

BOCC Doubleheader! New Courthouse Project Starts Again, Local No Kings March Organizer Unveiled, Employee Terminated

BOCC: Lodging Tax Increase? Employee Terminated

by George Gramlich, News and Commentary

The June 11, 2025 Custer County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) regular meeting was held at the All Aboard Westcliffe meeting room and started at 9 a.m. All three Commissioners were present: Chair Bill Canda and members Lucas Epp and Paul Vogelsong.

In Commissioner Items, Epp said two IT vendors made a site visit to our IT Department concerning providing contract IT services to us (especially in the cyber security arena). Epp said a couple of more vendors were interested. He was

hoping they could get one signed by August 1st.

Canda said he visited a Colorado State Agency when he was up north at a big meeting and asked them to delete us (somehow) from the infamous Fed Sanctuary List.

In New Business, Accounts Payable was up first. Epp read off the items over \$5k (which is very helpful). The total two-week amount was \$210. It passed.

The Commissioners then approved a contract with an insurance broker, Acrisure, for them to find us some insurance companies to replace our current vendor, CTSL.

Custer County Clerk Kelley Camper then asked the Com-

missioners to approve the payment to a firm she hired to do the election ballot printing, mailing, etc. This was ok'd.

The Office of Emergency Management's Director, Robyn Knappe, was next with a proposal to spend around \$3,500 total to purchase an 8x10 wooden shed so she could store some of OEM's stuff. (This was a lot better than her prior proposal a year or so ago where she wanted to build a whole building for her office and staff and to house her OEM stuff.) This caused a discussion about location, timing, was a concrete pad needed. Near the end of the talk fest, a citizen emailed in and said for the same amount of money you can get a big, metal Conex box that is secure and lockable. This amazed

the Commissioners (*none of them thought about that*) and they finally voted to have Knappe explore this more logical solution.

Next was a request from Custer County's Workforce Housing Committee for a Letter of Support regarding pursuing a path to build affordable housing on the 12 lots in Silver Cliff that the BOCC donated a while back. It seems nobody or no local organization actually wants to "own" the lots, build on them and run the operation. Apparently, there is a new non-profit, the Custer County Community Development Corporation that might be able to do it. However, it is new, has no

BOCC Doubleheader
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Holiday Events



July 03 -26, Sangres Art Guild ~
"Shadows and Light" Art Show,
July 5th Reception 1- 4 p.m.
3rd Street Gallery, 59000 N. Hwy 69

July 4 @ 7 - 10 a.m.
AAW Pancake Breakfast
All Aboard Westcliffe Depot
102 Main St., Westcliffe

July 4 & 5 @ 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
AAW Flea Market, Craft Fair
and Yard Sale,
110 Rosita Ave., Westcliffe

July 4 @ 10 - 11 a.m.
Independence Day Parade on
Westcliffe & Silver Cliff, Main
Streets Sponsored by the American
Legion Post 170. To participate sign
up the morning of the event. (set up
west of Conoco) or call call Richard @
719-242-3474. \$20 entry.

July 4 after dusk
Location TBA (but local)
Fireworks Display by "The Mortar
Men"

Join us Friday, July 4th @ 10 a.m.!

Independence Day Parade

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Join us in the Patriots Section
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Handguns! It is Time to STAND UP.**

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March with your fellow Patriots and make a statement
that WE still believe in our Constitution and we want it
RESTORED in Colorado. You have to SHOW UP to make a
statement. Bring the family, bring the kids, bring Grandma,
bring your friends. Stand up for your rights.

Assemble at 9:15 a.m., July 4th at the east end of Main Street
(Highway 96), Silver Cliff/Westcliffe, CO, at the open field just west of
the Conoco convenience store and gas station). Look for the Patriots
assembly area (USA Flags, Gadsden Flags, and guns, guns, guns). All
vehicles welcome! Plenty of places in town for lunch. The March is
about one mile long and takes about 45 minutes.

The parade begins at 10 a.m.

Firearm Protocol: Rifles: unloaded, safety on, no detachable
magazines inserted in rifle, chamber flag appreciated, **MUST BE**
SLUNG on shoulder or back. All rifles welcome. Handguns:
Holstered, open carry. **Bring your Trump/MAGA Hats, Signs!**

NO handling of weapons during the parade. Questions? Call us
at 719-783-3360 or email SDC.sentinel@gmail.com.

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**PATRIOT
ALERT!**
**The Senior's
Equalizer**
page 20



"The flag is the
embodiment, not
of sentiment,
but of history."
—Woodrow Wilson

SANGRE DE CRISTO
SENTINEL

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The Voice
of Conservative
Colorado!



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

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

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

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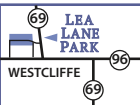


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Sangre Art Guild Shadows and Light Art Show

Sangre Art Guild and 3rd Street Gallery present “Shadows and Light” art show beginning July 5th. The reception is July 5th from 1-4 p.m. with music and refreshments. Please join us.

This show is unique in that it is the Artist’s Feedback Show. Ken McGowan, a local renowned artist and teacher, will be offering written feedback to artists, should they choose to receive it, on style, design, color, theme, strong points and suggestions. A fabulous opportunity to improve your work and applaud your strengths!

Stefanie Sere, News Director from KLZR will be selecting the Community Award.

Don’t miss these musicians during the reception, July 5th~ Smythe and Taylor, Westcliffe’s popular be-

Shadows and Light

July 3 to July 26



Intake:
June 29 and June 30
Reception:
Saturday, July 5
1 pm - 4 pm

3rd Street Gallery
59000 N. Hwy 69
Westcliffe, CO


Sponsored by
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loved duo. Gary Taylor and TC Smythe have been playing shows for 25 years and have become well known for their harmonies, wide repertoire and song-writing.

Thank you to Jenny Young of Wet Mountain Manual

Therapy for sponsoring these amazing Westcliffe musicians. Jenny specializes in CranioSacral therapy, Visceral Manipulation as well as lymphatic drainage. Presently at 114 N 2nd St., her office is moving to 104 Main St in Westcliffe in July.



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Local Mountain News & Notices

CENTRAL BUILDING SUPPLY Core Values: Quality, Service, Price

by Fred Hernandez

It has been fascinating to watch from the sidelines the dynamic growth of Central Building Supply (CBS) in the town of Silver Cliff. In a short span of time it has morphed from a simple hardware retail outlet to a full blown, one stop shop for every construction project all the way from the materials needed to the actual tools and heavy equipment to complete the job. From the freshly laid black topped parking area on Ohio Street, customers are welcomed by a new and handsome facade. With the addition of a large warehouse the total store area, now fifteen thousand square feet, has grown all the way from Mill Street to DeWalt Street. A recently acquired large parcel across Ohio Street will now be the designated equipment rental and trailers lot. A full-time staff of professionals has doubled to seven to ensure trained workers and expert guidance are readily available to assist all customers.

From the start of operations, management has maintained an almost laser focus on the three core principles that guide the successful trajectory of CBS; QUALITY, SERVICE AND PRICE. Whatever the product, one can be assured that the quality will be top of the line at all times. The service provided will be the best and price is not only competitive, but in some cases unbeatable by any competition. Throughout their market area, stretching from Trinidad to Denver, evidence of the operational success of CBS is the steadily increasing numbers of contractors flocking to their offices in Silver Cliff and Penrose for whole home packages. In the meantime, sales of pole barns remains steady at an average of four units a week.

High quality products, effective pricing, expert guidance combined with a rapid response team of professionals are the hallmarks of a successful full



Central Building Supply entrance.

Photo by Fred Hernandez

service hardware enterprise. Some of the nationally well-known products include DeWalt and Milwaukee for tools. For decking and flooring Fiberon, Trex and TimberTech. AMSOIL synthetic oil products for vehicles. ProVia and Anderson's

for Windows. All the time adding more top line brands to ensure that the customers get all their building needs met whether they need materials or the tools to build their projects. When it comes to lumber, CBS has a most unique selling proposition,

the only one in town. All their pressure treated lumber is Kiln Dried; KDAT MCH CD 15 GC. This ensures the customer that the lumber is resistant to cracking or deformation due to weather or other natural conditions. Unmatched quality lumber.

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Central Building Supply www.centralbuildingsupplyco.com
719-783-2385

Check out page 12 and 13 for more photos of the business.

DOLA Invests Almost \$800K Through REDI Program Local Agriculture Market Included

Press Release
by Shelby Wieman, DOLA

The Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) recently awarded \$780,000 for 13 projects across Colorado through the Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) program, which aims to help rural communities diversify their local economies and build resilience.

"These grants are investments in our rural economies and will support small businesses across Colorado," said Governor Jared Polis.

"The REDI program demonstrates DOLA's commitment to Colorado rural communities," said Maria De Cambra,

Executive Director of the Department of Local Affairs. "From childcare to main street revitalization, this vital funding helps communities attract investment, encourage entrepreneurship, stimulate economic growth, and improve the quality of life for rural Coloradans."

Local Impact

Custer County Wet Mountain Valley Agricultural Marketplace - \$100,000

This project involves establishing a brick-and-mortar agricultural marketplace in downtown Westcliffe to directly connect local producers with residents and tourists, aiming to address economic hardship and support the region's agricultural heritage.



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Local Mountain News & Notices

Letter to the Editor Intolerance

One of the dirty little secrets continually propagated by those on the Left is that they are proponents of “Tolerance,” one of The Twelve Great Virtues. I have found quite the opposite to be true. While those on the Right mostly subscribe to a “Live and let live” philosophy, those on the Left succumb to a temper tantrum anytime things don’t go their own way. As is the case now. The dust-up at the *Sentinel* building this past Saturday is appalling, to say the very least, yet it goes far beyond this one incident.

Those on the Left seem to think that they are “divinely” self-anointed to solve the world’s problems without any introspection, whatsoever. They also seem to be equally ignorant of history, and the oft mentioned quote, attributed to different people, that “Those who ignore history are doomed to repeat it.” The contemporary, violence prone Left is the legacy of the Jacobins in France, the Bolsheviks in Russia, and the Maoists in China, to name but a few--total destruction to be followed by a “new order” uplifting mankind. This scenario has never “worked,” nor will it ever because destroying the bourgeoisie, i.e. middle class, is destroying the ballast that holds any civilization together. However masked, it’s the same old, same, old lust for power, coupled with greed. In this chaotic world, America remains the only country that was founded upon a set of ideals distilled from the best of the Enlightenment thinkers. As with all ideals, we Americans have fallen somewhat short. Yet, that does not mean that the ideals were incorrect, but rather that we should aspire more.

Susanna Ferry, Custer County

Exciting Educational Travel Opportunity for Teens Thailand 2026!

Press Release

Educator and community leader Heather Ramer is thrilled to announce her fourth international student trip, an educational tour of Thailand in 2026! Open to all public and home-school students, this immersive experience is designed to broaden global perspectives and foster real-world learning. Families are encouraged to learn more about the itinerary, educational impact, and travel details. To hear more about how to enroll, or to donate to students currently fundraising for this trip, please contact Heather Ramer at hlaramer@gmail.com.

Please note, this program is not sponsored by or affiliated with Custer County Schools.

“Winners & Losers” Protecting Your Home & Property from Wildfire

Press Release

Insurance companies are cancelling homeowners’ policies due to wildfire risk. These decisions are being made during the underwriting process by evaluating factors such as roof types, construction features, property location, accessibility for firefighting, vegetation management, and loss history.

Colorado Forestry and Earthworks and Valor Development are sponsoring a public workshop titled “Winners and Losers” on June 28, 2025, from 10 a.m. to noon, at Lange Hall, 312 3rd St. in Westcliffe.

If your home is located within the natural vegetation areas of the county and you are at risk of a wildfire, we encourage you to attend this workshop and learn how you can partner with your insurance provider to mitigate fire hazards on your property through Colorado’s “Are You Firewise?” program.

There is no charge for this workshop, and a light lunch will be provided afterwards.

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BOCC Doubleheader
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people and needs to get going. Somehow this requires \$100k to do and the Committee wants permission to ask for that moolah from the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA). The DOLA grants requires a 20% match (\$20k) from us. It looked like Westcliffe and Silver Cliff will both chip in \$5k each so the County would need to cough up \$10k. The Commissioners ok'd it.

Next was a discussion item about raising the County's Lodging Tax. (It is currently at 2% but Colorado has just given local governments the okay to rape and pillage tourists throughout the state by allowing the local government entities to up it to a max of 6%.) To do this however, the County's citizens must ok it in a ballot initiative. (We are currently getting about \$90k from our 2% tax.)

Canda opens the discussion with the mandatory question, "Will this hurt our tourism?". This of course caused the pro tax folks in the audience to bombard the Commissioners with how high other towns, cities and counties' Lodging Tax rates are, trying to convince our supposedly small government, low tax, conservative Republican Commissioners that raising the price of staying in Happy Valley will have no effect on people coming here. (Only one person actually said it may affect it some, or a lot of tourists come here because it is cheaper than other places. Also, the comments noted that the various jurisdictions use other fees, etc. to raise the effective Lodging Tax rate with some as high as 16%.)

The person who raised the affordability issue was none other than our Director of Tourism, Deb Adams. She said if we raise it too much it will hurt us. Adams said our Lodging Tax receipts for last year were down \$10k from the year before. She stated that "doubling it" to 4% "might not hurt us too much". *(Hey Republican Commissioners, if you do this you are raising taxes. NO real need for more money was made during the discussion. Going forward, we need SMALLER government not bigger. You are setting us up for a catastrophe when the well goes dry. We need Custer County to be a place where regular people can visit.)* No decisions were made.

(All taxes should be a ballot item.)

Next was a Personnel Matter concerning our Planning & Zoning Director Dorothy Carsten. (You recall that just a week or two ago Vogelsong made a motion to fire Carsten because he alleged she violated the County's firearm carry rule where she supposedly open carried a pistol at a septic installation. After a huge discussion at the meeting, Vogelsong voted against his own proposal and with Epp's also "Nay" Carsten didn't get fired. Now, we are up for round two.)

Canda opened the discussion with blah, blah, blah about how the BOCC manages the County workforce. County Attorney Slater then said that Carsten chose to have the discussion in public rather than in

Executive Session, and since she did that, she is waving a lot of confidentiality.

Vogelsong then said, "that after receiving additional information on concealed carry", "I carefully reviewed everything" and that "on county property, on duty or off duty" weapons must be concealed. He then made the motion to fire Carsten.

Carsten, who was in the audience then made a statement, "I don't feel comfortable. I fear for my life and the safety of my family. That is all I have to say." Audience member, local democrat bigwig, and a motor mouth commentator at virtually every BOCC meeting, James *(Dr. Doom)* Gilbert then couldn't resist taking a swipe at Vogelsong. Gilbert told Vogelsong that a local newspaper *(of course it was the Sentinel and we are SOOOOOO joyed that Gilbert enjoys our coverage)* said that Vogelsong "caved" (regarding his prior vote on not firing Carsten) and this current action, "sounds like a political hatchet job" *(which is a precious comment coming from a democrat)*. Vogelsong, to his credit, came back strong saying that the paper said he "folded". (Actually we made a little funny out of Vogelsong's name by referring to him as "*Vogelfold*" after his no vote.) Vogelsong rebutted Gilbert saying, "At that time I did not have enough information. I was informed" that Carsten was open carrying at the County's impound compound, "plus other times". He again mentioned that the County Handbook says, on or off duty".

The three Commissioners then all voted to terminate Carsten.

In Public Comment, Gilbert, now unchained, went on a dribbling harangue about Custer County helping the feds arrest illegal aliens. *(The usual lib stuff. I think our local libs are scared of losing cheap, slave labor.)*

In perhaps the most enlightening exchange of the day, the County Clerk then asked the Commissioners, "Any employees that open carries can be fired" implying that a County employee, off duty, going about their business around town, can be fired for open carrying? **(Remember our Colorado Constitution explicitly allows open carry, the 2nd Amendment might have something to say about that, plus the Commissioners have declared that Custer County is a 2nd Amendment county.)**

Vogelsong replies, "Yes".

Kelley responded, "So you might as well fire half the staff". (Go Kelley!!!).

No response from our 2nd Amendment Commissioners. (Maybe they should take a serious look at what the Employee Handbook says and FIX IT.)

(Kelley is the *Sentinel's* Happy Valley Elected Official of the Week. Congrats Kelley.)

(NOTE: We got the actual Employee Handbook wording for the firearms policy. It applies only to County property. So if you are off duty AND not on county property, you can open carry.)

And that be it. Wait 'til next week, folks.

being a sanctuary county for illegal aliens or not. Vogelsong noted that CC is NOT a sanctuary county.

Canda stated that the new Courtroom project committee will start work next month. *(Colorado is trying to force CC and various other small counties to build new courthouses because the current ones are in violation of the state's crazy requirements. Folks, we are talking a cost exceeding 15 MILLION DOLLARS to build their Taj Mahal. (And since we are going to have to borrow a ton of money to do it, a TRUE payback cost of maybe \$30 MILLION. For one courthouse. Liberal insanity.)*

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June 19 BOCC

BOCC: New Courtroom Project
Starting Again, Local No Kings
March Organizer Unveiled

by George Gramlich,
News and Commentary

The June 19,2025 Custer County Board of County Commissioners regular meeting started at 9 a.m. and was held at the All Aboard Westcliffe meeting room. All three Commissioners were present: Chair Bill Canda and members Lucas Epp and Paul Vogelsong.

In Commissioner Items, Vogelsong said that all three Commissioners had attended the most recent Liberty Rocks get together at Tony's Pizza where they discussed Custer County and the flap about CC

Town Attorney Position

The Town of Westcliffe is currently seeking the services of a municipal attorney to serve as the Town Attorney for the Town. The deadline for submission of proposals is July 1, 2025. The Town expects to appoint the Town Attorney no later than July 25, 2025. The complete Request for Proposal is available on the Town's website: www.townofwestcliffe.com or directly from the Town: 1000 Main Street, Westcliffe, CO 81252; or by calling (719)783-2282 Ext 10.

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www.westcliffeflowershop.com

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Home & Patio Furniture, Footwear, Outdoor Wear
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Construction Services

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email: pbailey@solarsolutions.com

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719-298-6689 Call for store hours
DELI HOURS: Mon-Friday 11 - 4 , Sat: 11- 2:30

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email: pbailey@solarsolutions.com

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719-783-9321
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719-783-3770
www.highpeaksanimal.com

Well Drilling and Pump Services

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

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 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 last meet:- 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. Public welcome See www. CusterGOP.com or FB 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



by Fred Hernandez,
Opinion and Commentary

All over the country the dems are going totally bonkers. They’re pulling their hair out at the roots, tearing their shirts or as the Good Book says, renting their garments and beating their chests. All the while screaming at the top of their lungs. The hatred is bursting out all over. Their latest unimaginative nationwide caper, which they inappropriately called No Kings, is so ridiculous, so laughable it is a total embarrassment. But of course, to dems, it is not embarrassing, this is an achievement of sorts. This, after all, is their political platform. For them, this is the way to govern a country. Just for the record, there is no king. What we have is a Constitution. A well thought out document, a rule of law that guides our country’s leaders in the proper, legal conduct of our political and government affairs. But they don’t care about that. Of course not.

They care more about causing chaos, driving expenses up, taxing the hard working people, maiming children, destroying girls’ sports, giving all our money to illegal aliens and hatred, hatred for everything that is good. They don’t care when a politician, especially one of theirs, is taking bribes, creating scandal, obfuscating the truth, outright lying, breaking laws. Recently we have even had dems shooting dems to death. They have nothing to say about that. Of course not.

That is all there around the country.

Here, in Happy Valley, we have more or less a parallel story of dem nefarious activity on the national

level. Always in lock step with their masters and fellow puppets, no matter how harebrained the idea, the locals had their own demo. A No Kings demonstration that is founded on hate for a duly and unanimously elected president. Like their counterparts in the rest of the country they suffer TDS. It causes extreme , dangerous and uncontrollable rage. That behavior was exhibited quite clearly on Flag Day. On a day to honor the U.S. Army, the greatest fighting force in the world. An entity that was founded even before this republic and composed of the men and women who will defend this country and protect them even if they despise the military. Yes, the behavior was despicable in more ways than one.

They had children carrying hand-lettered cards and posters with the “F” word prominently displayed. What are they teaching their young ones? How to be rude, uncouth, ill mannered? Did they want their children to grow up to be just like them?

Their profanity laced chants were quite ugly to hear. But then ugly is almost their chosen signature. And then one of their own kind did the unthinkable. It was not really surprising given that they foment this kind of unhinged behavior. He pulled a gun on a peaceful group of patriots waving mostly American flags.

The one thing they complain about most. Guns. Yet their guy did it. What a shame for these holier than thou whiners.

By the way, most of their crew were unfamiliar to the locals. Did they bus them up for their demo? Did they get paid like the ones in the other areas?

Just asking. Hopefully they won’t mind. Thinking is allowed around here, right? The dem party is a party of doom. No God, no to life and that is why they are so obsessed with abortion. Kill, kill the children. That’s why it is ok to maim them, it’s a good thing they did not get wiped out before birth. Right?

They have been royally deceived these pathetic people. Distancing themselves from the Divine and traditional morality they have become weakened to deception. And deceived they are but they don’t even know it. They are almost totally oblivious to the harm they do on themselves, their families and the rest of their community. Hatred will never develop anything that is good. Yes, their hatred is so intense, so self-consuming, that we’ve even seen some of them confront the cardboard figure the Trump they loath and talk to it, using foul language, seething with hate to the point of becoming tearful, foaming at the mouth with rage. Where are they going with all this hatred? What do they wish to achieve? Nothing. Nothing but depression, sadness, despair, doubt, darkness, reduced mental capacity.

For many dems, it does not have to be this way. There are those among them who do not agree with their party’s behavior and platform. Silence, however, is not the way to handle that. If you do not speak, you have spoken. If you do not act, you have acted. Stand up for the truth. Stand up for what is right. Exit the party. You can always be an independent. Exitdoom. EXITDEM.

Monday, June 30

#59 Macaroni & Cheese

Salad w/Lite Italian

Asparagus

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.

Tuesday, July 1

#86 Spinach Lasagna

Green Beans

Tossed Vegetable w/Lite Italian

Banana

WW Bread w/Butter

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.

Thursday, July 3

#10 BBQ Pork Ribs

Creamy Coleslaw

Corn Cob, Seasoned Greens

Watermelon

Bran Muffin

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

(719) 942-3462

Community United Methodist Church

10 a.m. Worship

202 S. 6th Street, Westcliffe

719/783-2511

Cotopaxi Community Church

9:30 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

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

Call Pastor Err @ 719.429.0556

or Pastor Davie @ 719.371.3861

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 30 a.m. Outdoors

Bring a lawn chair!

830 Bridge St., Canon City, CO

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

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

1 p.m. Worship

Junction of Hwy 96 & 67, Wetmore

719/371-1230

Wetmore Community Church

9 a.m. Sunday School

10 a.m. Worship

699 County Rd. 395, Wetmore

719/784-0596

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not on things that are on earth. Colossians 3:2 ESV

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Events

July 03 -26, Sangres Art Guild ~ “Shadows and Light” Art Show, July 5th Reception 1- 4 p.m. 3rd Street Gallery, 59000 N. Hwy 69

June 28th, 10 a.m. to noon
Come & Learn -- Make Your Property Safe Mitigation Info @ Lange Hall, Lunch provided

July 4 @ 7 - 10 a.m.
AAW Pancake Breakfast, All Aboard Westcliffe Depot 102 Main St., Westcliffe

July 4 &5 @ 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
AAW Flea Market, Craft Fair and Yard Sale, 110 Rosita Ave., Westcliffe

July 4 @ 10 - 11 a.m. Entry fee \$20
Independence Day Parade on Westcliffe & Silver Cliff, Main Streets Sponsored by the American Legion Post 170. To participate sign up the morning of the event. (set up west of Conoco) or call or text 719-242-3474. .

July 4 after dusk Location TBA (but local)
Fireworks Display by “The Mortar Men”

Saturday, June 21, Noon Sun observance & Star Party (Beginner Telescope) 8:45 - 11:45 p.m. FREE on the Bluff in Westcliffe@ Smokey Jack Observatory.

Community Services

Altitude Community Fitness
(719) 783-0750

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

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

JUNE SCHEDULE
Care & Share-June 13 & 27 from 11-2
TEFAP- June 9 from 12-2
Everyday Eats boxes are available during any regular distribution from 11-2
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(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

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

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

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

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June 27 @ 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. WCCCL Archery w/Justin Krall @Hermit Park (Roundtree) Pavilion 4th and Hermit Rd, Westcliffe

West Custer County Library partners w/ Colorado Parks & Wildlife Ranger Justin Krall for an exciting archery experience. Learn all about archery and the safety of learning how to shoot a bow and arrow. This event

is for 9-18 yr olds only! Make sure to go to www.westcusterlibrary.org/events to sign up now. We hope to see you at the Hermit Park Pavilion!

June 27 Hayseeds Jam Session @ West Custer County Library

Kids session 3-3:45 p.m. Adults 4-4:45 p.m.

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Florence Farmers Market
Pioneer Park E 3rd & E 4th, Florence

*FRIDAY 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Westcliffe Farmers Market
(at Jess Price Park)
Main Street of Westcliffe

SATURDAY 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
(July 5- Oct. 4)
Royal Gorge Farmers Market
9th St & Hwy 50 in Cañon City

*OPEN THIS WEEK

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Local Mountain News & Notices

KIDS

Friday, June 27, 2025

Garden of the Gods



Living in Colorado, we are blessed with beautiful scenery and awesome mountains and colorful rock formations. One of these attractions is the Garden of Gods.

Garden of the Gods is a public park in Colorado Springs, established in 1909, known for its stunning red rock formations. The area has a rich history, with evidence of Native American tribes, particularly the Ute, who considered it a sacred site.

This park is a 1,341-acre public park located in Colorado Springs, Colorado, 862 acres of the park were designated a National Natural Landmark in 1971. Archaeological evidence shows that prehistoric people visited Garden of the Gods about 1330 BC. There is also evidence that at about 250 BC, Native American people camped in the park; they are believed to have been attracted to wildlife and plant life in the area and used overhangs created by the rocks for shelter. Many Native American tribes traveled through the area and claim a connection to Garden of the Gods: Apache, Cheyenne, Comanche, Kiowa, Lakota, Pawnee, Shoshone and Ute people.

The Garden of the Gods is home to over 600 plant species. Some of the most notable plants include Ponderosa Pine and Blue Grama Grass. The Blue Grama Grass is a drought-resistant grass that covers large areas. The park is also renowned for its stunning red rock formations and breathtaking views of Pikes Peak.

Charles Elliot Perkins purchased two-hundred and forty acres in the Garden of the Gods for a summer home. He later added to the property but never built on it, preferring to leave his wonderland in its natural state for the enjoyment of the public. Perkins died in 1907, before he was able to make arrangements for the land to become a public park. In 1909, Perkins' children, knowing their father's feeling for the Garden of the Gods, conveyed his four-hundred eighty acres to the City of Colorado Springs.

It would be known forever as the Garden of the Gods, "where it shall remain free to the public, where no intoxicating liquors shall be manufactured, sold, or dispensed, where no building or structure shall be erected except those necessary to properly care for, protect, and maintain the area as a public park."

by Audrey Slater. Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Garden_of_the_Gods, <https://gardenofgods.com/park-history/>, <https://great-gardenplans.com/how-was-garden-of-the-gods-formed/>, Photo by: John Fowler from Placitas, NM, USA - Garden of the Gods CC 2.0Wikimedia

Sangre de Cristo Sentinel • Westcliffe, Colorado

Corner

Obituary

Christopher John Watson

July 12, 1971- June 16, 2025

Christopher John Watson, age 53, of Florence, Colorado, passed away on June 16, 2025. Born July 12, 1971, Chris was a devoted spouse and father, proud grandfather, beloved son, and loyal brother whose presence will be deeply missed by all who knew and loved him.

Chris is survived by his mother, Audrey Slater, stepmother, Christine Watson; and siblings: Sean Watson, Nicole Watson, and TJ Watson. He leaves behind his spouse, Carrie Ann McClure-Watson and children: Cassaundra Tiner and her husband, Robert Tiner; Stephanie Tiner and

her husband, Larry Tiner; and Christopher (CJ) Watson II and his fiancée, Nicole Mule. He was a proud grandfather to his grandchildren: Troy, Kiersten, and Alice Tiner; Kaitlyn, Jennifer, and Aiden Tiner; and Blayne Watson.

He is proceeded in death by his father, Thomas H. Watson, and stepfather, Jack Slater.

Chris' memory will live on in the hearts of those who loved him, especially in the family he helped build and the many lives he touched.

A celebration of life for family and close friends



will be held to honor his life on Saturday, July 26, 2025, at Old Harrison Park (490 North Cottonwood, and Cherry St.) in Cañon City from Noon - 3 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you take a moment to hug your loved ones and cherish the time you have -- just as Chris would have wanted.

Life is Sacred God's Glory: Life.

by Fred Hernandez

There is absolutely nothing in the world that is more precious than life itself. Life is a gift from our Creator Who had no beginning Himself. Each and every one of His created human beings is made in His very own image and likeness. Only God has the right over all human life. The gift from God is sacred and must be lived from conception to natural expiration. No one has the right to take a life. Saint Irenaeus of Lyons, prominent second century theologian and Doctor of the Church said: "The Glory of God is a human being fully alive". And yet life can come to an

untimely end due to natural causes. When it happens it can trigger much grief and great sadness.

Last week the Catholic community of Our Lady of the Assumption experienced such a sorrowful time. The baby of parishioners Raul and Lucy Guzman was medically compromised. The tiny girl was born and lived for two hours; long enough for a Catholic priest to give her the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. Little Lucy Rose was interred at the cemetery of Our Lady of the Assumption in Silver Cliff on Saturday, June 21st. The parents, Raul

and Lucy, their children Isabella 9, Ines 6, Emilio 5 and Magdalete 3, were surrounded by their larger family, the community of Our Lady of the Assumption, as Father Stephen Injoalu officiated the funeral service at noon. More than thirty-five members of the church attended to pray and support the Guzman family in their moment of heartbreaking sorrow. The parishioners of Our Lady of The Assumption offer their profound condolences to the Guzman family on the passing of their baby Lucy Rose. We pray for the eternal repose of her soul. Requiescat in Pace. Rest In Peace.

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children.
And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Ephesians 5:1-2 ESV

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Local Mountain News & Notices

Westcliffe Town Meeting Scout Project to Restore Vet Memorial, More New Signs and Park Planning

by Laura Vass

The June 17, 2025 Town of Westcliffe Board of Trustees meeting called the meeting to order with a quorum.

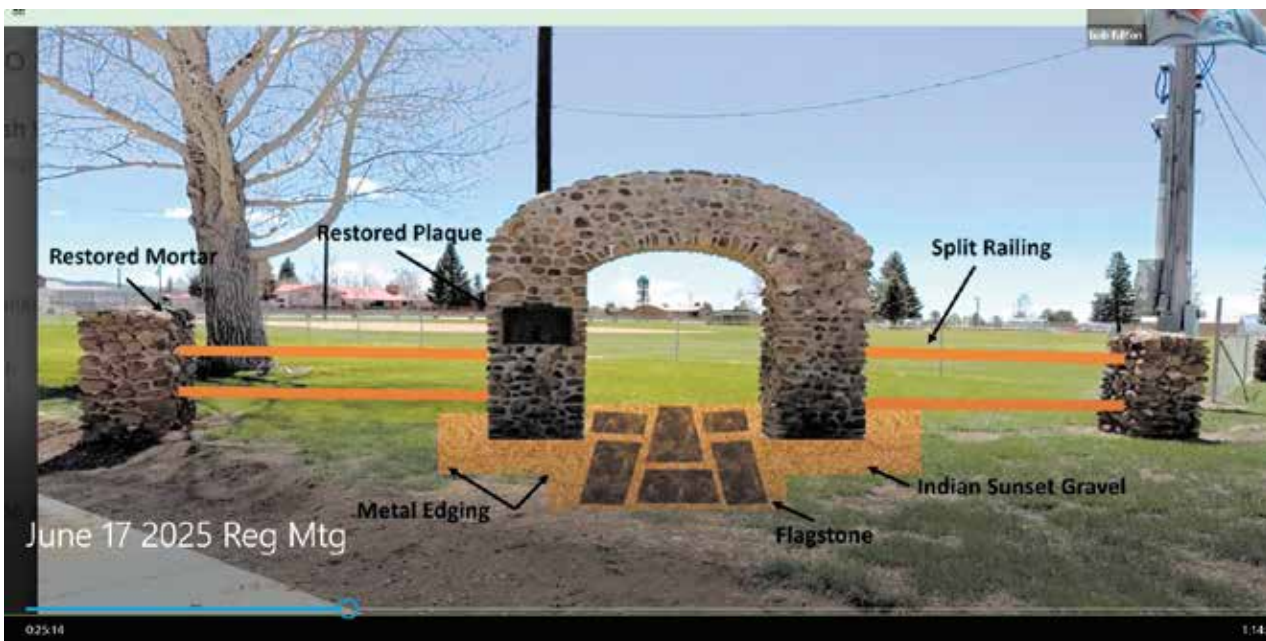
After approving the consent agenda, the parks improvement committee member Jackie Barnes submitted photos of the proposed signs to be added to the Bluff/Smokey Jack Observatory area. The signs were approved and will be paid for out of a designated fund.

Next, a Boy Scout, Lincoln Wingfield, presented his proposed Eagle Scout project, Improvements to the Veteran Memorial at Memorial Park. He gave an excellent presentation of his plan



Dark Skies/The Bluff dual signs get approval.

Photo from TOW meeting packet



Eagle Scout Lincoln Wingfield's detailed plan for refurbishing the Veteran Memorial at Memorial Park.

Screenshot of TOW June 17 meeting recording

to fix the concrete and rocking and do some landscaping. He had a photo diagram showing the plan and has worked with the American Legion for funding and is also helping with a fundraiser for the project. He said the project will cost about \$600.

He's got other scouts and family members lined up to help and even has a relative from Woodland Park that is a stone mason to help and advice. The project will include some

flagstone and gravel, new cedar rails, and restoration of the existing plaque.

The board reminded him that he'll need to coordinate with the town maintenance guy, and they want it to be done in a way that preserved the historical monument. They did approve the project.

Next was Andy Mast who wanted, for insurance purposes, to resolve the property boundaries located at 219 Main Street, Lot 10, and Third Street.

He had a survey plat and Kit Shy was also there for Q&A. The town agreed to sell their six to nine inch sliver of land along the side to Andy for \$ 5 and sign off on the transfer in order to clean up the issue.

A Public Hearing was opened for a rezoning of Lot 6 of Shadow Ridge

TOW Mtg
see page 17

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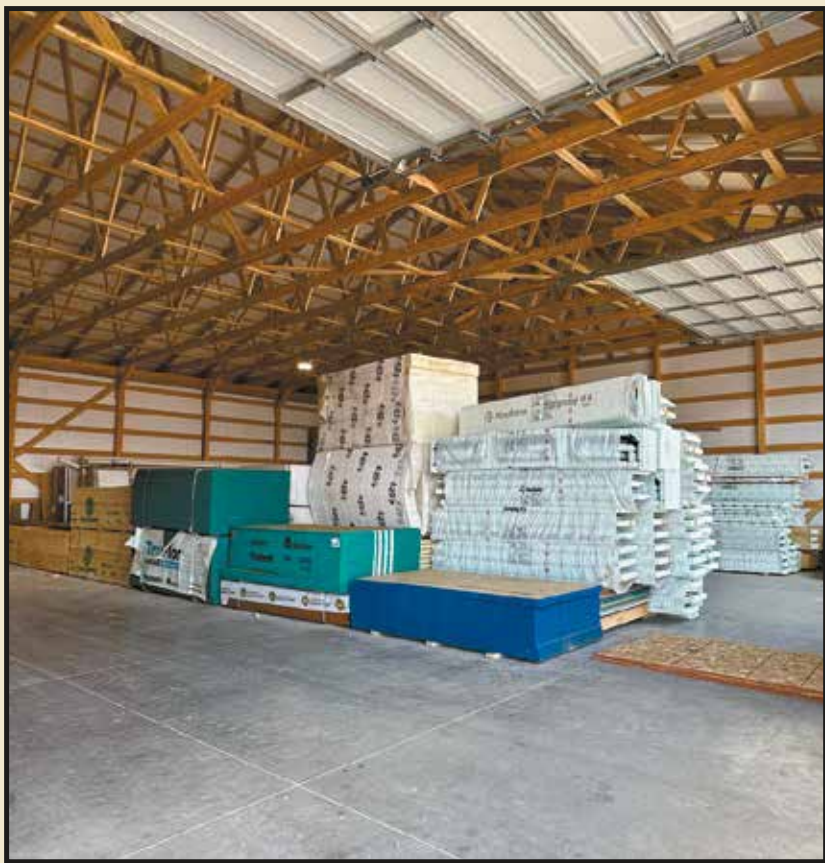
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Sentinel Photos & Layout by Katherine Brenchley



Colorado State News

Morphew Indictment and Extradition

Press Release
Chaffee County SO

We here at the Chaffee County Sheriff's Office are happy to announce that Barry Morphew has been indicted by a grand jury for his wife's murder and he is back in custody on a \$3,000,000 bond. We are proud of our staff and law enforcement partners for never giving up. The Chaffee County Sheriff's Office will not be answering case sensitive questions at this time.

Please see the below press release put out by 12th Judicial District Attorney Anne Kelly:

"On June 18, 2025, the Twelfth Judicial District Grand Jury returned an indictment charging Barry

Morphew with the First Degree Murder of his wife, Suzanne Morphew. Mr. Morphew was taken into custody in Arizona on June 20, 2025. The Twelfth Judicial District Attorney's Office will seek to extradite Mr. Morphew back to the San Luis Valley.

There will be a media briefing at 6 p.m. on June 20, 2025 at the San Luis Valley Department of Fire Prevention and Control located at 1301 West Avenue in Alamosa, Colorado.

The investigation into the disappearance and murder of Suzanne Morphew had been ongoing both before and after her remains were discovered near the town of Moffat in Saguache County, Colorado. The investigation team consists of law

enforcement officers from Chaffee County Sheriff's Office, Saguache County Sheriff's Office, Colorado Bureau of Investigation, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The Arizona Department of Public Safety assisted the investigation team by apprehending Mr. Morphew in Arizona.

"Federal, State and local law enforcement have never stopped working toward justice for Suzanne," said Twelfth Judicial District Attorney Anne Kelly. "The Twelfth Judicial District Attorney's Office stands in solidarity with Suzanne's family and the citizens of Chaffee and Saguache Counties in pursuing the Grand Jury's indictment."

The Twelfth Judicial

District Attorney's Office will be assisted by the Boulder County District Attorney's Office in this prosecution. The Denver County District Attorney's Office will provide appellate support. The Twelfth Judicial District Attorney's Office recognizes Boulder County District Attorney Michael Dougherty. He has consistently provided essential support and leadership to rural prosecutors with limited resources to pursue major cases and obtain justice for victims throughout the State.

To follow this case from this point forward, we would encourage you to follow the State Judicial Case of Interest page where hearings and public documents, including the indictment, can be found soon:



<https://www.coloradojudicial.gov/cases-interest>

We anticipate that State Judicial will be live streaming the court hearings. The hearing links can be found on State Judicial Case of Interest page.

Any indictment or filing of charges is merely an allegation. The defendant is presumed innocent unless or until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

About the Twelfth Judicial

District Attorney's Office:

The Twelfth Judicial District Attorney's Office represents the San Luis Valley including the rural counties of Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Rio Grande, Mineral and Saguache. The office is committed to treating all victims of crime in the San Luis Valley with dignity, respect and compassion. It has been led by District Attorney Anne Kelly since 2022."



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Lois McMaster Bujold



Colorado State News



Released and Reloaded: Montrose Bond Records Show Cracks Feeding Colorado's Criminal Underworld

by Jen Schumann,
The Rocky Mountain Voice

When a Montrose County woman was released on a \$0 personal recognizance bond after skipping court in late 2023, it wasn't her first time facing charges. It wouldn't be her last either. Within nine months, she was arrested again – this time for second degree assault, harassment and criminal attempt. Her story is not an outlier. It is a warning.

“There’s a revolving door with criminals or serious crime,” said Montrose County Sheriff Gene Lillard in a recent interview with Rocky Mounting Voice (RMV). “Last month we picked up one person five times – they were released on PR bond. There’s no consequences.”

To illustrate how Colorado laws are contributing to rising crime and lawlessness, Sheriff Lillard prepared and shared a document showing just one small snapshot in time.

During just one week in November 2023, at least seven individuals facing serious or

repeat charges were released from the Montrose County jail on personal recognizance – meaning they paid nothing and promised only to appear. Charges ranged from felony fugitives to domestic violence and resisting arrest.

Follow-up research into those cases reveals troubling patterns. In addition to the woman charged with violent assault, one man, released on charges of resisting arrest and criminal mischief, was later arrested for disorderly conduct and assaulting a peace officer less than five months later.

Another individual originally charged with harassment and domestic violence continued to appear in court through late 2024, indicating persistent legal entanglements.

A third person, whose November charges included weapons and explosives-related felonies, was still the subject of court motions in 2025, suggesting ongoing legal issues tied to the original arrest. The names of these individuals have been redacted at the request of Sheriff Lillard, who provided RMV with the release list.

“Judges and state lawmakers... We are not seeing high bonds placed on repeat offenders and that is a serious concern,” Lillard said. “It puts deputies at risk because people aren’t held accountable or held in jail.”

That risk is personal. Over the past year and a half, twelve correctional deputies in Montrose County have been injured in the jail. Some have suffered torn ligaments, chipped teeth, abrasions/ contusion, fingers bit, strained backs and bodily fluids thrown in their face. Lillard believes the problem starts in the courtroom.

“People become more hostile to law enforcement because they know that they’re just going to get away with it,” he said.

Lillard acknowledged that he’s been tempted to release the names of the judges authorizing repeat PR bonds – something Weld and Larimer counties tried but quickly regretted.

“The judges received death threats,” he said. “I won’t put lives in danger. But people do need to know what’s going on.”

The Sheriff says the cycle of release and reoffend doesn’t just wear down his department. It feeds something larger.

“Drug cartels are in Montrose,” Lillard said. “They’re connected to the Sinaloa cartel out of Mexico.

In one local sting, deputies assigned to a joint drug task force helped bring down a fentanyl and meth trafficking ring operating in Montrose. Fourteen people were federally indicted by the State Attorney General’s Office.

Lillard shared that most were convicted and sentenced to hard time. Authorities traced over \$1 million laundered from a local business to Mexico.

He said his own eyes were opened during a border tour four years ago at Sierra Vista, Arizona, that added a tremendous strain on the Cochise County Sheriff’s Office and all of the ranchers, citizens that live and work in the area.

Lillard believes a strong and secure southern border is the most humane and effective way to prevent crime, suffering and lawlessness from escalating. He argues that

real reform begins with enforcing immigration laws and restoring consequences for criminal activity at the point of entry.

While Montrose law enforcement continues to cooperate with federal agencies, Colorado’s policies have limited local coordination with ICE. According to Lillard, ICE must place judicially valid detainees and be present at release or individuals walk free.

“They have to be proactive because of the way the state government runs things and won’t let counties cooperate with ICE,” Lillard said.

Lillard explained that sometimes ICE is conducting operations based on their own investigations in the area. And that his deputies would be there at a moment’s notice to support efforts for a safe outcome. “We have taken a strong stand to have ICE’s back.” This is to assist any type of law enforcement whether it be local, state or federal.

MONTROSE
see page 16

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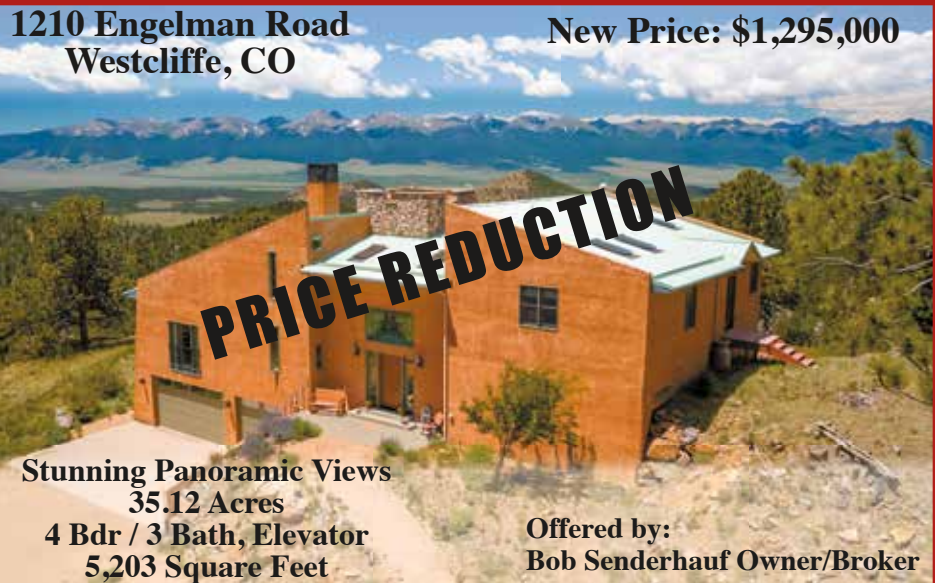


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Two CO Ballot Initiatives to Protect Kids Move Ahead

Two Proposed Ballot Initiatives that Restrict Sports and Surgeries for Transgender Youth Move Ahead

by Jenny Brundin,
Colorado Public Radio

Two proposed ballot initiatives targeting transgender youth are one step closer to a spot on the 2026 ballot.

A three-member panel of Colorado officials known as the Title Board approved the petitions Wednesday. After completing another technical procedure, proponents can begin gathering signatures in a bid to be on the ballot.

One initiative would require K-12 and colleges to restrict participation on school sports teams to the participant's sex, "as determined by certain aspects of their biological reproductive system." The other proposes banning gender affirming surgery for transgender people under the age of 18.

Similar measures were rejected for the ballot last year because the board ruled they were too broad, violating the single-subject rule, which must be clearly expressed in its title.

Under the first measure, Initiative 70, "Male and Female

Participation in School Sports," K-12 schools and colleges must designate sports teams as male, female or co-ed and only allow students to compete on a team of their "designated sex" that is listed at the time of the student's birth.

It would effectively prevent transgender students from competing on teams that align with their gender identity. Second, it bans anyone or any organization from filing a complaint, opening an investigation, or "taking other adverse action" against a school for maintaining separate sports for females. Finally, it gives the Commissioner of Education the authority to enforce the initiative at K-12 schools.

The measure is proposed by Rich Guggenheim, legislative director of the Colorado chapter of Gays Against Groomers and Republican strategist Michele Austin.

The initiative's legislative declaration states that the biological differences between males and females are "immutable" and "manifest prior to birth." It argues that sex-specific sports teams reduce the risk of physical injury to female athletes, promote equality between the sexes and provide opportunities for female athletes to compete against their female peers rather than against male athletes.

Objections

On Wednesday, the board considered arguments from Attorney Mark Grueskin, representing a registered elector, that the measure be rejected because it takes on more than a single subject, such as mandating sex-segregated sports teams, but also giving unlimited enforcement power to the Commissioner of Education.

He argued the measure contains "multiple hidden elements" and is problematic because there is no basis for determining an athlete's sex.

"We know there are certain school districts and certain schools that are simply more conservative and certain districts that are more liberal," said Grueskin. "There are going to be differences in terms of how this is applied and how it affects individual athletes ... This will allow specific schools to do whatever they want without an appeal, without consequence, and without review."

Attorney Scott Gesler, arguing for the proponents, said it's not unusual that schools will have different procedures and different forms of proof.

"There is a law, this is a law," he said. "It contains straightforward definitions and schools are required to follow the law."

Opponents also argued the definitions of "male" and "female" are ambiguous and not readily understandable to most voters. The measure describes a female as "a person whose biological reproductive system is organized around the production of ova," and a male is "a person whose biological reproductive system is organized around the production of sperm."

Some Title Board members struggled over vagueness of the definitions, which one termed "anachronistic" and worried about "invasive, intrusive" examinations for a person presenting as female to determine whether their biological reproductive system is organized around the production of ova.

Gessler argued that a person's sex could be determined through a cheek swab and DNA testing.

"So, you could swab a child's mouth to determine whether they can if they appear to be female and they could produce eggs," he said, adding that the question is not whether they can produce eggs but whether their reproductive system is "organized around the production of that."

Title Board chair Theresa Conoly wanted to ensure the measure is clear to voters, which is "the benchmark of the single subject rule."

A member of the public asked if the measure violates Colorado's Anti-Discrimination Act, which prohibits discrimination based on gender identity. Conoly responded that the Title Board doesn't rule on matters of constitutionality.

The other measure, Initiative 71, "Prohibit Certain Surgeries on Minors," was approved on a 2 to 1 vote. It would prohibit surgery altering a minor's biological sex characteristics and prohibit any health care professional or other person from "knowingly performing, prescribing, administering, or providing any surgery or related medical care on a minor for the purpose of altering the minor's biological sex characteristics."

It would also ban state or federal funds, Medicaid reimbursement or insurance coverage from being used to pay for the prohibited medical interventions.

The board's decisions can be appealed to the Colorado Supreme Court.

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Please see: <https://www.cpr.org/2025/06/05/proposed-ballot-initiatives-target-trans-youth/>

MONTROSE from page 15

That same commitment to law and order fuels Lillard's hope for change within the judicial system itself. In January, a new District Attorney took office in Montrose County. Anna Cooling, he said, has brought grit to the courtroom.

"Her deputy DAs can argue for a higher bond. And that approach is thanks to Cooling's dedication to the rule of law," Lillard said. "Cooling has grit. Great leadership."

Lillard emphasized that his deputies uphold the law regardless of politics or citizenship status. He shared that in the line of duty, they don't ask if someone is from Mexico or Ireland or inquire about their immigration background.

"They don't care," he said. "Our deputies would take a bullet for residents. They are hired to arrest law breakers and bad people. And to enforce the laws of Colorado and to uphold the Constitution of the United States."

For Lillard, enforcing the law without bias is fundamental to maintaining public safety. "We're apolitical about the rule of law," he said.

As one of Colorado's most experienced Sheriffs, Lillard doesn't mince words when it comes to public safety.

"If you remove consequences, you embolden criminals," he said. "And that's exactly what we're seeing."

Please see: <https://rocky mountain voice.com/2025/06/released-and-reloaded-montrose-bond-records-show-cracks-feeding-colorados-criminal-underworld/>

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Local Mountain News & Notices

TOW Mtg from page 11

from commercial highway to single residential. The board ended up tabling any decisions but not before a lengthy discussion.

It was unclear if the town’s zoning trumps the subdivision’s CCRs. The subdivision thinks their covenants supersede the town’s zoning. The town believes that does not include zoning. The subdivision would likely approve the change but are making the town aware that they believe they should have a vote to approve the change as their CCRs state.

Next was Resolution #1-2025, considering a pledge of \$5k to the previously unutilized nonprofit, Westcliffe CO Community Development NFP, (donated to Custer County Workforce Housing Committee) which is applying for the Local Planning Grant. The grant is an 80/20 grant, if received, would be used to get the administrative structure of the NFP set up.

Custer County BOCC approved putting in \$10K in the pot and Mr. Keen, Custer County Workforce Housing Committee, had asked the Town of Westcliffe to donate 5k and Silver Cliff to do the same. The Westcliffe board approved the resolution. One trustee thinks since the first new project will be the 12 lots that the County donated to Silver Cliff for housing are located in Silver Cliff, that Silver Cliff should foot the bill. (The grant application is not specifically for those lots, but for developing the infrastructure for

the non-profit which would/could manage the paperwork for the 12 lot project, but would later be available to manage other housing projects for both towns and the county.)

Under approving Faade Grant applications, there was a request to replace a door on the ground level of the building housing Sugar Lump. It was approved for ½ the cost of the project.

Dark Skies wants to put some signs up at the Smokey Jack Observatory (SOJ) area in The Bluff Park that would have seasonal diagrams of the constellations, one facing North and one facing South. This was approved.

Putting in a culvert on the drainage ditch by SOJ was also discussed. Dark Skies would buy the culvert. Town Maintenance would dig the trench. No motions were entered.

The Parks Advisory Committee report included some positive feedback on the movement of the Farmer’s Market back to Jess Price Park. Some people wanted to know why they put in so much cement.

There is 20K budget for trees in the budget. Consideration of a request to plant trees in Memorial Park was the discussion. Tree planting is part of the park improvement plan but in addition, there have been requests to plant trees in memory of a relative. Being explored is whether the park would replace trees given in memorial if the tree dies and where shade trees would best provide shade for families using the park and playground. There was also a question of whether the trees are for the parks or if the downtown plan for tree landscaping

is part of the same budget. This will be revisited next month. Of note, this discussion ended in a heated debate on whether saying the workshop recommendations were decisions isn’t the same thing the town was sued for. (Referring to the Hedberg suit.) It appeared to this reporter that there was concern because the mayor kept using the term “decided” when referring to the “recommendations”. This reporter assumed the mayor was indicating that he, personally, has made a decision how he’d like to see things go. Several times, it was pointed out that this was just a discussion session with no decisions.) This item was tabled in a motion since a committee is still gathering information and going through plans.

Next there was a discussion about the park playground getting dinged by insurance in the audit because it doesn’t fully comply. There are safety statutes on what materials around the equipment meet the safety standard. These standards are based on the height of equipment and the distance a child could fall. Apparently, some of the equipment is high enough that they’ll have to put in the recycled rubber chips, which are more costly than sand or wood chips. Also some of the playground equipment is reaching its safety life’s end and will need to be repaired or replaced. There are no plans to address the issue in this budget year. This item was also tabled until the safety evaluation is completed and estimates for a compliance solution are all in. The mayor hoped that this would be done before the budget workshop for next year so that it can be included for consideration.

LEGAL NOTICES

NOTICE OF FINAL PAYMENT

Notice is hereby given that final payment will be made on or after the 1st day of July, 2025 on a contract dated January 21, 2021 between Round Mountain Water and Sanitation District (Owner) and Iconergy, Inc. (Contractor), for the Meter Replacement Project and Smith Well Replacement Project.

All persons, companies or corporations that have furnished labor, materials or other supplies used by Contractor under and in connection with said contract and whose claims have not been paid by the Contractor shall file with the Owner a verified statement of the amount due and unpaid on account of such a claim on or before the date of final payment stated above. Failure on the part of the claimant to file such settlement will relieve the Owner from any or all liability for such claim.
Owner: Round Mountain Water and Sanitation District

/s/ ___ Dave Schneider,
General Manager
Published on June 27, 2025

Sangre de Cristo Sentinel
Westcliffe, Colorado

Attorney or Party Without Attorney (Name and Address):
Robert Roscoe
PO Bo 1435
Westcliffe, CO 81252
Case Number: 25PR10
Division 1

NOTICE TO CREDITORS BY PUBLICATION PURSUANT TO 15-12-801, C.R.S.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Estate of David Andrew Roscoe, Deceased
Case Number 25PR10

All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to

District Court of Custer County, Colorado
On or before October 29, 2025
All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to

Robert Roscoe
PO Box 1435
Westcliffe CO 81252

Published June 27, July 4, and July, 11, 2025
Sangre de Cristo Sentinel
Westcliffe, Colorado

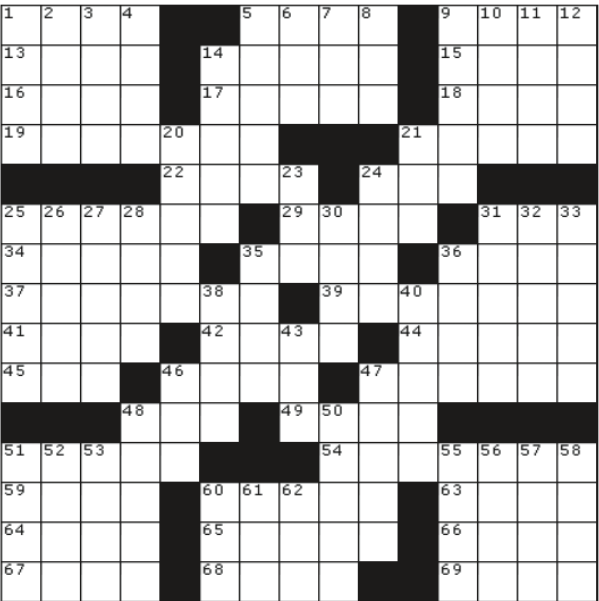
NOTICE NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Custer County District Court, Colorado
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In the Matter of the Estate of David Andrew Roscoe aka David Roscoe, David A Roscoe, Deceased

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS

- 1 Little Mermaid's Sebastian
- 5 Syllables used in songs (2 wds.)
- 9 Lawmen
- 13 Lounge
- 14 Stomache sore
- 15 Unseal
- 16 Relieve
- 17 Fasten
- 18 A Roman emperor
- 19 Fan
- 21 Father of 25A, son of 51A

DOWN

- 22 Uncomplicated
- 24 TV lawyer Matlock
- 25 Son of 21A
- 29 Aid a crime
- 31 Touch affectionately
- 34 Works of the devil
- 35 Skip
- 36 Swerve
- 37 Perceiving
- 39 With 60D, Happy ___!
- 41 Goad
- 42 First letter of the Arabic alphabet
- 44 National capital

- 45 Compass point
- 46 Gush out
- 47 Gargantuan (Trumpism)
- 48 Vapor
- 49 Double-reed instrument
- 51 Father of 21A, son of 54A
- 54 Father of 51A
- 59 Smear
- 60 Wild dog
- 63 Equal
- 64 European monetary unit
- 65 Constellation
- 66 Store
- 67 Actor Alda
- 68 Scream
- 69 Loch ___ monster

- 20 Cola company
- 21 Air commuter's transportation
- 23 Thanksgiving vegetable
- 24 Second letter of the Greek alphabet
- 25 The Messiah
- 26 Pull___ (sweaters)
- 27 Burn
- 28 Otherwise
- 30 Punch
- 31 Trainee
- 32 Relating to the ear
- 33 Ill-natured
- 35 Stare at
- 36 Thick carpet
- 38 Dozes
- 40 Not as false
- 43 The other half of Jima
- 46 Pouch
- 47 Tramps
- 48 African country
- 50 Doughnut-shaped roll
- 51 Thought
- 52 First king of Israel
- 53 Halo
- 55 Association (abbr.)
- 56 Loathe
- 57 OT book
- 58 Cat cries
- 60 See 39A
- 61 Wrath
- 62 Zilch

DOWN

- 1 Fly
- 2 Leo's lament
- 3 As well as
- 4 Type of cheese
- 5 Plague of Egypt
- 6 Hovercraft
- 7 Downwind
- 8 Creative work
- 9 Mr. O'Brien
- 10 Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
- 11 Brand of coffee alternative
- 12 Stuck up person
- 14 First husband of Bathsheba

Key on page 7

The Liberty Tree

Religion, The Constitution & Culture

State, National, & World

The Daily Jot

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

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

Giving in to Fear of the Flu

Big Pharma spends millions upon millions in fear-mongering the elderly into taking their yearly flu vaccine. The Centers for Disease Control is complicit in backing up Big Pharma. Millions of elderly Americans roll up their sleeves for a flu shot, trusting that public health agencies like the CDC and NIH are steering them right.

Yet according to their own data, flu deaths among the elderly continue to rise—even as vaccination rates hit record highs. A recently published 2025 NIH and CDC-supported study confirms a troubling trend: despite increased flu vaccination coverage, the death rate from influenza in people over 65 has not declined. In fact, it continues to climb.

The same agencies urging widespread vaccination now acknowledge, albeit quietly, that the flu shot may not be delivering the protection it promises—especially for the elderly. The seasonal flu vaccine I has long been marketed as a lifesaver, particularly for high-risk populations. But repeated peer-reviewed studies—including those published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* and a 2025 preprint from *medRxiv*—cast doubt on that claim. The evidence shows that flu shots often do not prevent infection, nor do they prevent flu-related deaths in the populations most encouraged to take them. This raises a serious question: If the vaccine isn’t effective at preventing illness or death, why is it still being pushed so aggressively? Isn’t this the same question we have after countless studies about the COVID 19 shots?

The answer may lie in the uncomfortable intersection of public health and profit. The pharmaceutical industry earns billions from annual flu shot production. And agencies like the CDC and NIH—many of whose advisory members have financial ties to vaccine manufacturers—continue to double down on these annual campaigns despite underwhelming results. Even some mainstream media is slowly acknowledging what critics have pointed out for years. A recent viral post by *Wide Awake Media* highlighted CDC admissions that the flu shot doesn’t stop transmission and may only “reduce severity of symptoms.” Worse, there appears to be a correlation between rising flu vaccination rates among seniors and increasing flu mortality in that same group. That doesn’t prove causation, but it certainly calls for pause and honest evaluation.

Yet each fall, the same message gets louder: “Get your flu shot—it could save your life.” What’s being left out is just as important: “...but it probably won’t prevent you from getting the flu or dying from it.” It’s time we stop letting fear drive health decisions. Americans—especially the elderly—deserve transparency. Make personal health decisions based off of informed choice, not pressure campaigns. There is wisdom in evaluating every medical decision prayerfully and practically. As Paul wrote to Timothy in 2 Timothy 1:7, “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.” That means asking hard questions, even when the answers challenge the status quo. So before you line up for another annual jab, consider the data—not just the fear-based sales pitch. Anything less is, say it with me...Stupidocrisy.

—Bill Wilson

Sources:

https://x.com/wideawake_media/status/1926572833041252603
<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9305032/>
<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/74/wr/mm7406a2.htm>
<https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2025.01.30.25321421v3>
<https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2025.01.30.25321421v3>

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Muslims Murder 200 Christians

Christians Ask Trump to Sanction Nigeria

by Ben Johnson,
The Washington Stand

The nation’s leading international religious freedom organization has asked President Donald Trump to call on the nation where mostly Muslim marauders have killed more Christians than anywhere else in the world to begin “protecting vulnerable” Christians.

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) has issued a statement asking the U.S. State Department to give Nigeria its most concerning designation for religious liberty: a Country of Particular Concern (CPC).

“The abhorrent violence in Nigeria’s Middle Belt and the systematic, ongoing, and egregious attacks throughout Nigeria against Christians and Muslims are indications that government prevention efforts are failing and not protecting vulnerable religious communities,” said USCIRF Chair and former Congresswoman Vicky Hartzler. “U.S. government foreign assistance to Nigeria should efficiently and effectively support efforts to protect religious freedom.”

“Further efforts are needed to reduce violence and preserve freedom of religion or belief for all Nigerians,” added USCIRF Commissioner Mohamed Elsanousi. “The U.S. government should use foreign assistance to address conflict resolution and enhance security sector training so vulnerable religious communities can be better protected.”

Predominantly Christians, as well as some Sufi or dissident Muslims, suffer persecution at the hands of the same force: radical Islamist jihadists.

Muslim extremists murdered 200 Christians in Nigeria over the weekend, often burning them alive. An eyewitness said some victims had been “burned beyond recognition: infants, children, mothers, and fathers just wiped out.”

“The images being reported in the aftermath of this massacre in Yelwata are absolutely devastating. Homes are burned to the ground, now piles of rubble. And lives have been lost, leaving those who survived grieving the loss of children, parents, siblings, and friends. It’s wrong for world leaders to ignore this as just another attack

in Nigeria. The innocent Christians targeted in these attacks deserve the protection of their government,” Arielle Del Turco, director of the Center for Religious Liberty at Family Research Council, told *The Washington Stand*.

“Diplomats from the U.S. and other free countries should be holding the Nigerian government accountable and speaking up on behalf of vulnerable Christians being persecuted for their faith,” Del Turco added. “These attacks against Christian villages are completely unacceptable, and the Nigerian government must hear that message loud and clear.”

That continues the ever-escalating cycle of violence plaguing Africa’s most populous nation.

Tens of Thousands of Christians Killed since 2000

Jihadists killed a total of 113 more Christians in March and April — 51 of them on Palm Sunday. Another 3,100 Christians died in 2024, making Nigeria the most dangerous country in the world for Christians, according to the World Watch List 2025 produced by religious persecution watchdog Open Doors. (Thus far in 2025, Nigeria ranks eighth, between the Islamic nations of Pakistan and Eritrea. It is the only nation among the 20 worst nations in the world where Christians constitute a majority.) Additionally:

- Last January, Boko Haram terrorists murdered the pastor of the Church of Christ and 13 others in Yobe State.
- In May 2024, an al-Qaeda affiliate killed eight people and kidnapped 160 children, mostly Christians, whom they eventually released.
- In August 2024, “bandits reportedly killed 70 Christians and kidnapped 20 students in separate attacks in Benue State,” recounted USCIRF in its latest annual report.

“Nigeria’s government has continued to forcibly close camps hosting displaced Christians who fled violence by Boko Haram, despite persistent security concerns in their communities of origin,” noted USCIRF in its most recent annual report. The annual report called on the Trump administration to name Nigeria a CPC, alongside Afghanistan, India, and Vietnam. It also wanted to label Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa

Province (ISWAP) as Entities of Particular Concern (EPC).

Nigeria recently had a Christian majority, according to groups on the ground. However, following the CIA, the most recent USCIRF report now lists Nigeria’s population as 53.5% Muslim, with Christians making up 45.9% of the country (35.3% Protestant, 10.6% Roman Catholic). In all, as many as 62,000 Christians may have lost their lives mostly to Islamist jihadist violence since 2000, according to Genocide Watch.

Nigerian lawmakers rejected a law that would have expanded Islamic Sharia law nationwide on October 24, 2024. Nigeria’s 1999 constitution — which describes Nigeria as “one indivisible and indissoluble sovereign nation under God” and provides for religious liberty — allows a “Sharia Court of Appeal” to impose “Islamic personal law.” Rep. Aliyu Missau said he offered the bill, which would have the word “personal,” because “[t]he constitution did not envisage the dynamism and development that may come into the country” under Islam’s influence over the last two decades.

However, the national government will imprison anyone guilty of making any comment which “persons consider as a public insult on their religion.” Under local anti-blasphemy laws, at least five prisoners still in jail have been sentenced to the death penalty (although courts vacated one sentence).

USCIRF had recommended the U.S. government brand Nigeria a top-level human rights offender every year since 2009, and the State Department finally designated the nation a Country of Particular Concern (CPC) in 2020 — an action reversed by President Joe Biden. USCIRF took the unusual step of releasing a public statement in November 2021 denouncing the administration’s intransigence: The Commission “finds it unexplainable that the U.S. Department of State did not redesignate Nigeria as a ‘Country of Particular Concern’ (CPC) and treated it as a country with no severe religious freedom violations.”

(Editor/GG: Had to shorten it a bit. For the whole article please see below.)

Please see: <https://washingtonstand.com/news/amid-abhorrent-violence-against-christians-experts-ask-trump-to-sanction-nigeria>

“The independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint councils and joint efforts—of common dangers, sufferings and successes.”

—George Washington



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Undercover as a 13-Year-Old, An Officer Finds What Parents Fear Most

by John DeGirolamo,
Guest Commentary, The Rocky Mountain Voice

You wouldn't let your middle schooler wander the mall by herself, so why would you let her wander the Internet alone? If your child has online access, then every predator all over the world potentially can contact your kid.

Is this a risk that parents should be worried about?

First, it's important to understand why predators are on the Internet, online games and social media. Predators are after kids for several reasons: First, to obtain explicit material. Second, to extort someone for money and third, to meet for a sexual encounter.

Frequently, the predator may be seeking a combination of the three. Dawn Hawkins, CEO for National Center on Sexual Exploitation noted on X (formerly Twitter), "Child sexual abuse, sex trafficking, rape, pornography – they have all merged online in today's digital world."

Officer David Gomez went undercover online as a thirteen-year-old girl.

Every parent should take note of what happened next.

Officer Gomez created a fake profile as a thirteen-year-old girl on a popular social media platform. This was done easily in a matter of minutes. Within twenty-four hours, the "thirteen-year-old" received multiple friend/follower requests from complete strangers.

The fake profile accepted the request, and within minutes, contact was made using a private message, trying to chat up the "girl." Within fifteen minutes, the fake profile had several new "friends/followers" and more than one asked for nude pictures. The profile was set up in a way where the child's face was not distinguishable and was clearly indicated as a minor.

Contact by the predator was purposeful. Twelve hours later, predators requested the child to go out on a dinner date, as well as offers to receive a makeover at a local motel.

Through private messaging, the predator made explicit and incriminating proposals, detailing his intentions.

The fake profile agreed to meet at a local motel where Officer Gomez and team promptly arrested a middle-aged man.

They were able to confiscate his electronic device and discovered that the criminal had sent over 100 friend/follower requests to middle school girls.

Of those contacted, 90% accepted the request without question.

The criminal also convinced over twenty middle school children to send him nude photos. He was using those images for his own use and sharing them with other collectors of child pornography (Child Sexual Abuse Material.)

The man was arrested on a Friday night and missed his dinner plans.

The guests were wondering why the man missed his own wedding rehearsal dinner. He was scheduled to get married the very next day.

His fiancée had a daughter from a previous relationship. Guess how old the daughter was? Thirteen years old. Truth is stranger than fiction.

What are the takeaways?

1. It's easy for anyone, including predators, to set up fake profiles. They may approach a child with an adult age profile or one with a similar age to the person they are trying to target.

2. Most teens see online relationships as an equivalent of someone they have met in person. They often view these as trusted friends.

3. Most teens get an ego boost when they receive a friend/follower request and it's common for many teens to have over a thousand social media connections.

4. Teens consider a large number of friends/followers as a validation of their popularity rather than a risk. Predators know this and that's why it is so common that a teen will accept a friend request without asking any questions.

5. Predators commonly use private messaging to contact an unsuspecting vulnerable minor.

Perhaps you have sons and think there is no need to worry. Think again. The next installment in this multipart article will review the specific ways predators target teenage boys.

Officer David Gomez's story is profiled in *It's Not About the dEvil*, a dramatized nonfiction book by John DiGirolamo, which features stories about people fighting modern evil. For more information about Officer Gomez, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/deputygomez>

John DiGirolamo is a speaker and critically acclaimed Christian author of four books, featuring stories of police officers, human trafficking advocates and survivors and a prolife doctor. His third book, It's Not About the Predator: A Parent's Guide to Internet & Social Media Safety, is a practical 65-page booklet to help parents keep their kids safe online. The book details the predator's playbook, grooming tactics, and specific proactive actions for parents.

John is the Board President of Bringing our Valley Hope, whose objective is to end human trafficking in central Colorado through education and survivor support. He's also on the parent's council of Defend Young Minds, a nonprofit that equips parents to defend their children from the harm of pornography. John is a member of the Chaffee County Patriots and his books are sold on Amazon. More information can be found: <https://itisnotabout.com/>

Please see: <https://rockymountainvoice.com/2025/06/16/digirolamo-undercover-as-a-13-year-old-an-officer-finds-what-parents-fear-most/>

June 19th

**The day Republicans
freed Slaves
from Democrats**

**Quotes from George Washington's
Farwell Address September 19, 1776**

"Guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism."

"There can be no greater error than to expect, or calculate upon real favors from nation to nation."

"The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government."



1776

The Second Amendment Corner

Liberty's Line in the Sand

2025



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

The Senior's Equalizer: Why Firearms & Awareness Are Not Optional

Opinion by Doris Wise, Jews Can Shoot, via ammoland.com

As we age, we gain perspective, wisdom, and hard-earned experience. But we also lose some physical capabilities we once took for granted: **strength, speed, balance, and stamina.** These changes do not make us weak, but they do make us **vulnerable** in ways we were not before.

Unfortunately, criminals know this all too well.

Seniors are targeted because predators see us as easy prey. They assume we cannot fight back, that we will be slow to react, easily overpowered, or simply afraid. In many cases, they are right, because when it comes to brute force, a 70 or 80-year-old cannot outmatch a 20 or 30-year-old attacker. That is not defeatism. That is reality.

The question is not **whether** we should defend ourselves. The question is **how** we do it effectively. The answer? Situational awareness, a firearm, and ongoing training.

Situational Awareness: Your First Line of Defense

Too many people move through life oblivious to their surroundings: glued to their phones, lost in thought, or assuming danger is someone else's problem. For seniors, that mindset is a luxury we cannot afford.

Situational awareness is the habit of staying alert. It is noticing the man loitering near your car, recognizing when someone follows you too closely through a store or parking lot, trusting your instincts when something feels wrong, and acting on that feeling before it is too late.

Criminals do not want a fight; they want an easy win. If you appear alert and prepared, you are far less likely to be targeted. However, awareness alone is not enough if an attacker decides to strike. That is where a firearm, and your ability to use it, become critical.

The Firearm: The Great Equalizer

A firearm is not a magic wand. It does not grant superpowers or solve every problem. But in a life-threatening situation, it levels the playing field.

You do not need to be strong. You do not need to run fast. You do not need to wrestle an attacker. You simply need to be **trained, ready, and willing** to defend yourself. A firearm is the only tool that gives a 78-year-old woman the power to stop a 28-year-old predator in his tracks.

This is not about fantasy or bravado; it is about real-world survival in a society where police often cannot arrive in time to stop violence, and criminals know it.

Training Is Not Optional:

It Is Lifesaving

Owning a gun is not enough. Confidence does not come from ownership; it comes from training. The good news? Training is widely available.

Seniors across the country are actively participating in firearms training, with over 17 million Americans aged 65 and older owning firearms, and at least 55 percent of those 55 and older with guns reporting attendance at safety training courses. Organizations like the National Rifle Association (NRA) and the United States Concealed Carry Association (USCCA) offer beginner-friendly classes, such as the NRA's Home Firearm Safety and USCCA's Concealed Carry and Home Defense Fundamentals, in states like Arizona, Texas, Rhode Island and beyond. These courses, often tailored for older adults, accommodate physical limitations and focus on safe handling, defensive shooting, and legal responsibilities. Providers like Gunsite Academy in Arizona and The Preserve Academy in Rhode Island offer senior-accessible classes, with many ranges providing personalized instruction to build skills and confidence at a comfortable pace.

Ongoing training sharpens reflexes, builds muscle memory, and reduces fear. It transforms a firearm from a daunting object into a reliable tool. It also teaches legal responsibility, safe handling,

and how to make sound decisions under stress.

Perhaps most importantly, training builds confidence: the kind that shows in your face and posture, which may deter an attacker before any confrontation begins.

Disarming Seniors Is a Death Sentence

We live in a time when some politicians and activists push to disarm law-abiding citizens, especially the elderly, under the guise of safety. They claim firearms are too dangerous, too complicated, or too risky for seniors. This is nonsense and deeply insulting.

Stripping seniors of the right to self-defense is tantamount to saying our lives are no longer worth protecting. It leaves us at the mercy of those who already view us as prey. It is the opposite of compassion.

As the daughter of Holocaust survivors, I do not say this lightly. History has shown, time and again, what happens when the vulnerable are disarmed. It never ends well.

We Must Be Our Own First Responders

Calling 911 is not a plan; it is a backup. In most emergencies, police arrive after the crime has occurred, after the door has been kicked in, after the attack has begun, after someone is injured

or dead.

When seconds count, you are the first responder.

A firearm in trained, disciplined hands is not violence; it is the prevention of violence. It is a tool of peace, not chaos, and the last line of defense for those who cannot afford to wait for help.

Empowerment Is Not Just for the Young

Our right to life, liberty, and self-protection does not expire with age. It becomes even more crucial as we age. No senior should be made to feel helpless or disposable. No senior should be told to "just call for help" while being attacked. That is not a plan; it is a death wish.

Situational awareness, armed readiness, and regular training are not paranoia; they are common sense. They are how seniors reclaim control in a world that too often sees us as weak.

To my fellow seniors: You are not too old. You are not too late. Train. Prepare. Stay aware. And never surrender your right to defend your life.

Because your life still matters.

Please see: <https://www.ammoland.com/2025/06/seniors-why-firearms-and-awareness-are-not-optional/>

FYI...

for your information...

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Office Hours are Tuesday & Wednesday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Fridays 9 a.m. - noon.

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Deadline for all other submissions is noon on Monday, and can be emailed to sdcsentinel@gmail.com

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Please limit Letters to the Editor to 500 words or less. Please include your name, address and phone number. Garage/Yard sales are printed free. However, verbiage is limited to date, time and address.

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“Be courteous to all, but intimate with few;
and let those be well-tryed before you give them your confidence.”
— George Washington

FightLite MCR: The Blue Collar Belt Fed AR-15

by Jim Grant, ammoland.com

I love all bad-ass belt-fed weapons like the FightLite MCR; They're just so cool. Sure, you could argue that a magazine-fed rifle is more practical, lighter, and compact, but if you've ever seen the look on Animal Mother's face in "Full Metal Jacket", you know exactly how it feels to wield one.

In fact, my experience with belt-fed weapons is limited to a Russian PKM and an FN M249, and while both were near-religious experiences, I never expected to realistically have one myself unless I hit the lottery. After all, a transferrable M249 (or likely a Minimi)- when you can actually find them - is north of \$500,000! This fact and the price of military-issued M249 SAWs are the likely impetus for the FightLite MCR's development.

The FightLite MCR can feed from a standard M249 SAW belt or a STANAG magazine.

But the MCR is more than just a budget SAW, so let's take a closer look and see what makes it so special.

FightLite MCR Upper

The FightLite MCR is a lightweight, closed-bolt, belt-fed, short-stroke piston-driven semi-or-fully-automatic upper receiver for the AR-15. Both the full and semi-auto versions are compatible with any semi-automatic AR lower, but function in only semi-automatic mode unless the shooter has a transferrable full-auto trigger pack or a registered lighting link. (The link only works in the semi-auto-only version that incorporates a bolt carrier cut to Colt SP01 specifications.)

One of the cooler features of the MCR is how it's not just a modified AR upper, but a purpose-built SAW replacement. This is why both versions can feed from either a standard M249 SAW belt or a STANAG magazine. It's also why the gun incorporates quick-change barrels that allow shooters to swap them out during extended firing sessions where the gun can overheat while providing suppressive fire.

To replace the barrel, a shooter needs only to clear the action



The FightLite MCR can feed from a standard M249 SAW belt or a STANAG magazine. IMG Jim Grant



Using a belt to load the MCR is a breeze. IMG Jim Grant

and lock it open by holding the bolt release while charging the action. Then press the barrel release tab just forward of the receiver top rail, and finally pull forward (towards the muzzle) on the barrel swap handle. Installing a replacement barrel is simply the same procedure in reverse.

Installing the MCR

Although my time with belt-fed firearms is somewhat limited, adapting to the MCR was fairly straightforward and became second nature pretty quickly. One thing that was a little unexpected, was the installation process for the FightLite MCR upper. I had originally assumed that like nearly every other AR upper receiver group, the installation consisted of popping out two takedown pins, replacing the upper, and reinstalling said pins. But there's actually a little more complicated than that.

To start things off, a shooter should replace their existing AR-15 lower's recoil buffer and spring with the ones provided by FightLite with the MCR. Doing

so is very easy and doesn't require any tools. The other step is more difficult and requires a shooter to replace their bolt catch with a proprietary extended one.

While most AR experts utilize a punch and a piece of cardboard or even cloth to protect the lower receiver while driving the roll pin in, I just took an old furniture nail and ground off the tip - but I also wrapped it in an old piece of holster leather since I ended up installing the catch on a friend's very expensive transferrable M4 lower.

After that, simply put the MCR on top of the host AR lower, and you're almost ready to roll!

Loading the FightLite MCR

Anyone who has ever run an M249 SAW can load the MCR in their sleep - the manual of arms is very similar. But for those of you without trigger time behind a belt-fed beast, here's the quick and dirty version.

To load the FightLite MCR, first push the tray cover release

forward toward the muzzle, then flip up the tray cover. Visually check to make sure there are no obvious signs of malfunction or damage, then draw your ammunition belt across the fed tray and align the forwardmost round to the chamber before closing the tray cover.

This requires a little finesse, but if you're using a polymer lead that goes on the end of the belt, you can just drop the entire thing across the feed tray and be done with it.

Once the round is aligned and the tray closed, charge the MCR's action or release the bolt. The gun is now loaded and chambered.

FightLite MCR Performance and Verdict

For the test, I ran the MCR on both a friend's SBR lower and another friend's transferrable, select-fire M4 lower. Across some 1,000 rounds of 5.56mm ammunition (800 rounds of 62gr green tip and 200 rounds of 55 gr FMJ), the MCR encountered around five malfunctions without cleaning. All of these issues stemmed from the gun being very hot and only occurred after the first 500 rounds were fired, leading me to believe they were caused by a combination of heat and carbon build-up.

Regarding accuracy, the gun could squeeze out two-MOA groups with either barrel using military-grade ammunition. Meaning that if a shooter wanted to run match rounds through a belt fed and burn money faster than Bloomberg shoving unwanted

gun control down the American people's collective throats, they could do so for an increase in accuracy. But personally, I don't see the point.

Overall, with an MSRP of around \$8,000, the Fightlite MCR is by no means 'cheap'. Not in price and certainly not in construction or build quality. Rather, it's a purpose-built LMG or belt-fed semi-auto that does exactly what it set out to do: beat the M249 SAW in terms of both price and overall weight. Sure, it's not cheap, but it's incredibly more affordable, coupled with a registered drop-in auto sear when compared to a factory transferable belt-fed machinegun.

Jim Grant is one of the elite editors for AmmoLand.com, who in addition to his mastery of prose, can wield a camera with expert finesse. He loves anything and everything guns but holds firearms from the Cold War in a special place in his heart.

When he's not reviewing guns or shooting for fun and competition, Jim can be found hiking and hunting with his wife Kimberly, their son, and their dog Peanut in the South Carolina low country.

(Editor/GG: Belt fed is the way to go. As the Apocalypse approaches, every neighborhood in Happy Valley should have at least one of these. Have a neighborhood fundraiser and actually buy something worth having. They're great on P Dawg colonies too. Plus, it looks super cool....)

Please see: <https://www.ammoland.com/2025/06/fightlite-mcr-the-blue-collar-belt-fed-ar-15/>



It's a belt-fed upper for your AR-15. What more needs to be said? IMG Jim Grant



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Honduran MS-13 Illegal Busted

Press Release from the U.S. Border Patrol
June 19, 2025

MS-13 GANG MEMBER ARRESTED!

On Sunday, USBP agents arrested Delmar Sanchez-Zuniga, a Honduran national, after he tried to sneak into the U.S. by hiding in a sugar cane field near Eagle Pass, TX.

Agents quickly ran his records and uncovered a violent criminal past:

- MS-13 gang member
- Felony convictions for possession of a controlled substance
- Felony conviction for possession of defaced firearm
- Arrest for sexual assault
- Arrest for aggravated assault

He now faces prosecution for felony illegal re-entry (8USC1326).

Gang ties. Violent past. No place in the U.S.



SCOTUS Says Constitution Does Not Second Guess the People On 'Gender Affirming' Care

by Thomas Jipping,
The Daily Signal

In one of the most-anticipated decisions of its 2024-25 term, *United States v. Skrmetti*, the Supreme Court held that a Tennessee law prohibiting so-called “gender affirming” medical interventions for minors does not violate the Fourteenth Amendment’s Equal Protection Clause. That was the only question before the Supreme Court, and it got the answer right.

Tennessee is among more than 20 states that prohibit such medical interventions for minors. Its law, called SB1, allows doctors to prescribe drugs such as puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones or to perform certain surgeries only to treat specific medical conditions. These include congenital defects, disease, or physical injury. It prohibits their use in cases of “gender dysphoria, gender identity disorder, [and] gender incongruence.”

Three minors who wanted to identify with the opposite sex and their parents challenged SB1, arguing that it violated the Fourteenth Amendment’s requirement that states provide the “equal protection of the laws.” They argued that SB1 was just like more familiar laws that discriminate based on sex, which the Supreme Court already held must meet a higher legal standard. The Biden administration also joined the case to oppose the

Tennessee law.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, which includes Tennessee, didn’t buy it and neither did the Supreme Court. Chief Justice John Roberts wrote the 6-3 opinion, refusing to find a “sex-based classification” in a statute that, to state the obvious, does not classify based on sex. SB1 applies to all minors, regardless of sex. The only distinctions it makes are age (it applies to minors, not adults) and the medical use of the particular surgeries and drugs. Neither of these has anything to do with sex.

Every Supreme Court decision has two parts: the judgment, which is typically a yes/no answer to a specific legal question, and the opinion, which explains the reasons for the judgment. The judgment decides the case before the Court and the opinion can impact other cases. Here, Roberts’ opinion addressed some important issues that will no doubt be raised in other cases.

He emphasized, for example, that our understanding of gender is constantly changing and that the advisability and efficacy of medical interventions in cases of gender dysphoria or incongruence is being hotly debated. In fact, Roberts pointed out, several European countries that jumped on the “gender-affirming” care band-wagon have reversed

course, “rais[ing] significant concerns regarding the potential harms associated with using puberty blockers and hormones to treat transgender minors.”

In addition, the Court refused to extend its controversial decision in *Bostock v. Clayton County* from the statutory to the constitutional context. In *Bostock*, the Supreme Court held that firing someone who is gay or “transgender” amounts to discrimination “because of” sex, violating Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Liberal activists want the Supreme Court to reach the same conclusion with respect to the Equal Protection Clause. Roberts refused, explaining the important differences between SB1 and “the logic of *Bostock*.”

Unless a law discriminates on the basis of things such as race, religion, or sex, courts are not going to second-guess legislative judgments about policy issues. This decision means that gender-related laws like SB1 are in the broad category of matters, such as regulating the practice of medicine generally, that the people and their elected representatives must handle. SB1, Roberts wrote, “clearly meets this standard.”

Like European countries have concluded, the Tennessee legislature argued that any perceived discordance between sex and gender can be resolved

by an approach far less invasive and permanent than surgery or drugs and will likely produce better outcomes.

Challenges to similar laws in other states raise the same Equal Protection Clause issue and whether parents have a right, under the Due Process Clause of the same Fourteenth Amendment, to obtain medical interventions for their minor children. This decision should settle the first issue, but the second will likely find its way to the Supreme Court as litigation elsewhere continues.

In recent polls, many Americans say that the Supreme Court decides cases based more on politics than law. The Court can fuel that perception when it makes up rights that are not in the Constitution’s text, or tries to reach a result that is politically, but not judicially, correct. This is not one of those cases. The Court applied basic Equal Protection Clause analysis and came to the obvious, and objectively correct, conclusion. As Roberts concluded, the Equal Protection Clause does not resolve “fierce scientific and policy debates” like those today that relate to gender. That’s our job as citizens.

Please see: <https://www.dailysignal.com/2025/06/18/supreme-court-says-the-constitution-does-not-second-guess-the-people-on-gender-affirming-care/>



How Firearms and Horses Helped Settlers Survive Grizzly Bear Country

by Dean Weingarten,
ammoland.com.

Few studies have examined the effectiveness of firearms in defense against bears. This may be because early experience with modern firearms against bears showed them to be incredibly effective compared to muzzleloading firearms, which were far superior to bows and spears.

Before Christopher Columbus pioneered a regular and profitable way to travel to the Caribbean and the New World, Amerindians had difficulty defending themselves and their food against grizzly bears.

Grizzly bears migrated into the area occupied by the 48 contiguous states a bit after humans, about 12,000 to 16,000 years ago. The bears originated in Europe and Asia, and had colonized what is now Alaska and some of far northern Canada. Glaciers prevented them from migrating further south. They had co-developed with men in Europe and Asia, and had evolved strategies to deal with humans. In the Americas, Amerindians did not have firearms or horses. They had a difficult time dealing with grizzly bears. Grizzly bears are much more aggressive than black bears and tend to be larger. A closely coordinated group of men could kill a grizzly with bows and spears, but they were likely to suffer casualties.

This changed when firearms and horses were brought to the Americas.

Grizzly bears were encountered early in Canada. Henry Kelsey, a British Explorer, made a name

for himself in 1691 by killing two grizzly bears in what is now Canada. Kelsey was accompanied by an Indian companion. In 1691, Kelsey would have been armed with a flintlock musket. From *The Great Company*, 1667- 1871:

“His companion made his escape up a tree, while Kelsey, his retreat cut off, hid himself in a clump of high willows. The bears perceiving the Indian in the branches made directly for him, but Kelsey, observing their action, leveled his gun and killed one of the animals. The other bear bounded towards the place from which the shots came, and not finding the explorer, returned to the tree, when he was brought down by Kelsey’s second shot. Good fortune attended this exploit, for it attained for the young man the name among the tribes of Miss-top-ashish, or ‘Little Giant’.”

The large bears became a serious problem as the Spanish colonized California, starting in 1769. From *A Description of Distant Roads, Original Journals of the First Expedition into California*, 1769-1770, by Juan Crespi, p. 485:

“The scouts had reported to us that they had come upon a great many large bears in this level. With this in mind, our Captain and five or six soldiers were riding their horses. On coming down to the plain we at once spied some seven of them in two or three different spots. They fired at one, which it took seven or more shots for them to kill, each shot wounding it in the body. They slew it finally, and the rest went galloping off.”

Six or seven mounted men, armed with muzzleloaders, were able to



Cowboys roping a bear by James Walker, 1877. Copyright expired

kill a large grizzly bear without a casualty. In 1769, these would be flintlock muskets of 71 caliber. Horses were an essential element. They negated the speed of the bears, at least in open terrain. In California, as large ranches developed, bears were killed to prevent depredation on cows. Groups of Californian cowboys were able to capture bears with horses and lassos. The horses made the difference.

In the *Journals of the Lewis and Clark expedition*, in 1806, Clark noted that the Indians were able to kill bears in the open with horses and bows.

“The Indians of this Country Seldom kill the bear they are very much afraid of them and the killing of a white or Grzley bear, is as great a feat as two of their enemy. the few of those Animals which they Chance to kill is found in the leavel open lands and pursued on horses & killed with their Arrows.

Lewis noted that competent riflemen could kill grizzly bears, but the grizzly bears had a serious reputation for ferocity

and tenacity. After numerous encounters with grizzly bears, Lewis noted how difficult they were to kill.

“I must confess that I do not like the gentlemen and had reather fight two Indians than one bear; there is no other chance to conquer them by a single shot but by shooting them through the brains, and this becomes difficult in consequence of two large muscles which cover the sides of the forehead and the sharp projection of the center of the frontal bone, which is also of a pretty good thickness.

The Lewis and Clark expedition varied from about 50 to 30 members. Members of the expedition killed about 33 grizzly bears, along with at least 10 grizzly bears that were wounded and escaped. In spite of the number of bears taken and wounded, not one person in the expedition was killed by a bear. Reading the journals, many of the men shot bears, and had to run, jump into water, climb trees, ride horses or otherwise escape the bears, but none were mauled by a bear.

With cartridge firearms, a single man could reliably kill grizzly bears.

Sir Samuel Baker noted the combination of a cartridge pistol and a horse in the killing of a grizzly bear in “Wild Beasts and Their Ways” in 1881. The cowboy chased the bear on a moonless night, keeping it in the open. Both the bear and the horse became exhausted. The cowboy fired eight shots; two to turn the bear from heading toward a forest, and six shots at the bear after it was exhausted. On examining the bear, Baker found the cowboy had hit it with one shot, which went through the heart from the back to the front. From the account:

“Eight shots had been fired from the commencement, to the termination by the last fatal bullet; but, although Texas Bill was an excellent shot with his revolver, he had missed seven times, and the eighth was the only bullet that struck the bear. This had entered between the shoulders vertically, proving the correctness of his description, as he must have shot directly downwards. The bullet had passed through the centre of the heart, and had escaped near the brisket, having penetrated completely through this formidable animal.”

Baker was so impressed with the Colt revolver and cartridge combination that he ordered one for himself when he returned to England.

Please see: <https://www.ammoland.com/2025/06/how-firearms-and-horses-helped-settlers-survive-grizzly-bear-country/>



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—Frederick Douglass





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JUNE 19 BOCC
from page 5

Elected Officials Reports were first.

First up was Custer County Sheriff Rich Smith. Sheriff Smith noted that the new avjet fuel tank at the airport was being used by multiple rescue helicopters which helped them avoid a long trip back to their bases to refuel. He said he had met with Family Crisis Services on finding a “safe place” locally for domestic violence victims to stay rather than going all the way down the hill to Cañon City.

Sheriff Smith then talked about last Saturday when there were two “First Amendment Events”. (One being a U.S. Flag Day Celebration in front of the *Sentinel* where local patriots waved American Flags for two hours to celebrate Flag Day. The other being the lib, nationwide protest rallies against President Trump. These were labeled “No Kings” day. One was held in Westcliffe at the west end of Main Street (at the ‘Bluffs’) at 10 a.m. That group then marched east of Main Street on the sidewalks to school and then marched back. You can read about that in last week’s *Sentinel*.)

Sheriff Smith stated that before the No Kings rally started, he went down to the ‘Bluffs’ to meet with the “march organizer”, one “Dr. James Gilbert” to discuss security and walking protocols.

[Interesting. So, James (Dr. Doom) Gilbert, a local democrat

big wig was the local “march organizer”. So Gilbert (and maybe other local libs) are responsible (or at least partly responsible) for bringing in all those out of towners who jammed the sidewalks up and down Main Street screaming crazy chants and displaying 4th grade cardboard signs with crayon sayings scribbled on them. All to protest a duly elected U.S. President. (You didn’t see conservatives do that after Biden sort of got elected.) So, let’s look at what happened during their Main Street “march”. Main Street Westcliffe is the tourist center of the county. The street is lined with all kinds of shops, restaurants, bars, art galleries, etc. They depend on street traffic for sales. Saturday is the biggest revenue day of the week for them. It is June. A big tourist month. The weather was perfect that day. Tons of tourists coming to town including many Colorado day trippers. They come driving onto Main Street to park, walk and shop and what do they see? A long column of angry, freaky looking people, yelling and chanting, with crazy signs, jamming the sidewalk. What does a tourist do? Get out of there as fast as humanly possible. Never to come back. Our merchants take a BEATING. Westcliffe’s reputation as a nice, quiet spot to spend a day is shattered. The delusional local and out of town demonstrators think they are making a difference, and they are. Every time they do this, more people come to oppose them and their efforts as they disrupt our economic lifeline: tourism. Their myopic, self-absorbed view of themselves as being at the front

of the lib effort to get rid of Trump (and democracy) means that they have NO concerns about how their behavior affects others. Especially economically. You want a rally. Fine. Have it at the ‘Bluffs but don’t march up and down Main Street, jamming the sidewalk, scaring off our merchants’ clientele and hurting our community. A lot of these merchants are barely hanging on and the loss of big Saturday revenue intake is devastating. But libs don’t care about others. It is all about themselves. Hey Gilbert! Grow up. This ain’t the sixties again. Have a little consideration for our community and our merchants. It is beyond a waste of time for left wing freaks to shuffle up and down Main Street in Happy Valley. The locals dislike it and every time you do it -- you LOSE support.]

Sheriff Smith then (adroitly) mentioned the local lefty who “pulled a gun on several people” at the *Sentinel*’s Flag Day celebration. Smith said they “caught him out of town” and it was up to the District Attorney now. (Read about that horror show in last week’s *Sentinel*.)

Custer County Treasurer, Virginia Trujillo, was next. No surprises. The County’s ending bank balance in April was \$11,250,000.

Brad Baltzly, our County Coroner was the next speaker. Brad said they had only one death lately but since it was a younger person he is having an autopsy done.

County Clerk Kelley Camper, then gave her report. Kelley said the Clerk’s Office collected about

\$248k in fees in May. The County gets to keep about half of that.

The Veterans Service Office Report was next. Director Dominic Edginton delivers it. He said he expected another million dollars in compensation by the end of May from the VA for our veterans via the VA claims he has made. Dominic noted that 228 vets have received new compensation since he came on board. There are 581 veterans “on paper” in Custer County. He is also helping a lot of vets from Fremont County as their VSO Office there is way below par and the vets aren’t getting the help they need.

Bob Smith, our Director of Human Resources, gave his department report. Bob said they had completed the County insurance policy review. Also, our Worker’s Compensation broker was selected and he is getting quotes.

Vernon Roth, Finance Director, was next up. Vernon said he has four proposals from IT companies for contract services for his department (a lot of that is cyber security). Vernon said he is looking hard at the county’s Century Link landlines as it is costing us around \$7k a month for them and a bunch of lines are not even being used.

The Information Technology report was given by its Director, John Mapes. He has been super busy with the landline audit, VOIP research, the SO’s IT issues and various internet outages.

No surprises in the Human Services report. EBT outlay for

May was \$128k. Total Child Support case load is 72.

Road & Bridge reported that their diesel tank dispenser is leaking and four test holes for contamination must be drilled which will cost up to \$10k. The cost to fix the new fuel system could be around \$20k.

Epp gave the Recycling Report. YTD, 120 bales of various materials have been produced.

Robyn Knappe gave the OEM report. She said the wildfire mitigation program is doing good with 13 neighborhood ambassadors. They have had three chipping “events”.

Our County Kids Council had good news. They are working with Family Crisis Services to find a local place for domestic violence victims. Last week’s Family Day had close to 400 attendees. It was noted that all of Kids Council budget comes from the state and things are looking a little shaky down the road with funding. Interestingly, it was stated that there are 900 kids under the age of 19 in the county and that Custer County had the second highest child growth in the state between 2019 and 2023.

The Public Health report stated that the most recent case of measles in Colorado was in Boulder County and that if you want to get vaccinated against the measles go see them. There are concerns about future revenue stream income as the fed flow is drying up. Their staff has been reduced by 40%.

And that was that.