would be market-driven, cost-effective, and free of government coercion. In 2017, Polis dismissed financial concerns, touting a “bottom-up” approach. His actions as Governor have been anything but market-based.

In 2019, he signed Senate Bill 236 (the PUC review act) and House Bill 1261 (the climate action plan), mandating 26% greenhouse gas reductions by 2025, 80% carbon emissions reduction by 2030, and then 90% by 2050.

2023 legislation amended greenhouse gas emissions—calling for a 75% reduction by 2040 and 100% by 2050 across all utilities. Polis's new draft legislation ups the ante again, requiring 95% greenhouse gas emissions reduction from the electricity sector by 2035 and 100% by 2040.

Nuclear to the rescue?

To bipartisan cheers, Gov. Polis quietly signed House Bill 1040 in March, adding nuclear to the state's list of clean energy sources. But his pending legislation speeds up the decarbonization timeline, making nuclear an impossibility in the state.

That's a mistake. Nuclear is the only proven, dispatchable, zero-emission resource. With a 93 percent capacity rating, it's the most reliable resource. Period.

Public support is strong—especially among younger voters. Bipartisan support exists, too, with groups like the American Conservation Coalition, Independence Institute, and Colorado Nuclear Alliance backing deployment.

Our analysis shows that large-scale nuclear offers lower system costs than wind and solar with storage. So why exclude it?

But Polis seems more interested in appeasing climate fundamentalists like the Sierra Club, 350.org, and Conservation Colorado than in delivering real solutions. But if Colorado wants to power data centers, AI platforms, and economic growth, nuclear power is essential.

Emissions vs. human thriving

Energy policy is about more than emissions—it's about people. Nowhere is that contrast clearer than in the opposing worldviews of Gov. Polis and U.S. Energy Secretary Chris Wright, former CEO of the Colorado-based Liberty Energy.

Polis views energy almost exclusively through the lens of emissions reduction. His singular focus on achieving “net zero” drives policies that favor intermittent renewables, restrict reliable baseload power, and, oddly, exclude nuclear innovation. It's a vision rooted in scarcity and sacrifice—what can only be described as an energy deprivation mindset. Under his vision, Coloradans are expected to accept higher costs, reduced reliability, and fewer choices in service of a narrow climate metric.

By contrast, Energy Secretary

Wright offers a hopeful, human-centered alternative. He makes the moral case for energy abundance and warns of the very real dangers of energy poverty—particularly for low-income families, rural communities, and the medically vulnerable. His aim isn't “net zero”—it's zero energy poverty. He calls net zero a “sini-ster idea” that causes real-world suffering and deepens inequality. Instead, he envisions a future where clean, affordable, and reliable energy powers opportunity, prosperity, and public health.

Other states moving in that direction. Utah, Arkansas, Arizona, and North Carolina, are embedding reliability and affordability into state law. Colorado, by contrast, clings to one-dimensional metrics. We've mistaken virtue signaling for sound policy. We've traded practical progress for political symbolism—and left ratepayers holding the bill.

The wild card? President Trump's recent executive orders. These orders challenge state-level discrimination against coal and dispatchable generation, target regulatory overreach on emissions, and push back against forced baseload retirements. Colorado's energy scarcity policy is now on a collision course with the federal vision of energy abundance.

As net-zero ideologues have leveraged legal strategies for decades, proponents of energy abundance, affordability, reliability, and human prosperity may now utilize these executive orders as a legal foundation to challenge and potentially delay Governor Polis' aggressive emissions agenda—an agenda that risks significant economic consequences for the state of Colorado.

ENERGY Part 2
see page 22

TAVERN

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Local Mountain News & Notices

Christian Summer Camp Sues Over Same-Sex Facilities Mandate

by Sherrie Peif,
CompleteColorado.com

BAILEY — A Christian children’s summer camp located east of Breckenridge is suing the Colorado Department of Early Childhood over gender identity-based regulations requiring campers be allowed to use the private bathing, dressing, and sleeping facilities of the opposite sex.

Named in the lawsuit are Lisa Roy, executive director of the Colorado Department of Early Childhood and Carin Rosa, director of the Department’s division of early learning licensing and administration.

The state-licensed Camp IdRaHaJe (inspired by the song “I’d Rather Have Jesus”), had requested a waiver from the regulations based on religious beliefs, but was denied.

According to a news release sent out by Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF), the lawyers representing the 75-year-old camp, “When IdRaHaJe requested to run its camp in line with its religious beliefs, the department

denied the request, forcing the camp to choose between upholding its beliefs about biological sex and risk losing its license or abandoning its beliefs and mission to minister children.”

ADF is a public interest law firm specializing in defending First Amendment protections and parental rights. It is perhaps best known for its successful defense of Colorado cake decorator Jack Phillips, who refused to make a wedding cake for two gay men. Phillips eventually won his case before the U.S. Supreme Court. ADF also defended Web designer Lorie Smith, who received a \$1.5 million settlement from the state of Colorado. The Supreme Court ruled the state violated Smith’s First Amendment right to freedom of religion by forcing her to use her artistic skills to create a wedding website for same-sex marriage couples. ADF also is currently before the Supreme Court challenging the constitutionality of Colorado’s ban on conversion therapy for minors on behalf of Colorado licensed professional counselor Kaley Chiles.

IdRaHaJe has been operating since 1948 and has held a resident camp license since 1995. It serves between 2,500 and 3,000 children between 6 and 17 years old every summer with backpacking, camping and other activities while promoting Christianity through worship.

“The government has no place telling religious summer camps that it’s “lights out” for upholding their religious beliefs about human sexuality,” said ADF Legal Counsel Andrea Dill in the release. “We are urging the court to allow IdRaHaJe to operate as it has for over 75 years: As a Christian summer camp that accepts all campers without fear of being punished for its beliefs.”

(Editor/GG: Our Colorado dems are beyond sick. Every one of them. 2026 is rapidly approaching. We need GOOD, conservative candidates who will give a real choice. I think the average Coloradan has seen enough....)

Please see: <https://completecolorado.com/2025/05/15/christian-summer-camp-sues-colorado-gender-identity-mandate/>

LEGAL NOTICES

NOTICE OF PROPOSED SCHOOL BUDGET

Notice is hereby given that a proposed budget has been submitted to the Board of Education of Custer County School District C-1 for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025 and has been filed in the business office where it is available for public inspection. The proposed budget will be considered for adoption at a Regular meeting of the Board of Education of

said District at Custer County School Library on June 24, 2025, at 4:30 p.m.

Any person paying school taxes in said district may at any time prior to the final adoption of the budget file or register his objections thereto.

BOARD OF EDUCATION
Dated May 13, 2025
Custer County School District C-1
Jennifer Kriegh

Published May 16, 2025
Sangre de Cristo Sentinel
Westcliffe, Colorado

Custer County School District One School Board Opening

The Custer County School District Board of Education has declared a director vacancy that will be filled by appointment by the Board no later than July 12, 2025.

To be eligible for appointment, a candidate must be a registered elector of the district for at least twelve consecutive months and have never been convicted of commission of a sexual offense against a child.

Interested persons are invited to submit a statement of interest and qualifications to the Board of Education Secretary via email at jennifer.kriegh@ccbobcats.net or via US Mail to Custer County School District PO Box 730, Westcliffe, CO 81252. All correspondence must be received by 4:00 p.m. on Monday, June 2, 2025

The Board will interview prospective candidates at a public meeting, the date of which shall be established by the Board at a future public meeting. The term of this appointment shall be until the next regularly scheduled Board of Education election in November 2025.

Published May 15, 23, 30, 2025
Sangre de Cristo Sentinel
Westcliffe, Colorado

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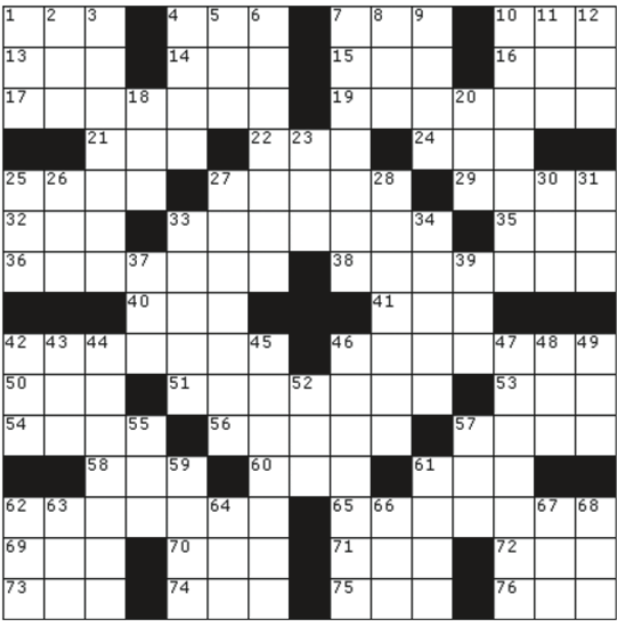
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CROSSWORD PUZZLE



- ACROSS**

1 Admiral (abbr.)

4 Central Intelligence Agency

7 High-school club

10 Accomplished

13 Killed in action

14 Finish

15 Toilet

16 Terminal abbr.

17 Aerial

19 Set loose

21 Explosive
- 22 Untalkative

24 Elder

25 Hurt

27 Greeting, with 51A & 39D

29 Island

32 “Raven” author

33 Carnal

35 Aurora

36 Dinghy

38 Mark earlier than real date

40 Attention-Deficit Disorder (abbr.)

41 Genetic code

- 42 Ballpark snacks

46 Lucky insect (2 wds.)

50 Atmosphere

51 See 27A

53 Flightless bird

54 Svelte

56 Rationalism

57 Catch sight of (KJV)

58 Pen brand

60 Pressure unit

61 Fortify

62 Freakish

65 Can ____ (plr)

69 Tree seed

70 Downwind

71 Neither’s partner

72 Popeye’s yes

73 Dessert

74 Bog

75 Pigpen

76 Tyrannosaurus
- 18 Vane direction

20 Samuel’s mentor

23 Highs

25 Rainy mo.

26 Speak softly

27 Zeus (2 wds.)

28 Either end of a ____ yard of a square sail

30 Dozens

31 Compass point

33 City destroyed by fire

34 Allows to borrow

37 Rotten

39 See 27A

42 Owns

43 Lubricate

44 Homage

45 First Christian martyr

46 Injuries

47 Bedaub

48 Arbiter

49 Gal’s pal

52 Hellos

55 .001”

57 Gray sea eagle

59 Golden ____ (Israelite idol)

61 Visionary

62 Gross national product

63 Yes in Nice

64 Visit

66 Cooking vessel

67 Seed bread

68 Gender

- DOWN**

1 Also known as (abbr.)

2 Uproar

3 First book of NT

4 Coin

5 No room for them in the ____

6 Unyielding

7 Get chubby

8 Long time

9 Horse game

10 Palestinian body of water

11 ____ A Small World...

12 Telegraphic signal
- Puzzle on page 8

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“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.”

— Theodore Roosevelt

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“All That Is Necessary for the Triumph of Evil Is That Good Men Do Nothing”— Edmund Burke

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.

Speak Life,
Not Leshon Hara

In the ancient world of Israel, Tzara’at was a physical affliction with spiritual implications. Often mistranslated as “leprosy,” Tzara’at wasn’t just a skin disease—it was a divine response to inner corruption, particularly slander and gossip (leshon hara). In Leviticus, the afflicted were sent outside the camp, a painful picture of both physical and social isolation. Why such a harsh consequence for words? Because words build or destroy. Proverbs 18:21 tells us, “Death and life are in the power of the tongue.” The Talmud expands this idea, teaching that slander harms not only the one spoken about, but also the speaker and the listener. Tzara’at was God’s way of making visible what was festering spiritually.

Fast forward to the Gospels. In Luke 5:12–14, a man “full of leprosy” falls at Jesus’ feet, begging to be cleansed. Rather than withdrawal, Jesus touches him, saying, “I am willing; be cleansed.” In a world where such a man was shunned, Jesus didn’t offer ritual—He offered compassion. And this gets to the heart of something deeper: Jesus prioritized mercy over mechanics. Hosea 6:6 says, “For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.” Jesus quoted this often. He knew people could keep temple rituals and still carry venom in their speech. But a merciful heart changes the atmosphere.

Those with Tzara’at weren’t merely suffering; they were living illustrations of the damage caused by divisive speech. In today’s world, the affliction may no longer be on the skin, but the infection of slander still festers in the soul—and it isolates just the same. Christ didn’t just heal bodies; He restored relationships. He silenced shame, reversed isolation, and rebuked judgmental systems that had lost the plot. In Matthew 9:13, Jesus says plainly, “Go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’” He wasn’t just quoting Hosea—He was confronting a culture addicted to appearances, but often lacked empathy.

So what’s the takeaway? Especially in these times when everywhere we turn, people are extremely critical of others, a revival of the tongue is badly needed. A cleansing not just of actions, but intentions. Less talk that wounds, more use of words that are uplifting, encouraging and healing. If Jesus touched the untouchable and lifted the outcast, what excuse do we have for weaponizing our words? Let’s remember this: In God’s economy, character counts more than ceremony. In the Kingdom of Christ, compassion is the true sacrifice. Every word we speak has the power to invite heaven or stir up hell. It’s important to remember who we are in Christ. Let’s choose words that bring restoration, not separation. Speak life, speak mercy, speak like Jesus.

Bill Wilson

Dailyjot.com Printed with permission.

Epic City - Caliphate Blueprint USA

Welcome to a Community in Texas,
Where the Constitution Is Not Welcome

by Aynez Anni Cyrus,
FrontPageMag.com

Texas—the symbol of American grit, freedom, and no-nonsense independence—is now facing a threat not with tanks, not with terrorist flags, but with a soft, sophisticated invasion. Not with bombs, but with blueprints. Welcome to EPIC City, the East Plano Islamic Center’s \$100 million project to build what they call a “meticulously designed community that brings Islam to the forefront.” Not American values. Not constitutional order. Islam.

This isn’t just a housing development. This is a 402-acre ideological fortress in the making. A Sharia-centric complex boasting 1,000 homes, a 3,200-capacity mosque, Islamic schools, clinics, and senior living, all revolving around the teachings of one of the most radical Islamic preachers in North America: Dr. Yasir Qadhi.

The promotional video released by EPIC and their developer (posted publicly on Instagram here) features Quranic recitation, Islamic nasheeds, and the explicit goal of forming a “self-governed Islamic community.” Their own language betrays the mission: not coexistence—domination. What they are constructing is not a neighborhood; it is a parallel society, a city-within-a-city ruled not by Texas law, but by Islamic jurisprudence. A soft caliphate, planted in plain sight.

This is not speculation. This is strategic subversion.

The East Plano Islamic Center’s own scholar-in-residence, Yasir Qadhi, is no moderate. He’s not even quietly radical. He is openly hostile to democracy, pluralism, and Western civilization as we know it. Qadhi has stated, verbatim, that:

“No Supreme Court, no system of government, no democracy where they vote... What gives you the right to prohibit something or allow something?”

(Yasir Qadhi, public lecture—archived and transcribed by MEMRI and various Islamic watchdogs)

This is not a fringe interpretation. Qadhi is telling you plainly: democracy is illegitimate. In his own words:

“To believe that it is permissible to follow a system of laws other than the Sharia negates one’s testimony of Islam.”

(Yasir Qadhi, [IlmSummit 2008], widely cited in scholarly critiques of political Islam)

According to Qadhi’s ideology, any Muslim who believes in constitutional

law, religious tolerance, or separation of church and state has rejected Islam and is to be considered an apostate. And what happens to apostates under Sharia? Qadhi doesn’t shy away:

“Yes, under the Islamic law, apostasy is a crime punishable by death. That is the consensus of the scholars.”

(Yasir Qadhi, Islamic Awareness Conference, 2009)

This is not religion. This is totalitarian theocracy.

Qadhi’s record includes:

- Referring to Christians as “filthy polytheists” whose lives “hold no value” in jihad. (Islamic seminar, 2006)
- Justifying the killing of homosexuals and apostates under Islamic law. (Islamic Center of Tennessee, recorded lectures)
- Fundraising for Aafia Siddiqui, the al-Qaeda-linked terrorist convicted of attempting to kill U.S. soldiers. (2008 fundraising dinner, documented by IPT)
- Denying the Holocaust, only to later “clarify” under pressure. (2001 online post, now deleted, archived by critics)
- Praising the Taliban and calling for a jihad-aligned worldview to be nurtured among American Muslims.

This is the man leading EPIC. This is the ideology shaping this “city.” This is the same Qadhi who has appeared on stage with known Muslim Brotherhood sympathizers and has long been connected to Yaqeen Institute, a propaganda engine disguising Islamism as civil rights activism.

Let’s be absolutely clear: this is not about “freedom of religion.” No religion has the right to erect a self-governed compound designed around the rejection of the U.S. Constitution. Qadhi’s own sermons claim that Sharia is above man-made law, and that those who do not submit to it—Muslims and non-Muslims alike—are in opposition to Allah. This isn’t worship. It’s warfare in slow motion.

And they’re expanding. Land grabs tied to Islamic groups are already popping up across Texas—in Sachse, Aubrey, Blue Ridge—and even in cases where megachurches are being converted into ideological outposts. These are not isolated incidents. These are footholds.

Thankfully, not everyone is asleep. Governor Greg Abbott has stated unequivocally, “Sharia law is not allowed in Texas. Nor are Sharia cities.” State agencies are already investigating EPIC’s permits,

including violations for illegal funeral operations and unapproved construction. Attorney General Ken Paxton has leveled consumer protection charges, while the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality has issued cease-and-desist orders.

And now, HR 971 is making its way through the Texas legislature — a resolution that would declare CAIR, the Council on American-Islamic Relations, unwelcome at the Texas Capitol. This is a group tied by the Department of Justice to Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood — and yet they continue to infiltrate schools, law enforcement training programs, and government hearings under the guise of “civil rights.”

Meanwhile, brave patriots like Bill Gawthrop and Lauren Morris are briefing legislators behind the scenes, educating them on the true nature of Islam as a political doctrine—not merely a faith. They’ve distributed material from Steve Kirby, the late Sam Solomon, and other experts on Islamic jurisprudence and Western incompatibility. The tide is turning—but it’s moving slowly.

A Christian friend who fled the Islamic world and now lives in Texas, Zaid, said it best in a letter to the Governor’s office:

“As a Texan who experienced the impact of Islamic Shariah law in the Middle East and has found a safe and free home in Texas, I disagree with forming communities based solely on religion. Exclusive enclaves hinder assimilation and threaten the values that make Texas free.”

He’s right. And unless we speak louder than the imams, the silence will be our surrender.

This isn’t just about EPIC. It’s not even just about Texas. What is being constructed is a framework for Islamic political expansion inside the West, using our own tolerance as the gateway to eventual submission. It’s already happening in France, Germany, Sweden, and the UK. America is simply next in line. And if Texas falls—the last bastion of American resistance—where will we retreat to then?

This is not a drill. This is not a zoning dispute. This is the test of whether the West has the will to survive.

We’re not watching a neighborhood rise.

We’re watching a civilization kneel — unless we stop it.

Please see: <https://www.frontpage-mag.com/epic-city-caliphate-blueprint-usa/>

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Friday, June 6, 4-6:30pm: New Shooter Friday
Saturday, June 7, 7:45am-4pm: CCW
4:30pm: Ruck with us - SGS Hunt Club
Tuesday, June 10, 5-6:30pm: Veterans After Action Coffee
Friday, June 13, 4-8pm: Ladies Night
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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.



An Alternate Look at Handgun Stopping Power – Part 1

by Greg Ellifritz,
Buckeye Firearms Association

—July 08, 2011

Part 1 of 2



I've been interested in firearm stopping power for a very long time. I remember reading *Handguns* magazine back in the late 1980s when Evan Marshall was writing articles about his stopping power studies. When Marshall's first book came out in 1992, I ordered it immediately, despite the fact that I was a college student and really couldn't afford its \$39 price tag. Over the years I bought all of the rest of Marshall's books as well as anything else I could find on the subject. I even have a first edition of "*Gunshot Injuries*" by Louis Lagarde published in 1915.

Every source I read has different recommendations. Some say Marshall's data is genius. Some say it is statistically impossible. Some like big heavy bullets. Some like lighter, faster bullets. There isn't any consensus. The more I read, the more confused I get.

One thing I remember reading that made a lot of sense to me was an article by Massad Ayoob. He came out with his own stopping power data around the time Marshall published "*Handgun Stopping Power*". In the article, Ayoob took his critics to task. He suggested that if people didn't believe his data, they should collect their own and do their own analysis. That made sense to me. So that's just what I did. I always had a slight problem with the methodology of Marshall and Sanow's work. For consistency purposes, they ONLY included hits to the torso and ONLY included cases where the person was hit with just a

single round. Multiple hits screwed up their data, so they excluded them. This led to an unrealistically high stopping power percentage, because it factored out many of the cases where a person

didn't stop! I wanted to look at hits anywhere on the body and get a realistic idea of actual stopping power, no matter how many hits it took to get it. So I started collecting data.

Over a 10-year period, I kept track of stopping power results from every shooting I could find. I talked to the participants of gunfights, read police reports, attended autopsies, and scoured the newspapers, magazines, and Internet for any reliable accounts of what happened to the human body when it was shot.

I documented all of the data I could; tracking caliber, type of bullet (if known), where the bullet hit and whether or not the person was incapacitated. I also tracked fatalities, noting which bullets were more likely to kill and which were not. It was an exhaustive project, but I'm glad I did it and I'm happy to report the results of my study here.

Before I get to the details, I must give a warning. I don't have any dog in this fight! I don't sell ammo. I'm not being paid by any firearm or ammunition manufacturer. I carry a lot of different pistols for self defense. Within the last two weeks, I've carried a .22 Magnum, a .380 auto, a .38 spl revolver, 3 different 9mm autos and a .45 auto. I don't have an axe to grind. If you are happy with your 9mm, I'm happy for you. If you think that everyone should be carrying a .45 (because they don't make a .46), I'm cool with that too. I'm just reporting the data. If you don't like it, take Mr. Ayoob's advice...do a study of your own.

Notes on terminology:

Since it was my study, I got to determine the variables and their definitions. Here's what I looked at:

- Number of people shot
- Number of rounds that hit

- On average, how many rounds did it take for the person to stop his violent action or be incapacitated? For this number, I included hits anywhere on the body. To be considered an immediate incapacitation, I used criteria similar to Marshall's. If the attacker was striking or shooting the victim, the round needed to immediately stop the attack without another blow being thrown or shot being fired. If the person shot was in the act of running (either towards or away from the shooter), he must have fallen to the ground within five feet.

I also excluded all cases of accidental shootings or suicides. Every shot in this study took place during a military battle or an altercation with a criminal.

- What percentage of shooting incidents resulted in fatalities. For this, I included only hits to the head or torso.

- What percentage of people were not incapacitated no matter how many rounds hit them

- Accuracy. What percentage of hits was in the head or torso. I tracked this to check if variations could affect stopping power. For example, if one caliber had a huge percentage of shootings resulting in arm hits, we may expect that the stopping power of that round wouldn't look as good as a caliber where the majority of rounds hit the head.

- One shot stop percentage - number of incapacitations divided by the number of hits the person took. Like Marshall's number, I only included hits to the torso or head in this number.

- Percentage of people who were immediately stopped with one hit to the head or torso

Here are the results:

25ACP

of people shot - 68
of hits - 150
% of hits that were fatal - 25%
Average number of rounds until incapacitation - 2.2
% of people who were not incapacitated - 35%
One-shot-stop % - 30%
Accuracy (head and torso hits) - 62%
% actually incapacitated by one shot (torso or head hit) - 49%

.22 (short, long and long rifle)

of people shot - 154
of hits - 213
% of hits that were fatal - 34%
Average number of rounds until incapacitation - 1.38
% of people who were not incapacitated - 31%
One-shot-stop % - 31%
Accuracy (head and torso hits) - 76%
% actually incapacitated by one shot (torso or head hit) - 60%

.32 (both .32 Long and .32 ACP)

of people shot - 25
of hits - 38
% of hits that were fatal - 21%
Average number of rounds until incapacitation - 1.52
% of people who were not incapacitated - 40%
One-shot-stop % - 40%
Accuracy (head and torso hits) - 78%
% actually incapacitated by one shot (torso or head hit) - 72%

STOPPING POWER see page 21

PSA AK-47 Review: The Best Budget AK on the Market?

by Scott Witner, ammoland.com

When it comes to AK-47 rifles, few things matter more than durability, reliability, and affordability.



The AK platform has a long-standing reputation for being the rifle that keeps running no matter what you throw at it. But finding a solid AK that doesn’t break the bank? That’s been a challenge—until now.

Enter the Palmetto State Armory AK-47 GF3, a Made in the USA rifle that brings the legendary AK toughness to an affordable price point. Built with a hammer-forged bolt, carrier, and front trunnion, this rifle is designed for longevity. PSA didn’t just assemble an AK with off-the-shelf parts—they built the GF3 from the ground up, ensuring new, precision-manufactured components that elevate it beyond the usual budget-tier AKs.

The real question is: Does the PSA AK-47 GF3 live up to the hype?

Build Quality & Features: A New Standard for Budget AKs

One of the first things you notice when handling the PSA AK-47 GF3 is how solid it feels. It doesn’t have the loose, rattly feel of some budget AKs. The stamped steel receiver is well-finished, and the rivets are clean and secure—a crucial factor in AK reliability.



Photo: Safety Selector

But the real standout feature? The hammer-forged front trunnion, bolt, and carrier. These components take the most abuse in an AK, and PSA went the extra mile by forging them—just like you’d find in high-end imported AKs.

This is a big deal because early budget AKs from PSA and other manufacturers suffered from soft trunnions wearing out prematurely. With the GF3’s forged parts, that’s no longer a concern.

Other standout features include:

- **4150 Nitride-Treated Barrel** – This 16-inch, 1:9.5 twist barrel is built for accuracy and durability. It may not be chrome-lined like some imports, but nitride treatment is still extremely wear-resistant and helps with corrosion protection.
- **Traditional side rail for an optic mount** – PSA recommends Midwest Industries or RS Regulate mounts, as AK rail tolerances vary widely.
- **Classic Polymer Furniture** – The Olive Drab Green stock, handguard, and grip provide a traditional look with a modern touch. The stock is basic but functional, though some might want to upgrade to Magpul or wood furniture for a better feel.
- **Traditional Slant Brake & Bayonet Lug** – The PSA GF3 keeps it classic with the standard AK muzzle device and a bayonet lug, adding to its authenticity.

- **800-Yard Rear Sight Leaf** – Standard for AKs, though realistically, you won’t be shooting this at 800 yards—it’s more of a historical nod than a practical feature.



Photo: PSA AK-47 Rear Leaf Sight

Overall, PSA put serious effort into making this a “budget” AK that doesn’t cut corners where it matters most.

Performance & Reliability: Can It Take a Beating?

Palmetto State Armory torture-tested the GF3 to 10,000 rounds, and while we didn’t push it that far, we ran several hundred rounds through it with zero malfunctions.

We tested the GF3 with a mix of ammo types, including:

- **Sterling Steel Cased 123-gr FMJ**
- **Soviet Arms Steel Cased 122-gr FMJ**
- **Sellier & Bellot Brass Cased 124-gr FMJ**
- **Sabre Steel Cased Black Tip 123-gr FMJ**

Across all four types, the rifle ran flawlessly, eating up steel and brass without complaint. That’s exactly what you expect from an AK—it’s designed to work with cheap steel-cased ammo, and the GF3 handled it like a champ.

We also tested the accuracy. AKs aren’t known for pinpoint precision, but we were able to consistently hit steel at 100 yards with the standard sights. At 50 yards, groupings hovered around 2-3 inches with bulk steel case ammo, which is solid for an AK.

I probably wouldn’t be engaging a threat out past 50 yards with this rifle with only iron sights.

A few other things we tested:

- **Mag Changes** – The magazine release has good tension but is slightly on the small side. Standard AK mags lock in easily, but some may prefer an extended mag release for faster swaps.
- **Recoil & Handling** – The GF3 shoots like a classic AK—smooth, with moderate recoil. The piston-driven system keeps things running clean, and the standard safety lever is smooth and easy to manipulate.
- **Durability** – The GF3 took some unintended drops (whoops) during testing, but kept running. No dents, no dings, no malfunctions.



Photo: PSA AK-47 GF3 in the field

What Could Be Better?

- While the GF3 is an incredible value, it does have a few minor drawbacks:
- **Stock & Grip** – The furniture is functional but basic. It works, but many will want to upgrade to

PSA AK-7 Review
see page 22

STOPPING POWER from page 20

.380 ACP

of people shot - 85
of hits - 150
% of hits that were fatal - 29%
Average number of rounds until incapacitation - 1.76
% of people who were not incapacitated - 16%
One-shot-stop % - 44%
Accuracy (head and torso hits) - 76%
% actually incapacitated by one shot (torso or head hit) - 62%

38 Special

of people shot - 199
of hits - 373
% of hits that were fatal - 29%
Average number of rounds until incapacitation - 1.87
% of people who were not incapacitated - 17%
One-shot-stop % - 39%
Accuracy (head and torso hits) - 76%
% actually incapacitated by one shot (torso or head hit) - 55%

9mm Luger

of people shot - 456
of hits - 1,121
% of hits that were fatal - 24%
Average number of rounds until incapacitation - 2.45
% of people who were not incapacitated - 13%
One-shot-stop % - 34%
Accuracy (head and torso hits) - 74%
% actually incapacitated by one shot (torso or head hit) - 47%

.357 (both Magnum and Sig)

of people shot - 105
of hits - 179
% of hits that were fatal - 34%
Average number of rounds until incapacitation - 1.7
% of people who were not incapacitated - 9%
One-shot-stop % - 44%
Accuracy (head and torso hits) - 81%
% actually incapacitated by one shot (torso or head hit) - 61%

.40 S&W

of people shot - 188
of hits - 443
% of hits that were fatal - 25%
Average number of rounds until incapacitation - 2.36
% of people who were not incapacitated - 13%
One-shot-stop % - 45%
Accuracy (head and torso hits) - 76%
% actually incapacitated by one shot (torso or head hit) - 52%

.45 ACP

of people shot - 209
of hits - 436
% of hits that were fatal - 29%
Average number of rounds until incapacitation - 2.08
% of people who were not incapacitated - 14%
One-shot-stop % - 39%
Accuracy (head and torso hits) - 85%
% actually incapacitated by one shot (torso or head hit) - 51%

.44 Magnum

of people shot - 24
of hits - 41
% of hits that were fatal - 26%
Average number of rounds until incapacitation - 1.71
% of people who were not incapacitated - 13%
One-shot-stop % - 59%
Accuracy (head and torso hits) - 88%
% actually incapacitated by one shot (torso or head hit) - 53%

Rifle (all Centerfire)

of people shot - 126
of hits - 176
% of hits that were fatal - 68%
Average number of rounds until incapacitation - 1.4
% of people who were not incapacitated - 9%
One-shot-stop % - 58%
Accuracy (head and torso hits) - 81%
% actually incapacitated by one shot (torso or head hit) - 80%

Shotgun (All, but 90% of results were 12 gauge)

of people shot - 146
of hits - 178
% of hits that were fatal - 65%
Average number of rounds until incapacitation - 1.22
% of people who were not incapacitated - 12%
One-shot-stop % - 58%
Accuracy (head and torso hits) - 84%
% actually incapacitated by one shot (torso or head hit) - 86%

Please see: Please see: <https://www.buckeyefirearms.org/alternate-look-handgun-stopping-power>

PSA AK7 Review from page 21

- Magpul, wood, or another AKM-compatible option.
- **No Cleaning Rod** – Some purists will be annoyed that PSA doesn’t include a cleaning rod. While it’s not a dealbreaker, it would be nice to see it included for authenticity.
- **Muzzle Device** – The standard slant brake is fine, but many will want to swap it out for a compensator or suppressor-ready mount.



Photo: PSA GF3 Slant Muzzle Device

But at this price point, these aren’t dealbreakers—they’re easy-to-upgrade preferences rather than actual flaws.

I plan to upgrade the handguard, stock, and grip and continue testing this thing. I also plan on adding a bungee sling from SOE Tactical Gear. Stay tuned for a longer-term update towards the end of the summer!

Final Verdict: Best Budget AK Available Today?

For around \$600-700, the PSA AK-47 GF3 is an absolute steal.

It delivers on the key elements of an AK—durability, reliability, and affordability—without cutting corners on critical components. The hammer-forged internals, 4150 nitrided barrel, and solid performance put it ahead of most other budget-friendly AKs on the market.

Yes, the furniture is basic, and some might want a chrome-lined barrel, but for the price, this is the best American-made AK option available today. Whether you’re new to AKs or a seasoned shooter looking for an affordable workhorse, the PSA GF3 is a no-brainer.

More to come on the GF3 as we continue to run this all spring and summer and even take it through a few rifle courses if time permits.

Pros & Cons Recap

Pros

- Hammer-forged internals for durability
- 4150 nitrided barrel for accuracy & longevity
- Side scope mount for optics
- Reliable across all tested ammo
- Made in the USA with a lifetime warranty
- Affordable without cutting corners

Cons

- Basic polymer furniture (easy to upgrade)
- No cleaning rod (minor issue)
- Slant brake isn’t the best (but standard for AKs)

If you’re looking for an AK that won’t let you down without draining your wallet, the PSA AK-47 GF3 is the best bang for your buck.

Please see: <https://www.ammoland.com/2025/05/psa-ak-47-gf3-review-the-best-budget-ak-on-the-market/>

250th Anniversary from page 19

house? Again, because the Lexington church was the center of opposition to British tyranny!

Yet the patriot militia regrouped and continued to press. British General Percy noted that the homes looked like great places for rebel snipers and ordered them burned. British soldiers fired on the homes, stormed and looted them, then put them to the torch, beginning with Lexington church deacon Joseph Loring’s home, then moving on to burn six others. Yet the number of militia continued to grow and press the British until they continued their retreat back to Boston.

A God-Ordained Victory

In all, the British suffered some 273 casualties, with 73 killed, 174 wounded, and 26 missing. By contrast, patriot militia suffered 95 casualties, 49 killed, 41 wounded, and five missing. The numbers were not all that large, but the victory was no less impressive. The patriot militia had soundly beaten a superior British force of nearly 2,100 men when counting Percy’s reinforcements.

News quickly spread, and the ministers responded. Again, historian Alice Baldwin records how they persuaded their congregants to join the fight for liberty:

“Stephen Farrar, of New Ipswich, New Hampshire, left with ninety-seven of his parishioners. Joseph Willard, of Beverly, marched with two companies from his town, raised in no small part through his exertion. Rev. David Avery, of Windsor, Vermont, after hearing the news of Lexington, preached a farewell sermon, then,

outside the meeting-house door, called his people to arms and marched with twenty men. On the way he served as captain, preached, and collected more troops. David Grosvenor, of Grafton, left his pulpit and, musket in hand, joined the minute men who marched to Cambridge. ... Pastor John Cleaveland is said to have preached his whole parish into the army and then to have gone himself.”

Rev. Zabdiel Adams declared: “It is



better to be free among the dead, than slaves among the living.”

Mark well that the battles of Lexington, Concord, and beyond were no series of mindless, mob actions. Remember, these battles came after a “long train of abuses and usurpations,” as Jefferson put it in the Declaration, enumerating no less than 27 grievances that can be described as nothing short of “tyranny.” Taxation without representation and a host of other oppressive actions by Parliament, the royal governors, and their proxies led to colonial opposition, and colonial opposition, exemplified in the Boston Tea Party, led to British armed occupation in Boston.

In fact, when news of the British blockade of the city reached the other colonies in 1774, the pastors took to their pulpits. British leadership despised them and called them the

“Black Regiment” because they wore black clerical robes and passionately preached biblical sermons against British tyranny. John Adams wrote Abigail from Philadelphia: “*The Clergy here of every denomination ... thunder and lighten every Sabbath against the “Oppression” of King George and the Parliament. These black robed ministers were a menace to the British, so much so that the field commander of the British reinforcement detachment, Percy, declared: “No body of men are so extremely injurious to peace and tranquility as the clergy. They preach sedition openly from their pulpits.”*

It would not be an overstatement to claim of these patriot pastors that their sermons inspired the American battlefield bravery that fought back against British tyranny. Consequently, the omission of all references to these Christian ministers and their influence on America’s founding is not only contemptible, but it must also be corrected. If we hope to pass on the torch of liberty faithfully to the next generation, they must understand that America’s founding principles flow from biblical truth proclaimed and fought for primarily by people who adhered to the Christian faith. That is the true history that must be told for America’s 250th celebration. Thankfully, it is not too late to get it right.

(Editor/GG: Question: Where are pastors like these here today? Hard to find....)

Please see: <https://washingtonstand.com/commentary/antichristian-bias-in-history-reporting-the-250th-anniversary-remembrances-of-lexington-and-concord-as-a-case-study>

ENERGY Part 2 from page 16

The path forward

What Coloradans rarely hear is that we don’t have to choose between a thriving economy and a healthy environment. We can have both.

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, American energy production has tripled since 1950. In December 2023, the U.S. set a new record—producing 13.3 million barrels of oil per day, despite a 69% decline in active oil rigs. Meanwhile, we’ve made historic environmental progress: the Environmental Protection Agency reports that between 1970 and 2020, emissions of the six most common air pollutants dropped by 78%. We’ve

also dramatically improved water quality across the country.

Reliable, affordable energy powers everything—clean water, healthcare, communication, transportation. Without it, modern life collapses.

To avoid economic decline and out-migration, Colorado must:

- Stop forced retirements of baseload power.
- Reinstate the least-cost planning principle.
- Prioritize reliability and grid resilience.
- Stop pretending wind and solar are cheaper—they’re not when total system costs are included.
- Give ratepayers a real seat at the decision-making table

Bottom line: We’ve reduced emissions and become better environmental stewards not by restricting energy,

but by powering progress with the very technology made possible by affordable, reliable power. That means choosing innovation and abundance over scarcity and ideology.

If we don’t course-correct soon, get a backup generator. What’s coming won’t just be expensive—it could be dangerous.

Amy Oliver Cooke is the President and Board Chair of *Always On Energy Research*, a nonprofit specializing in energy cost modeling, reliability analysis, and policy impact. She’s the energy fellow for the State Policy Network and directs energy and environmental policy for the Independence Institute.

Please see: <https://completecolorado.com/2025/05/09/colorado-forced-march-energy-uncertainty/>



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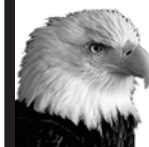
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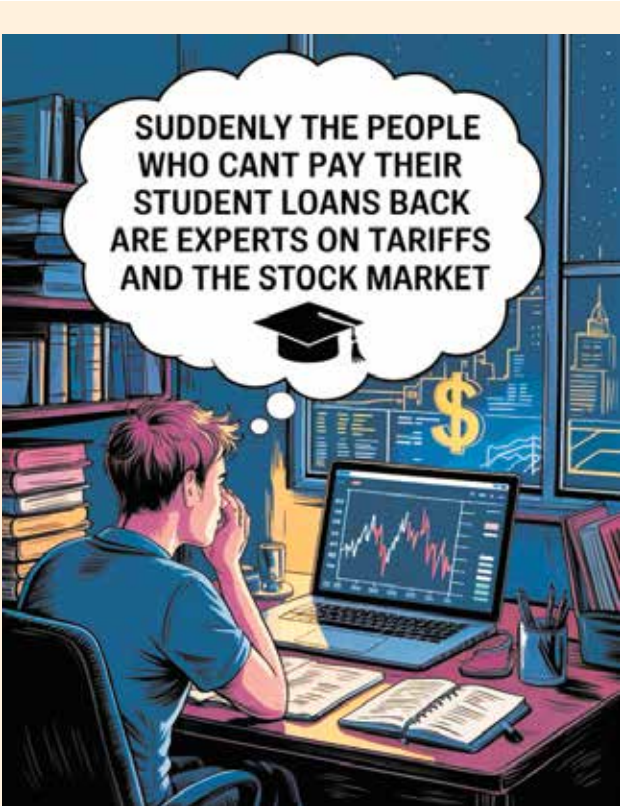
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Hitler
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I did that!



- Decriminalized fentanyl
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Made Colorado:

- #1 in car theft
- #1 in cocaine use
- #1 in inflation
- #1 in bank robberies
- A sanctuary state



I've always wondered why liberals were referred to as the Left & conservatives as the Right

Then I found this Bible verse...

"The heart of the wise inclines to the right, but the heart of the fool to the left"

This picture won the Pulitzer prize in 1960. It shows a priest giving the last rites to a Cuban farmer, owner of his land. He refused to work for the Castro regime. He died by a fire squad after a "trial" by Che Guevara that lasted 4 minutes. You will never see this picture on a T shirt.



BOOM and BLACKOUT
from page 15

Ideological vanity projects. DEI bureau-cracies metastasizing across government agencies. Public school curricula saturated with sociopolitical indoctrination instead of academic rigor. Homelessness initiatives spend hundreds of millions annually to subsidize dysfunction while criminalizing the enforcement of public order.

What we are witnessing is not just the mismanagement of a state. It is the transformation of a dynamic society into a managed economy — one centrally planned by progressive ideology, executed through bureaucratic sprawl, and funded by an ever-shrinking productive class.

This is how prosperous states collapse: not with a single bad law but with the accumulation of countless petty restrictions, layered over time, driven by a belief that government knows best.

Once a model of balanced governance and economic

possibility, Colorado is morphing into something far more familiar and dangerous. A state where incentives are warped, success is punished, and virtue is measured in press releases, not results.

But here’s the thing about reality: it always reasserts itself. No state can out-legislate gravity.

At some point, the lights flicker, the budget buckles, the headlines change from “visionary” to “crisis.” The only question is whether we come to our senses before or after the blackout.

It doesn’t have to be this way. Colorado has the assets to boom: a talented workforce, vast natural resources, world-class universities, and an enviable geographic position.

What we lack is political leadership that trusts in the ingenuity of free people more than the dictates of central planners.

The choice is ours. Boom or blackout.

And the clock is ticking.

(Editor/GG Hancock also publishes on Substack @ <https://hancman.substack.com>)

Michael A. Hancock, a retired high-

tech executive, musician, and composer, explores diverse interests—from religion and arts to politics and philosophy—offering thoughtful insights on the intersections of culture, innovation, and society.

RMV Editor’s note: Opinions expressed in commentary pieces are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the management of the Rocky Mountain Voice, but even so we support the constitutional right of the author to express those opinions.

Please see: <https://rockymountainvoice.com/2025/05/hancock-the-future-of-colorado-hangs-between-boom-and-blackout/>

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**Medal of Honor
from page 2**

Lieutenant-Colonel Rogers, however, displayed unflappable calm in the face of this madness, and set about directing and positioning his howitzer batteries to counter the ground assault with anti-personnel fire and return mortar fire at the NVA positions.

Despite his best efforts, however, NVA combat engineers made it to a section of the American barricade, and managed to blow open that section of the outer defenses with explosives. Now that the perimeter had been breached, there was an imminent danger that the fire base would indeed be completely overrun.

Rogers, however, was determined to prevent this from happening. Picking up his helmet and his M-16, he charged straight across to the front line position, rallying the troops who had been dazed

by the force of the explosions and personally redirecting howitzer fire to the appropriate positions.

An enemy mortar round exploded near him, knocking him off his feet and wounding him with shrapnel, but he got up immediately and led a charge against the NVA troops pouring into the base.

Despite being wounded, Rogers got into the thick of the fighting, personally killing a number of the enemy and helping drive the others out of the base.

Once this first wave of attackers had been repelled, he and his men set about patching the breached defenses. Owing to the urgent nature of this task, Rogers refused medical assistance for his wounds—keeping his men alive and keeping the base in American hands was his only concern.

Sure enough, as expected, the NVA launched another furious assault on the base. Again Rogers led from

the front, engaging in ferocious close range firefights with the enemy while moving along the line and providing encouragement to his beleaguered troops. Again, against all odds, he and his men were able to repel the assault.

The NVA were still not ready to admit defeat, however. They launched a third assault at dawn.

Yet again Fire Base Rita was subjected to a hail of mortar, rocket and RPG fire, and as before, this was accompanied by a wave of infantry pouring out of the jungle. Again, under heavy fire, Rogers directed his howitzer counter-fire with collected precision.

Even when a Vietnamese heavy mortar round burst on his gun parapet, riddling his body with shrapnel and rendering him unable to continue fighting, he kept on yelling out support and encouragement to his troops, who ultimately managed to hold the line.

Thanks to Rogers' courageous leadership and refusal to yield even in the face of near-certain destruction, Fire Base Rita remained in American hands.

In 1970, Rogers was awarded the Medal of Honor for his valor during this battle. Having this highest honor bestowed on him was undoubtedly one of the highlights of a long and proud military career—a path he had been inspired to take by his father, who had served in the First World War.

In addition to relentlessly battling whatever enemies he encountered on the battlefield, Rogers also fought tirelessly for other noble causes.

Despite initially facing discrimination, which Rogers described as “overt,” from both his fellow soldiers and commanding officers, he kept his chin up and served with pride, retaining his unflagging determination to be the best he could be.

In the process, Charles Calvin Rogers proved the critics — those who were opposed to desegregation of the military, claiming it would decrease fighting effectiveness — wrong.

Not only did Rogers lead by proud example, but as his career advanced and he gained more clout in the Armed Forces, he also made it a personal priority to ensure there were equal opportunities in career development and promotions for both minorities and women in the US Army.

Rogers retired from the Army in 1984, after having attained the rank of Major General. During his career he was decorated with the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star (with three oak leaf clusters), the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Legion of Merit, and the Medal of Honor, among other medals.

Please see: <https://www.facebook.com/smallestsoldier>