



Evergreen Takes Time to Heal Custer County Prioritizes School Safety

by Reggie Foster

The students of Evergreen High School are learning from home this week as they try to heal from September 10th’s school shooting. The day one of their own took aim at them. With a revolver in hand, a 16-year-old Evergreen student was rapidly firing both inside and outside of the school. The shooter continued moving, reloading, and firing until two of his fellow students lay critically wounded and he turned the gun on himself.

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) completed a study in 2022 on

half a century of mass shootings in our country. Early reports indicate that the Evergreen shooter fits most of the data.

- Shooters are usually an “insider” meaning a student or employee of the institution.
- Shooters leak or publish their plans ahead of time.
- They are troubled by personal trauma or in crisis. Radicalization would likely qualify here.
- Young shooters stole guns from their family members.

According to the study: “In particular, K-12 school and workplace shooters were ‘insiders’ — current or former students and employees. That finding has implications for physical security measures and the use of active shooter drills.”

Many have praised the efforts and quick actions of the Evergreen staff and students. Locked doors prevented the shooter from accessing parts of the three story school. Without the locked doors, he would

SCHOOL SAFETY
see page 24

Let’s Agree to Disagree

by Michael Foster, Editor,
Opinion

As I am sure others of you were as well, I was saddened to hear the news of Charlie Kirk’s assassination last week at a Turning Point USA event at Utah Valley University. Though I did not follow him closely, I was aware of his work and the influence he was having, primarily on college campuses across our Nation.

I am sad for his family and loved ones. For the tragedy that his children will now grow up without a father, and his wife, Erika, will carry on without her husband. Also, for the tragedy that another young man has apparently thrown away the privilege of a life fully

lived in America by setting aside his words and choosing violence. But the sadness I feel for those closest to this tragic incident pales in comparison to the sadness I feel for our Nation.

Because the greater tragedy is that we have come to a place, as a Nation, where the threat of violence directed at those who do not share our beliefs, not only comes to fruition, but ends in death and subsequently being celebrated within pockets of our society.

I am glad we do not agree on everything as a people. The debate those disagreements spark is beneficial and homogeneity of thought amongst a populous is not good. But the divide we are seeing

across our Nation today is very troubling. And, even the separation of those closest to the center, who have never been further apart, does not concern me nearly as much as the ever-widening divide between those on the extreme ends of the political spectrum.

All Americans, but especially those who speak in public, have a right to express ideas and debate the beliefs of others. That a person’s views may be viewed as controversial or unpopular does not negate that freedom. When violence enters the equation, it threatens the very foundation of open discourse. Even if someone’s speech is viewed as objectionable, shutting them down violently or through the threat of violence undermines democratic

standards. If America ever gets to the place where it normalizes violence as a response to speech, we are in big trouble.

Early on in my Army career, a boss I very much respected encouraged me to openly disagree when I felt strongly about something, an act that doesn’t necessarily come naturally to most junior military officers. But along with that mentorship came a caution. He encouraged me to learn how to disagree without being disagreeable. I knew enough to convey my perspective respectfully, but he counseled on the benefit of actively listening and seeking to understand the other

OPINION
see page 8

BOCC: Unfunded Mandates, Courthouse, Kid Stats

September 10, 2025

by Sentinel Staff

This paragraph is for those who remember and prefer the *Reader’s Digest* version of the story. Data was presented to substantiate that the county needs cheaper housing, more childcare, and a new court building. The committees attached to these efforts asked for permission to apply for grants to help pay for it. Our school test scores are not good, however, we have the highest graduation rate in the state. SAR is getting training money and we have a landfill compactor for sale. The Commissioners voted to join other counties in standing their ground behind Colorado statute on unfunded state mandates. The End.

For those who prefer Long-Form, please keep reading. In their opening statements, Commissioners Vogelsong and Epp mentioned attending the Work Force Housing committee meeting. The group is getting closer and closer to solutions and options, and things are going very well. No specifics were given.

Vogelsong mentioned attending the second public meeting of the Wet Mountain Valley Outdoors. He described it as a large gathering with good information about what the county is looking into to expand and he encouraged others to attend the next meeting in October.

Commissioner Canda mentioned the kickoff of the underfunded courts requirements and presenting the new court building to voters

next year. The committee met last week and is working on a grant which is due on 30th of September to help fund the project. According to Canda, the Custer County court room is the biggest in the district and also the least safe.

A representative from Kids Count Colorado presented data from 2023 for Custer County. As of 2023, 815 individuals (approximately 15% of our county population) are children, which is lower than the state average of 21 percent. Custer County is one of only 15 counties in the state that had an increase in the child population.

One in nine children in 2023 lived in poverty in Colorado making the state average 11 percent. Custer County far exceeds the state average, in not a good way,

with 22 percent of our children living in poverty. According to a new data tool the average annual household survival budget, (the amount a family of four needs to live comfortably) for families in Colorado is \$93k. At \$81k a family of four needs slightly less than the state average to live in Custer County. Rent or mortgage payment, utilities, and childcare are the biggest costs families face. Twenty-eight percent of families across Colorado experience financial hardship each month.

Colorado ranked in the bottom half of states for healthcare for kids. 40% of babies in Custer County were born to mothers who did not receive prenatal care.

BOCC
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CCHS Homecoming Photo Feature
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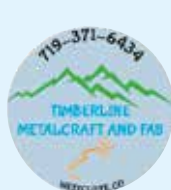
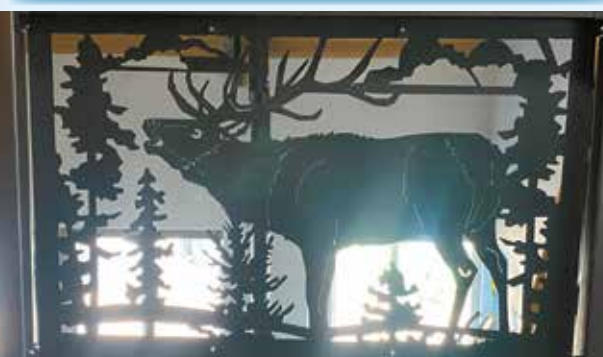
I will call on the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.
2 Samuel 22: 4 KJV



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Bookends for September 2025

by West Custer County Library District

Moving into the heart of autumn, shorter days and golden light can invite a more reflective mood. Here at the library, our programs and resources in the month ahead will provide great opportunities to slow down and go deeper with a variety of subjects.

There's plenty to reflect on from our nation's history as we approach the 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Come join others for a series of educational discussions about the Founders' arduous process of crafting our one-of-a-kind Constitution. Open to adults and high school students, this exploratory series is led by Professor Karl Walling whose teaching career includes appointments at the University of Chicago, University of Michigan, as well as the U.S. Air Force Academy (where he was voted best professor in the Social Sciences and earned several prizes for teaching and scholarship.) Register for the Monday sessions that start October 4th, 4 - 6 p.m.

If you can't make the discussion but are interested in refreshing your understanding of the topic, check out the library's copy of *How to Read the Constitution and Why* by constitutional law professor Kim Wehle. This "timely... witty and entertaining" guide includes the complete text of the U.S. Constitution, too.

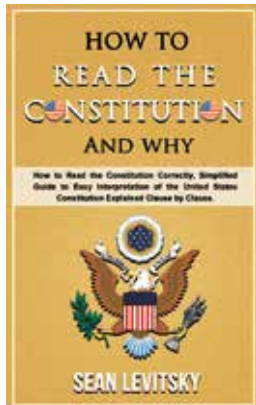
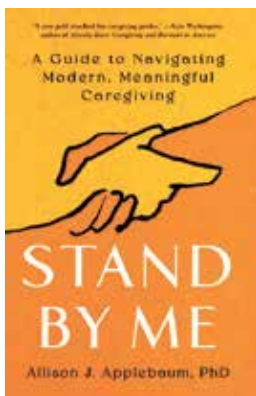
Our form of government isn't the only thing that needs understanding and care. Lots of people in our community do too! Including anyone who is (or loves) a senior citizen. In his book, *Successful Aging*, neuroscientist Daniel J. Levitin

explores the unique and remarkable developmental stage of the 60+ years (You can find this book at the library.) Delve into some of the local opportunities of this developmental stage on Saturday, October 18th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the "Aging in Place Custer County" Senior Fair at Lange Hall. Co-sponsored by Landing Well, attendees will be able to explore products, services, and resources that promote a healthy, active, and independent lifestyle. A walk-in flu shot clinic will also be available! No registration is necessary for this event.

We also know that a number of folks in our community are caring for loved ones with many kinds of long-term health conditions. This is a precious and challenging commitment. The library has several resources to support caregivers, starting with a few good books: *Stand By Me: A Guide to Navigating Modern, Meaningful Caregiving* by Dr. Allison J. Applebaum, the founder of the only clinic for caregivers. And local author Wayne Ewing has written a heartfelt meditation, *In the Land of Forgetfulness: Dementia Care as Spiritual Formation*. And, because it's important to have the support and camaraderie of other people living the same challenges, the library now hosts a bimonthly caregiver meetup on first and third Mondays, 1 - 3 p.m. No registration is required and coffee is available. Just come and enjoy the company of other caregivers on the journey.

For more information on any of these events and all of our resources, drop by the library, call us at 719-783-9138, or visit our website at:

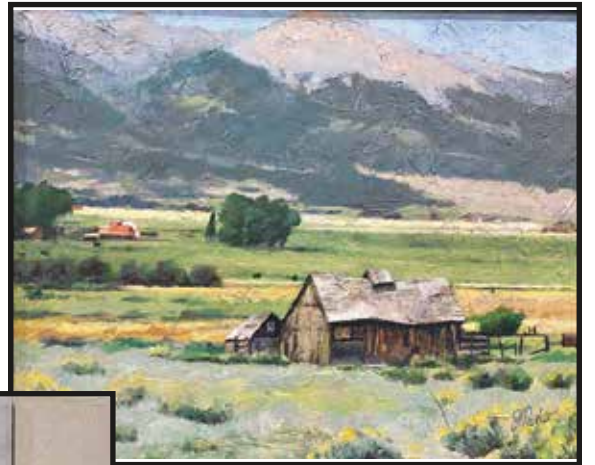
www.westcusterlibrary.org.



Sangre Art Guild APW Awards

Last Friday's Alla Prima Westcliffe Award ceremony offered up 17 awards and prizes to the entrants.

Best of Show (funded through Rebecca's Fund) went to Jeanene Parker, Outstanding Body of Work - Tom Brown. 1st Place - Jennifer Chapin. 2nd Place - Charlotte Quist and 3rd Place - Ken Hartman.



Top: Painting by Jeanene Parker.

Left: Ken Hartman with his entry.

Sentinel photos



The Alla Prima Show will remain on display at 3rd Street Gallery in Westcliffe through the end of the month.

This year, Sangre Art Guild is teaming up with Custer County Tourism Board to produce the coveted annual calender. Twelve prize winning art pieces from the show will be selected for the project.



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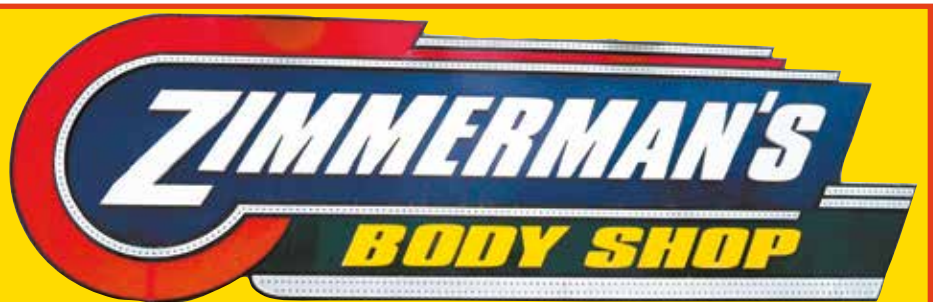
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Local Mountain News & Notices

Unpacking WMVO: Its Team Structure

by Sentinel Staff

The Sentinel Staff is continuing to research WMVO for better understanding for all. The series will continue next week. For now, here is the structure as shared by a WMVO Planning Team member.

Planning Team (2-4 members): Responsible for project design, meeting planning, outreach, final deliverables, and will support the implementation of the Wet Mountain Valley Outdoors eventual plan. Meets with the Canopy team twice a month through the project. Attends Core Team and Community Network meetings. (Editor's note: Canopy refers to Civic Canopy, the company hired by the

planning team to facilitate Community Network meetings and other tasks.)

Core Team (12-18 members): Responsible for feedback on project design, outreach and recruitment (as able), participation in key meetings, and support of eventual plan. Meets every 4-6 weeks. Attends Community Network meetings.

Community Network (100+ members): Responsible for contributing to shared vision, providing input on goals, serving on action teams, and supporting long-term work. Meets at least four times.

Action Teams (4 teams, 6-12 members each): Responsible for implementing specific strategies.

Liberty Rocks A Full Agenda

by Fred Hernandez

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ann Barthrop with the Pledge of Allegiance, the attendees singing America The Beautiful and the invocation by Dr. Ann Willson quoting President William Harding. The late president said "No education No vision" and ended his speech during American Education Week in 1922 with the prayer "Lord help us to protect the integrity of our education". A fitting prayer for these days.

First up was Author John DiGirolamo ardent crusader against human trafficking who has five books on the subject to his credit. Aided by a powerpoint presentation, Mr. DiGirolamo went through the paces of this insidious criminal

activity which plagues our country and the world. He challenged the audience with the statement that if it is thought that this only happens in big cities then the surprise would be that Colorado and its rural towns are in the top ten areas where exploitation of labor and sex slaves takes place. Everyone is a potential victim; both sexes, all religions, all nationalities. He debunked several false myths such as the idea that predators are usually "creepy old men". Not true at all; firmly stating that predators are normal, regular people that look like everyday citizens one meets on the street, in a shopping mall or even in schools. What feeds human trafficking is pornography and the internet. Social media in particular is a

major weapon used by predators. Some statistics show that 41% of teens view pornography during school. 53% of boys and 39% of girls believe porn is a normal activity. He explained the steps predators take in getting their victims.

With most kids today being online and with Snapchat, Instagram, Tik-Tok and other platforms, predators have a huge arena for seeking out their victims. Parents are implored to take the time to familiarize themselves with the dangers their children face each day.

Pedophiles go where the children are and parents must be one step ahead to

LIBERTY ROCKS
see page 11

The Sentinel Revival Oh Yes. It Was A Close Call.

by Fred Hernandez

With the recent demise of our dear friend George Gramlich, the founding editor of the *Sangre de Cristo Sentinel*, the paper had a frightening near death experience. A cold wave of anxiety swept through the conservative Custer community. The loss of our voice would be a life-changing event with far reaching repercussions. How would our concerns be communicated to the county leaders? What would it mean to have no means to express our thoughts and opinions? It was a dark moment and a wakeup call for the entire community. Unexpectedly but fortunately, the revival came rather quickly. New publishers stepped up and have taken over with the commitment to carry on the legacy of responsible reporting as a service to the entire county.

The breaking news at the Liberty Rocks meeting last month featured the comeback of the *Sangre de Cristo Sentinel* under new leadership. What many had feared was the end of the paper really turned out to be just a brief "pause". During that meeting retired Col. Michael Foster, recently inducted in the Rangers Hall of Fame, which honors the most elite members of our military, made the announcement as the incoming Owner, Publisher and Managing Editor.

In his remarks Mr. Foster highlighted the goals he envisions for the *Sentinel* as being the paper that "fosters a sense of community, encourages civic engagement and supports all our local businesses." He went on to say, and we paraphrase, that the staff at the paper understands that with the privilege of publishing a newspaper comes great responsibility and when someone selects the paper as their source of news, or a business decides to spend their advertising dollars in the paper, these decisions must be treated with the utmost respect.

Having had the dire experience of the potential loss of our community voice, the

Sentinel is calling on all its many supporters to come together and make this a real, truly effective community project. Everyone is cordially invited to make their personal investment in this, their community paper. Everyone can help in some way or another and every effort, no matter how seemingly small, can produce great dividends for the community as a whole. Let us ensure our collective voice remains strong and vibrant long into the future for our sake and for the sake of those who come after us, our children and grandchildren.

Soon we will be formally announcing a fun-filled fundraising event. This event won't be as much about the details of the event itself but more about YOU, our supporting base. This is not just about funds; it is a lot more about personal commitments for medium to long range support. An effort to galvanize our combined strengths that in turn fuses us into one strong entity for the good of the whole county, not just parts of it.

As important as raising funds is in any enterprise, there are other opportunities to make our community paper a powerhouse for the benefit of everyone who lives in and loves Custer County. You can help out and be part of the team. There are meetings that you attend, local organizations that you follow on a regular basis, you can write your impressions and opinions about these meetings. You don't have to be journalists to do that, and we could surely use your assistance in getting the word out to the rest of our friends and neighbors. You can help. Believe it, you can.

Watch out for more information about our fun-filled event coming soon. It will be one memorable and happy time that you will not want to miss.

We are back refreshed, revived and ready as ever to serve the community we all love. Come join the *Sentinel* team. The Guardian of truth in our valley.

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Letters to the Editor



Please send your submissions to us at sdc.sentinel@gmail.com, mail them or bring them in to the office at 601 Main St., Westcliffe CO 81252. Rules: We will print, at our discretion, the thoughts and ideas of our fellow citizen-patriots. Please limit your offerings to 500 words or less. No profanity or vulgarity, no personal attacks, and please sign your name and give us the general location of your residence. Also please provide your phone number or email - for confirmation only. The opinions expressed here are solely those of the author; they do not necessarily reflect the opinions held or endorsed by the Sentinel.

Free Legal Resource Day – October 3rd

Press Release

The 11th Judicial District Access to Justice Committee is offering a free Legal Resource Day on Friday, October 3rd featuring clinics with information on various legal topics and also ask-an-attorney sessions providing private consultations with attorneys.

The public is invited to attend the following free legal information clinics which will be streaming at the Custer County Courthouse, 205 S. 6th Street in Westcliffe:

- Probate and Simple Estate Planning (9-10 a.m.)
- How to Prepare and Present Your Case (10-11 a.m.)
- Licensed Legal Paraprofessionals & Divorce in Colorado Courts (11-Noon)
- Evictions: Landlord Overview (1-2 p.m.)
- Evictions: Tenant Overview (2-3 p.m.)

The ask-an-attorney sessions are free 20-minute in-person consultations with an attorney at the Chaffee County Courthouse, 142 Crestone Avenue in Salida and run from 9-Noon, and 1-3 p.m. Appointments are required. To schedule an appointment, call Lori Hale at 719-539-2561 ext. 30434.

Charlie, a Christian Martyr

Dear Editor;

Last week a horrible thing happened. An innocent man, Charlie Kirk, was murdered. Mr. Kirk was NOT an enemy of the people or of democrats or of any other persons whatsoever. No, Charlie was only a crusader of the truth and great speaker for the Bible, promoting that book as God’s Word. Although I keep hearing people say it was a “political” assassination on the news reports, our Cowboy Church preacher brought out the fact no one is saying, and that this was not really political, but what we actually have is a Christian martyr. Charlie would have certainly gotten my vote for any office he might have wanted and I for sure would have loved to vote for him to be our next president or some future president. What he was killed for was that he was not afraid to speak the truth and he was most certainly very well full of knowledge about our Bible and

obviously a man who studied it and believed every word of that great book as well. The killing was for him using our First Amendment Right of free speech also. You could even say it was an anti-Constitution slaying too. How did Conservatives react? No burning, no looting, no killing sprees, no hate speech about democrats needing to be targets for retaliatory assassinations. No. There were prayer groups all over our nation, praying for the man’s family and also for our nation itself. Time after time we have all heard the leaders on the left saying Republicans/Conservatives, should be killed and targeted for what we believe.

I did serve our country while in uniform, (Navy,) and will defend our nation and our Constitution anytime I can. Those who never wore a military uniform, and I should say not all of those folks even, but many do not realize we are actually at war right

now. It’s the war against God and against truth, not a political war for some country who needs help from a stronger nation. Good and evil is what we are involved in and it will continue until our Savior returns. Make NO mistake. This is a direct result of democratic leaders, public school teachers with left leaning, (as so many are after brain-washing they get from our colleges these days,) calling for death and targeting of anyone willing to take a stand for biblical Truth. Those pushing their agendas have corrupted the minds of so many of our young people. Just when you think it can’t get any worse, we have some of the left’s leaders celebrating the murder of Charlie and making public their sick opinions about it. Totally disgusting. Pray for our great nation to turn back towards God. All things are possible with God! Believe it.

Frank Searight
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719-298-6689 Call for store hours
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email: pbailey@solarsolutions.com

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1200 Broadway in Silver Cliff

Recurring Events

Mondays
10 a.m. Pickle Ball Silver Cliff Mem.Park (SCMP)
More info: lizbrannen@gmail.com
6 p.m. Men’s Bible Study, FBC 6th St.
6 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous (CLSD) 12 Step study, at St. Luke’s, 3rd & Rosita, Westcliffe. Martha at 719-371-1853.

1st Monday of the Month
5 p.m. Post 170 Auxiliary mo. mtg (year-round) Cliffe Lanes
2nd and 4th Monday
6 – 7 p.m. Narcotics Anonymous
Community United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall.
Children Welcome. colobamanana@yahoo.com

Tuesdays
9 a.m. Women’s Bible Studay, FBC 6th St
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
Sept 24-May 13 @ Sangre de Cristo Fellowship, 120 Jerry Dr, Westcliffe. Free childcare 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.

Thursdays
5:45 p.m. Women’s Bible Studay, FBC 6th St

First Thursday of the Month
9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Comfort Quilters, FBC (log bldg next to the church) 417 S. 6th St. Contact Delores at 719-371-1451.

2nd Thursday of the Month
6 p.m. Custer County Republican Central Committee meeting. Ranchers Roost. The public is welcome See www.CusterGOP.com or Facebook page at <https://m.facebook.com/custertgop>

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

OPINION from page 1

person’s point of view before responding. He taught me to maintain a calm and composed demeanor and to focus my comments on the issue at hand, not on anyone who may have held a different opinion.

He stressed the importance of striving for constructive solutions rather than just pointing out flaws, and in the end -- when all else fails -- being willing to just agree to disagree. Maybe you liked Charlie Kirk’s work and followed him closely. Maybe you did not. I imagine most of you lie somewhere in between and many of you had never heard of him before last week. Regardless of where you fall on that curve, there is one thing that is undeniable. Charlie Kirk and his family suffered a tragic loss and paid a horrible price. The question foremost in my mind is what will we learn from last week’s unfortunate events?

Will we take the time to pause and reflect, and renew our commitment to be productive, contributing members of society? To model exceptional behavior? Will we listen with ears that are less clogged and hearts that are more open? Or will we let this incident reaffirm our already established beliefs that the other side is at fault and to blame? Will we add this as another weight on the already unbalanced scale that clouds our judgment of other’s actions and prevents us from assuming best intentions are in play?

By the time he delivered his first inaugural address, several southern states had already seceded from the Union and Abraham Lincoln knew the precipice upon which the Nation hung. In that address, Lincoln called upon “the better angels of our nature” to assist in repairing the growing divide between our countrymen. Our Nation could sure use help from those better angels today.

If we remain unwilling to reach across to those on the other side of the political and ideological divide, we are in trouble. If we intentionally ignore opportunities to close that gap, we’re missing it. If we break the olive branches extended to us by those who do not share our beliefs, we are guilty of not learning from what is transpiring around us, and we should not be surprised when they stop extending olive branches altogether.

I have enormous respect for people who stand up for their beliefs. Doing so is a fundamental right and freedom we should all hold dear. But how you stand is just as, and in some cases more, important as the act of standing. If you stand and scream into an echo chamber, you should not be surprised when the other side remains unconvinced. When you hurl insults and dispersion and cast blame without looking in the mirror first, don’t be shocked when you get the

same in return. When you only preach to those who already share your values, do not be surprised when you hear a raucous Amen come from the chorus.

I believe there is a better version of America, and therefore our incredible mountain community, that is achievable. One where we are willing to listen and engage. To work alongside those we might disagree with towards the achievement of a common good. To endeavor to make the most informed decisions possible and to realize that sometimes what might seem best for us as individuals is not the same as what might be best for our community. To do that, one of your principles must be that you are willing to engage and cooperate with those with whom you have differences. It’s one of mine. I hope it can be one of yours.

I know that some of you will not agree with the opinion that I have shared above. That’s okay – we can just agree to disagree.

Custer Senior Center Menu

Monday, September 22	Tuesday, September 23	Thursday, September 25
#47 Scalloped Potatoes w/Ham Spinach Salad w/Mandarin Oranges Hard Boiled Egg Sliced Peaches WW Dinner Roll	#18 Bratwurst on a Bun Onions & Cabbage Oven Brownd Potatoes Peas & Carrots Orange	#50 Honey BBQ Chicken Oven Brownd Potatoes Broccoli and Carrots Diced Pears Carrifruit Salad WW Bread w/Butter
Served Mondays, Tuesdays & Thursdays at noon. 612 Main St. , Silver Cliff Townhall (lower level) <i>The following major food allergens are used as ingredients: Milk, Egg, Fish, Tree Nuts, Peanuts, Wheat, Soy and Sesame.</i>		
Please call (719) 783-9508 before 9:30 a.m. for reservations A \$4 suggested donation per meal is appreciated, but not required. All menus subject to change.		

Come and Worship

Christian Science 9:30 a.m. Worship <i>8 Bassick Place, Westcliffe</i> Church of Christ 9:30 a.m. Bible Study 10:30 a.m. Worship <i>818 Ohio Street, Silver Cliff</i> 719/783-4601 Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints 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 <i>0157 County Rd. 27A</i> <i>Cotopaxi 719/942-3526</i> (719) 942-3462 Community United Methodist Church 10 a.m. Worship <i>202 S. 6th Street, Westcliffe</i> 719/783-2511 Cotopaxi Community Church 9:30 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship 6 p.m. Wedn. Bible Study <i>PastorSteveHolcomb@gmail.com</i> <i>20326 Hwy. 50, Cotopaxi</i>	First Baptist Church of Westcliffe 9:30 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Fellowship 10:45 a.m. Worship <i>410 S. 6th Street, Westcliffe</i> <i>Pastor Josh Olsteen</i> 719/783-2498 High Country Mennonite Church 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:45 a.m. Sunday School <i>103 N. Adams St, Westcliffe</i> 719/783-9045 <i>Call Pastor Erv @ 719.429.0556</i> <i>or Pastor Davie @ 719.371.3861</i> Huerfano Community Bible Church 10:30 a.m. Sunday Worship 7 p.m.: Thursday Bible Study <i>603 Leon Street, Walsenburg</i> (719) 251-9053 Hope Lutheran Church 2 p.m. Worship 3:15 p.m. Bible Study <i>3rd & Powell Streets, Westcliffe</i> <i>Pastor Dan Kleke 719/783-2323</i> Lange Hall 719/783-2561 Living Stone Calvary Chapel Saturday evenings: 5:30 p.m. Sunday Mornings: 9 a.m. & 11 a.m. <i>830 Bridge St., Canon City, CO</i> <i>Pastor Sean Meagher 719/276-0863</i>	Our Lady of the Assumption Roman Catholic Church <i>Diocese of Pueblo</i> 11 a.m. Sunday Mass 10 a.m. (2nd Tuesday of month) Mass 10 a.m. Wednesday Mass 5:30 p.m. Thursday Mass <i>109 S. 5th Street, Westcliffe</i> 719/783-3507 Our Lady of Mt. Zion Catholic Church 11 a.m. Mass, 2nd & 3rd Sunday of month <i>210 S. 2nd St, Westcliffe</i> 719/783-2491 Praise Community Church Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Praise & Worship 10:45 a.m. <i>215 N Pikes Peak Ave., Florence</i> 719/784-1184 St. Luke’s Episcopal Church 10:30 a.m. Worship & Eucharist 11:30 a.m. Fellowship 8:30 a.m. Prayer Service, Thursdays <i>3rd & Rosita Streets, Westcliffe</i> 719/783-2477 St. Patrick’s Anglican Church 11 a.m. Worship 403 S. 2nd S., Westcliffe 925/339-0175 or 719/783-2500 Sacred Heart Catholic Church <i>Diocese of Pueblo</i> Saturday Mass 4 p.m. <i>Highway 69, Gardner</i> <i>Bldg. Mickey. 719/746-2037</i>	Sangre de Cristo Cowboy Church <i>Pastor: Mike Shields</i> 10 a.m. Sunday School 11 a.m. Worship Last Sunday of Month: Potluck at Noon sangredecristocowboychurch.com also on Facebook <i>60260 Hwy 69, Westcliffe</i> 719/232-5372 Sangre de Cristo Fellowship 9 a.m. Meet & Greet 9:30 a.m. Service <i>120 Jerry Drive, Westcliffe</i> 719/783-0903 Sangre de Cristo Seminary Chapel 10 a.m. Worship <i>6160 County Rd. 130, Westcliffe</i> 719/ 371-1822 Valley Bible Fellowship 10 a.m. Worship <i>116 Hermit Lane, Silver Cliff</i> 719/581-7572 Wetmore Baptist Church 9:45 a.m. Sunday School 10:45 a.m. Worship 1 p.m. Worship <i>Junction of Hwy 96 & 67, Wetmore</i> 719/371-1230 Wetmore Community Church 9 a.m. Sunday School 10 a.m. Worship <i>699 County Rd. 395, Wetmore</i> 719/784-0596
Send Church updates to sdcsentinel@gmail.com (719) 783-3360			

Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD;
for He is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.
Psalm 106:1 KJV



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Events

Thursday, September 18 @ 4 p.m. set up, 5:30 Dinner
Valley Strong Community Dinner on Main St., Westcliffe to register a table go to ValleyStrong.us.

Saturday, September 20
12-Mile Slash Site, final day for the year

Saturday Sept 20, 9 a.m. - 3p.m.
Wood splitting and Barbecue. Bring your gloves and wear sturdy shoes. Veterans Rescue Ranch 3730 Centennial Ranch Road.

Saturday, September 20, 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Oktoberfest sponsored by The American Legion Post 170 Proceeds benefit Wreaths Across American program. Event at WMV Saddle Club, 90 County Road 241, Westcliffe

Saturday,, September 20, 8-10 p.m.
Star Party at 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
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Friday 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
(719) 783-4357

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Courthouse Bldg. (Rosita Rd. Entrance)

West Custer County Library
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(719) 783-9138
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–Charlie Kirk

Best Sloppy Joes



Custer County CattleWomen served up a hot and local treat of sloppy Joes with meat donated by Rockin W5 Ranch and raised \$250 at the Homecoming Bobcat Football game and donated that money back to the Athletics Department.

Photo courtesy of Custer County Cattlewomen

Sept. 9th School Board Mtg. Geothermal NOT so Thermal

School Board Meeting
September 9, 2025

by Sentinel Contributor

When the Custer County School board gathered for its regularly scheduled monthly meeting September 9th at 4:30 p.m. in the school library, the most significant item of concern was that the geothermal heating system that is supposed to keep the school warm all winter is not working well. Last year the school had to spend \$90,000. This year, \$40,000 has already been spent on system repairs.

The Board interviewed Heating & Plumbing Engineers representative Alex Rascon. He recommended updating the control software which may solve the problem, but said the school should contact TRANE, the company whose equipment is in place, for more insight.

Geothermal may have been the wrong choice for this climate. If the repairs and updates from TRANE do not make the school reasonably comfortable, changing to another system would be extremely expensive.

Longtime teacher Michelle Tillotson reported on two projects. One, the Colorado Multi-tiered System of Supports, is a prevention-based framework using team-driving leadership and data-based problem solving to improve the outcomes of every student in the school. Here in Custer County, Tillotson said their focus will be to produce well-rounded students using discipline and classroom management, tracking interventions, promoting a sound dress code and working to reduce absenteeism and maintaining good working relationships with the families of the students.

Tillotson also reported on the Faculty Advisory Council. It is firming up the chain of command at the school. The

school desperately needs more substitute teachers. Tillotson urged the Board to simplify the hiring process for them. The Board asked the administration to address the application process.

She reported that the State of Colorado requires staff to stay up to date on gender and discrimination training, and fairness and safety in sports.

Superintendent Kyle Heberd reported that going into homecoming week, the football team, though small, is coming into its own with a coaching staff that has solidified in recent weeks.

Elementary Principal Sydney Benesch reported that her students have completed their reading assessments using The Northwest Evaluation Assessment (NWEA) which measures academic growth over time using computer adaptive assessments that are unique for each student.

Benesch also described using voluntary group counseling to help children learn how to make friends. The parents are closely involved. Students gain social skills and the school improves its ability to meet the material needs of the students.

Athletic Director Aundrea McCormick told the Board that there is a huge need for volunteers to help at all sports events. The number of ineligible athletes has decreased. This year, Custer County will have a two-day wrestling tournament. Boys' and girls' teams will wrestle on different days.

Business Manager for K-12, Amalia Castaneda, reported that the school has prepared for the upcoming audit and all is going very well.

The next regularly scheduled Custer County School Board meeting will be held Tuesday, October 7th at 4:30 in the school library.

KIDS Friday, Sept., 19, 2025

U.S. Constitution Week Grand Lake Colorado

This week we are learning about Constitution Day and Citizenship Day. This is an American federal observance that recognizes the adoption of the United States Constitution and those who have become U.S. citizens. It is normally observed on September 17, the day that in 1787 the Constitution was signed in Philadelphia. On February 29, 1952, Congress designated September 17th as Constitution Day and Citizenship Day.

This is the 14th year that Grand Lake, Colorado has celebrated U.S. Constitution Week. Tom Goodfellow is the master mind behind this weeklong celebration. The idea for U.S. Constitution Week began in 2012. Tom had realized that the 4th of July is celebrated in a grand manner all over the U.S. but few people were even aware of Constitution Week. Many locals encouraged Tom to go ahead with his ideas. Businesses became involved and the U.S. Constitution Week in Grand Lake, Colorado, was born. This celebration includes events every day during the week that highlight, educate and celebrate the U.S. Constitution, including having current U.S. Constitutional experts speak and answer questions about this important document.

This year the dates for this event are September 15 – 21. If you are reading this on Friday then tomorrow will be the last day of the event. Saturday is jam packed with activities.

Here is the schedule:

Saturday, September 20:

10 a.m. – parade down Grand Ave
11 a.m. Town Park festivities –
Master of Ceremonies Kim Monson
560 KLZ radio Presentation: From
the Revolution to the Constitution
The birth of our nation featuring -
Mile High Fife and Drum
1 p.m. – Keynote Speaker:
Professor Jonathan Turley
“Free Speech in an age of rage”

2:30 p.m. Outdoor Concert with
Saxophonist Steve Watts of Dotsero
3 p.m. Puddle Stomp
8:30 p.m. Fireworks over Grand Lake

Sunday, September 21

10 a.m. Worship Service performed
by Community Church of the
Rockies at Town Park, Grand Lake.

If you can't make it this year the
link to their website is <https://www.grandlakeusconstitutionweek.com/events>.

by Audrey Slater. Sources: <https://westernriv.com/constitution-week-fireworks/>, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitution_Day_and_Citizenship_Day, <https://westernriv.com/constitution-week-fireworks/>

Sangre de Cristo Sentinel • Westcliffe, Colorado

Corner

OKTOBERFEST!

Oktoberfest hosted by
The American Legion Post 170.
Saturday September 20
Wet Mountain Saddle Club
10 - 7 p.m.



All proceeds go to
Wreaths Across America program.

BOBCAT CORNER

Friday, September 19:

4 pm: MS Volleyball @ Merit Academy (away)
4 pm: HS JV Volleyball @ Primero (away)
5 pm: HS Varsity Volleyball @ Primero (away)
7 pm: HS Football @ HOME vs Sargent

Saturday, September 20:

9 am: Cross Country: Coronado Cougar Classic in Co. Springs

Tuesday, September 23:

4:30 pm: MS Football vs Edison @ Hanover (6-man) (away)
4:30 pm: MS Volleyball @ Edison (away)

Thursday, September 25:

3 pm: MS Cross Country @ Cañon City Invitational
5 pm: HS Varsity Volleyball @ Cotopaxi (away)

Friday, September 26:

10 am: MS Volleyball @ HOME vs South Park
1:45 pm: HS Cross Country: Rampart Kozuik Classic @ Co Spgs
1 pm: HS JV Volleyball @ Center (away)
2 pm: HS Varsity Volleyball @ Center (away)
7 pm: MS Football @ Sanford (away)

Saturday, September 27:

10 am: MS Volleyball @ Cripple Creek (away)

Tuesday, September 30:

4:30 pm: HS JV Volleyball @ HOME vs Buena Vista
5:30 pm: HS Varsity Volleyball @ HOME vs Buena Vista

Thursday, October 2:

4:30 pm: MS Football @ Cotopaxi (6-man) (away)
5 pm: HS Varsity Volleyball @ Crested Butte (away)

COME OUT AND SUPPORT YOUR CUSTER COUNTY BOBCATS!

All games and dates are subject to change without notice.

Local Mountain News & Notices

LIBERTY ROCKS

from page 4

protect their progeny. It was shocking to learn that in Colorado alone there were more than 18,000 reports in 2024. Parents and guardians are encouraged to visit the website:

thisishumantrafficking.com to learn about this horrible criminal enterprise. If you want to report anything about this crime call these numbers:

888-373-7888 or text 233-733; In Colorado call 866-455-5075 or text: 720-999-9724

John DiGirolamo has five easy reading books on Amazon packed with information.

Ms. Sarah Fisher, a certified counselor representing Family Counseling Service which specializes in domestic violence cases for the Custer and Fremont Counties. She spoke about her organization: it is one hundred percent confidential and they are legally bound not to share any information with anyone, their service is one hundred percent free and they are “victim driven”; which means they give their clients the options available to them and the choice is entirely the client’s. Their goal is to empower the victim. She went on to explain in detail the dynamics between victims and abusers. She is fully supported by our local Sheriff’s Office of whom she spoke highly. The number of the hotline, which received 1,196 calls last year, is 719-275-2429. This is a crisis line manned 24/7.

Ms. Stacey Fite who owns and operates Custer County Supply on Main Street in Westcliffe then spoke about the new bills passed by the state which greatly impacts gun ownership in Colorado as the noose tightens around the Second Amendment of the Constitution. Specifically the bills target Federal Firearms Licensees (FFL), intentionally making it more difficult for them to do their business. In addition to their federal license FFL’s are now required to apply for a state license or they will no longer be allowed to sell any firearm. Aside from the \$400 annual fee there will be new paperwork required, a new round of fingerprinting not only for the owner of the store but for all employees, more paperwork which will create a need to hire personnel and increase operating costs which in turn will be passed on to customers. There will be new safety classes required, which means more fees. The age for buying ammo has been increased to twenty-one. All these new laws also affect law enforcement, as it gives the Sheriff’s Office more paperwork to handle and that might require new hires. In short, the

effect will be to make it cumbersome for people to buy and own firearms. Ms. Fite encouraged the audience to get involved by voting wisely and to become better informed about these issues by visiting LWVColorado.org for more information.

On overtime, the last item on the agenda was brought up by Charles Ellison regarding the initiative to be included in the November ballot of increasing the Custer County tourism tax by three times from the current 2% to a proposed 6% which is actually and effectively a 300% increase. Mr. Ellison argues that the increase will cause a decline in demand for BnBs. The timing is not right considering that BnB owners are struggling to keep their businesses afloat during these challenging times. The proposed increase in tax is would to be applied to the county’s need for child care services (2%) and workforce housing (2%). Mr. Ellison firmly believes that the decrease in demand, as caused by the tax increase, will negatively impact those whom it was supposed to benefit. A decrease in demand for short term stays will result in less job opportunities as well. Taking a quick jab at proponents of this initiative Mr. Ellison quipped “Tax and spend”.

In response to the presentation against tax increase Mr. Barry Keene a keen (no pun intended) proponent of the tax increase explained his position as follows: the population of senior citizens is steadily increasing and will soon account for 40% of Custer County. In the meantime, the number of working age members of the population are declining and will soon be only forty percent of the county. In order to have a workforce there needs to be child care services and housing. Both of these needs will be effectively addressed with the tax increase. In support of his arguments Mr. Keene passed out studies of various data for both towns of Silver Cliff and Westcliffe including statistics of home ownership, home rentals, income levels of different social groups, figures representing the decline of prime workforce population of ages between 24 and 64 year old workers and jobs and wages by sector.

The meeting came to an end with the announcement of The First Annual Coroners Ball scheduled for October 18 from 6 p.m.at the Saddle Club. All proceeds from this event will go toward a scholarship fund for a local student to go to a trade school. Costumes are encouraged and prizes will be awarded for the best ones. Everyone is invited to the spaghetti dinner and live music by Dave Ropollo. For more information please contact Nikita at (719) 458-9402

BOBCAT SCOREBOARD

Friday, September 12:
MS Volleyball vs Cotopaxi: **Win!**
Saturday, September 13: **HOME COMING!**
Cross Country: Trojan Invite @ Fountain-Ft. Carson:
For the girls: Abigail Handy placed 17th w/ 23:18, Shiloh Holmes placed 47th w/ 28:28
For the boys: Mason Stover placed 10th w/ 17:36, Robert Bachman placed 21st w/18:24, Jacob Weeks placed 31st w/ 19:16, Pierce Rowans placed 90th w/ 25:42
MS Football @ HOME vs South Park (6-man): **40-6, Win!**
1 pm: HS JV Volleyball @ HOME vs South Park, **3-0, Win!**
HS Varsity Volleyball @ HOME vs South Park: **3-0, Win!**
HS Football @ HOME vs Holly: **6-36, loss**
MS Volleyball Tournament @ Sierra Grande (away): *played 3 teams and went 1-2 for the day*



BOBCAT ATHLETE OF THE WEEK!

Cross Country Abigail Handy!

Competing as a freshman up against the toughest in the state, Abbi Handy has exceeded expectations and proven she can hang with the best--and even give them a run for their money. Abbi began the season at the challenging Cheyenne Mountain Stampede course with an impressive 5k time of 25:22. She then went on to medal at the Lake County Invitational, with an 11th place and a time of 24:22. The next week, she ran her personal best in Alamosa, finishing at 22:54; and finally, last week, she earned a top 20 finish again at Fountain Ft. Carson, with a time of 23:18. Abbi has positioned herself already to prove that she is a force to be reckoned with; in practice, she’s determined; with her teammates, she is encouraging, and we are so excited to watch her move up the leaderboard as she continues to run her heart out. Congrats, Abbi!

Volleyball Cadence Weeks for Varsity! Layna Jones for JV!



Custer County School District C-1 MENU for the WEEK of September 22 thru Sept 25 2025

BOBCATS	Breakfast	Lunch
Monday	Cold Cereal Oatmeal Fruit Milk	Cheeseburger Oven Fries Lettuce, Tomato, Pickle Fruit Milk
Tuesday	Cheese Omelet Yogurt Oatmeal Fruit Milk	Nacho Supreme Beans Corn Fruit Milk
Wednesday	Pancake wraps Yogurt Fruit Milk	Spaghetti Salad, Roll Fruit Milk
Thursday	Biscuits and Gravy Fruit Milk	Orange Chicken Rice Imperial Vegetable Mandarin Oranges Milk

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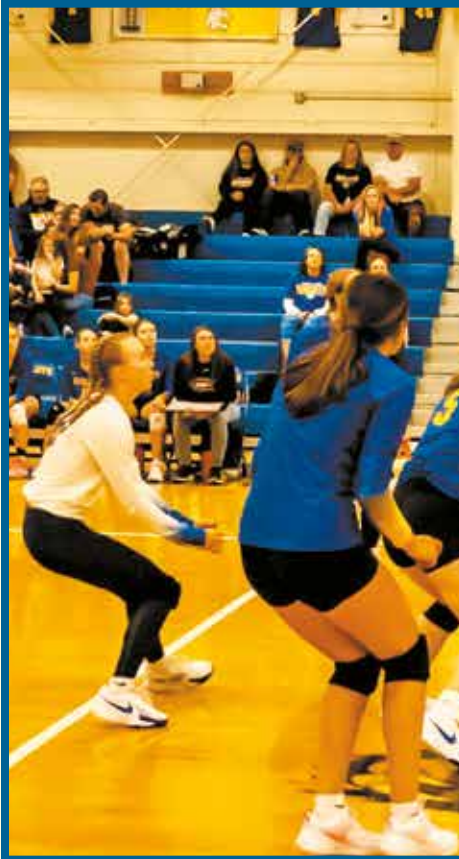
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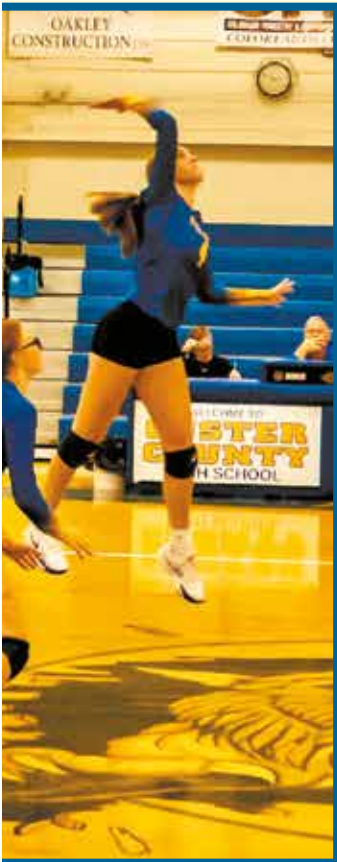
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BOBCAT HOMECOMING



NING WEEKEND 2025!



The Cross Still Offends

by Pastor Rich Bitterman, Galena, MO
Pastor Rich Bitterman @w_bitterman On X

The Cross Still Offends

The bullet tore the air in half.

A folding chair rattled. A Bible dropped. A young man slumped sideways beneath a white event tent, eyes wide with the weight of eternity.

It was supposed to be a conversation. A “prove me wrong” segment. But this time, rebuttal came not with words, but with a rifle.

Charlie Kirk didn’t get to finish his sentence.

I got the news just before prayer meeting. I contemplated this death as I prepared to lead the saints in prayer. But I didn’t feel like praying. Not tonight. My hands were still. My mouth was ready. But my soul was pacing. Angry. Grieving. Tempted.

Tempted to grow quiet.

Tempted to sit this one out.

Tempted to wonder if any of this, faith, boldness, public gospel witness, is still worth it. Because hatred in this country isn’t simmering anymore. It is boiling. Europe is trembling. Israel is burning. Rockets lit the sky over Gaza again. And now, here on American soil, the blood of a Christian apologist paints the pavement of a university quad.

What do you do with that?

What do you say when courage gets gunned down in daylight?

Charlie Kirk was no perfect man. None of us are.

But he had backbone where most of us don’t anymore. He was a believer. Unashamed. Unafraid. He understood that real conversations only happen when truth is welcome at the table. And the truth he carried most was Christ.

He brought the gospel into public space on purpose. Because the gospel isn’t supposed to stay in church basements and private Bible studies. It is meant to confront. It is supposed to offend. It was not made for safety.

The Word became flesh and they nailed Him to a tree.

So of course they came for Charlie.

Of course they reached for a gun.

This is what evil does when it runs out of arguments. It doesn’t reason. It kills.

That’s the part that catches in my throat. Not just the sadness, but the strategy of hell behind it.

The Enemy wants us afraid.

He wants us to see what happened to Charlie and backpedal.

He wants the rest of us to whisper, to soften the message, to believe the lie that faith should stay private.

But Christ never whispered.

THE CROSS
see page 22

Custer County Responders Hold 9/11 Memorial Tribute



Firefighters from Wet Mountain Fire Protection District along with deputies and posse members from the Custer County Sheriff’s Office came together to honor the fallen responders from September 11, 2001. Thank you to our community for coming out to march with us and show their support. Check out the little responder!

Photos Courtesy of Custer County SO

RPI Part II from page 2

Here again, It’s about the trails and accessibility and not the surrounding forest health.

Also in Trails for All’s July meeting, it was noted concerning doing a reroute of a trail, that “Destiny Chapman of the USFS said that her staff could do most of the work with in-kind grants. The current going rate is \$10,000 to \$12,000 per week for a four-person crew, plus equipment. Destiny felt that adding “accessibility” to the project would improve the chances of receiving the grant.”

That’s telling. It tells us where the USFS’s focus is on particular grants. Accessibility.

We’ve seen for decades, through partnerships with state wildlife organizations, that accessibility does not mean for everyone. Accessibility continues to decrease or come with new barriers and fee hikes for hunting, grazing leases, and responsible logging.

WMVO and Good Forestry

The registered agent for Wet Mountain Valley Outdoors (WMVO) is

Trails for All. So already, there are collaborations being formed with recreational access in mind. But will the new organization, given their connections and shared board members such as John Van Doren, President of WMVO and board member of TfA and Shelley Larson President of TfA and consultant for WMVO, put any focused effort on good forestry collaboration?

That would be a new direction, and possibly more difficult to collaborate. Even the USFS website continues to focus on “accessibility” and “bio-diversity”, more so than good forestry efforts that would keep our forests healthy and less of a fire hazard.

Consider also the USFS’s Stay the Trail efforts. As CPW’s Parks and Wildlife divisions changed the focus and the monies allocations when they merged. There have been roads eliminated en masse and few trail additions.in comparison. With more control over access, under the precepts of “preservation” and “accessibility”, there are now access points in Colorado that people have to make reservations to enter. The Stay the Trail program funnels people to specific trails and camp site areas, creating very busy entries in many locales.

Partial funder of the new WMVO grant is Colorado Parks & Wildlife [CPW] whcih finds itself currently chalk full of Rewilding efforts and advocates, including Colorado’s Disastrous wolf introduction. Will that necessarily be part of the focus for grant obtainment?

First things first would be to promote/ implement good forest health. And yet in Colorado, like California, it doesn’t seem to be the focus of any collaboration efforts.

*Editor’s Note/llv: It seems that the premise for forming regional hubs within the Colorado Outdoor Regional Partnerships, is to get existing groups with special interests to collaborate and find and pool resources to get their pet projects done. So which organizations or agencies will promote good forestry? Government agencies, USFS and CPW, don’t have a great track record for focusing on this. Without a collaborating body or agency vested in good forestry goals, logically, it won’t be where WMVO, as a collaboration hub, focuses either.

Your are encouraged to attend the next WMVO meeting. Stay informed, get involved, and protect our way of life.

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Colorado State News



Xcel Sues Elbert County Over Massive Power Line Permit Denial

by Savana Kascak,
CompleteColorado.com

KIOWA, Colorado

Xcel Energy is suing Elbert County after commissioners in June unanimously denied the energy monopoly’s permit request to build a massive power line project through the county.

The billion-dollar-plus Colorado Power Pathway project is an important element of Gov. Polis’ ambitious 100% renewable energy mandate for the state intended to connect wind and solar energy generated on the Eastern Plains to metro Denver area communities.

As previously reported by Complete Colorado, Elbert County commissioners (followed quickly by neighboring El Paso County) voted 3-0 to deny Xcel access to build 48 miles of the 550-mile power line across the county. As part of the denial, commissioners argue the power line would not only decrease property values and negatively impact areas with animal traffic, but that the risk for wildfires will increase without an adequate prevention plan from Xcel. Commissioners also say Xcel’s utility applications were incomplete and inaccurate.

The county, with a population of roughly 29,000 southeast of Denver, is not served by Xcel as an energy provider.

Xcel Energy subsidiary Public Service Co. filed an official complaint with Kiowa District Court on July 29, asking the court to overturn the denial, claiming, among other things, that the county is acting contrary to the state’s best interest.

“In particular, the Denial Decision was based upon the Board’s conclusion that it did not need to consider the needs of its neighboring jurisdictions when evaluating Pathway’s site selection,” the complaint reads in part. “While PSCo acknowledges that counties, like Elbert, have certain regulatory siting authority over projects, like Pathway, counties cannot use that authority to effectively preclude a project that is a matter of statewide concern from coming to fruition.”

While the county commission reports having not been officially served as of yet, they responded with the following statement:

“We will review the complaint, respond through the legal process, and fully expect to support and defend the county’s decision to deny this project.”

Amy Cooke, co-host of PowerGab, the Independence Institute’s Colorado focuses energy podcast, says the power line project amounts to rural Coloradans being forced to give up their land and safety for “high-voltage super-

highways” that will only benefit the Front Range.

“Colorado’s ideologically driven energy policy isn’t just controversial — it’s contentious and costly,” Cook told Complete Colorado, “Elbert County is doing what neither the legislature nor the executive branches will do: stand up for its residents, its viewsheds, and its right to demand complete, safe, and honest applications from utilities.”

Please see <https://completeminnesota.com/2025/08/14/xcel-energy-sues-elbert-county-over-massive-power-line-permit-denial/>

Editor’s Note: Xcel plans to install 48 miles of 275 new steel poles in Elbert County. The project is set to cost \$1.7 billion.

As readers may recall, the town of Eaton, north of Denver, rejected Excel’s plan and denied them a permit. The town council eventually settled in 2022, after being sued by Excel. The power lines now stand next to residents in Eaton. A reminder that Excel has been diligently pursuing the last county holdouts on their project, through the courts and by seeking eminent domain.

Screen shot from <https://www.coloradospowerpathway.com/project-description/>

Obituary Gary Lee Tracey

Gary Lee Tracey of Westcliffe, Colorado passed away on September 10, 2025 at the age of 70 years old. Gary was a native to Colorado who resided in Northglenn until his retirement when he fell in love with the beautiful Sangre De Cristo Mountains where he spent the last years of his life.

He was preceded in death by his beloved parents Clarence and Grace Tracey, as well as his brother Richard Tracey. Gary is survived by his two daughters Lia and Kaela, his four beautiful grandchildren Brendan, Aubrey, Jaxtyn, Declan and his nephew Chad and niece Tiffany.

Anyone that knew Gary knew the love he had for his dog Winkey who passed away just several days before him.





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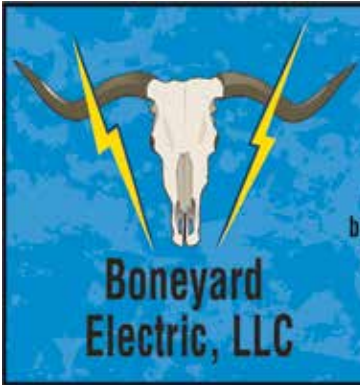
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Colorado State News

Colorado Land Board Mission Creep Risks School Funding

September 11, 2025

Greg Walcher,
CompleteColorado.com

Land ownership checkerboard exists in nearly every state because of an oddity called “state school trust lands” (see Figure 1).

more money might be made from subdividing and developing than from grazing or energy leases. But selling only generates short-term profits – pennywise but pound foolish. So, the 1996 language replaced “maximum” with a more appropriate standard: “to produce reasonable and consistent

own press office said it uses “economic sabotage and guerrilla warfare to stop the exploitation and destruction of the environment.”

ELF was condemned by most environmental groups – even the Sierra Club once offered a reward for the capture of ELF arsonists. Rosmarino, however, cheered them on after they torched multiple buildings on Vail Mountain in 1998, in what the FBI called the “worst act of eco-terrorism ever in the United States.” Six perpetrators went to prison; one remains on the FBI’s most wanted list.

Rosmarino, though, told *Mother Jones* magazine she was delighted at “one of the most beautiful acts of economic sabotage ever in this state.” She also worked for **Wild Earth Guardians** and sat on the leadership council of the **Rewilding Institute**, which works to replace agriculture with native species. She has said she wants “massive herds of bison and pronghorn... prairie dog colonies, and lesser prairie-chickens conducting their ancient and provocative mating dances.”

Preservation not the land board’s mission

She now says she is focused on “preservation,” not eco-terrorism, and I have no reason to doubt her sincerity. I am a big believer in second chances; I’ve needed several myself. But “preservation” is not the land board’s job, though purchasing “lands in the path of future development” has already been added to the board’s website. There are plenty of agencies and programs involved in conservation work. But stopping development is no more part of the land board’s job than “rewilding” or dancing with prairie chickens.

Rosmarino has been praised for her skill at “raising large sums of money.” Great. But shifting the focus to preservation instead of revenue – beyond the 300,000 acres voters set aside for that purpose – would threaten at least some of the \$280 million being raised for public schools. She is not the only state land board director in the U.S. who seems intent on changing the historic purpose of these lands; there are several others. They are in the wrong jobs to pursue that agenda, because the state land boards must raise revenue for the schools. That is what distinguishes state trust lands from all other public lands.

Greg Walcher is former director of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, and a Western Slope resident.

Please see: <http://completecolorado.com/2025/09/11/colorado-land-board-mission-creep-risks-school-funding>

Figure 1. State land trusts in the west.

The federal government granted those lands at the time of statehood, under the Land Ordinance of 1785. Thomas Jefferson’s system divides and records land into townships, each with 36 one-square-mile sections. New states entering the union were each given two sections per township, to be held in trust to fund public schools.

State land boards were created to manage those lands—which in Colorado amounts to 4 million acres—and charged with administering the lands “in such a manner as will secure the maximum possible amount” for the school fund. The Lincoln Institute of Public Lands explains, “That singularity of purpose continues today and distinguishes state trust lands... from other types of public lands.”

State lands generate revenue in many ways, primarily through leases for farming, grazing, mining, oil and gas, renewable energy, and research. Some leases also support recreational uses such as guided hunting and fishing, trails, campgrounds, and others.

The Colorado version

Colorado voters adjusted that original constitutional language in 1996 because the word “maximum” became controversial. After all, the maximum profit from land would be made by selling it, which the state land board could do and has done. Today it only actually owns 2.8 million acres. Also,

income over time.” Many other states have made similar adjustments to the original statutes.

State school trust lands still could not be used without generating revenue, such as if they were set aside for conservation uses like wilderness or national parks. But there might be a few exceptions, so Colorado voters authorized the land board to establish a “Stewardship Trust” to promote conservation and natural values, limited to 300,000 acres. The remaining trust lands still earn over \$280 million a year for the school fund, mostly from oil and gas leases, still fulfilling their original unique mission.

An ecoterrorism cheerleader at the helm

That original mission was called into sharp focus with the recent appointment of Nicole Rosmarino as state land board director, and whose previous career has everything to do with land preservation and nothing to do with funding schools or managing leases. In fact, she was associated for decades with the most extreme ecoterrorists in the U.S., an association she says no longer represents her thinking, which has “evolved.”

Rosmarino faced tough questions because of her public cheering for **Earth Liberation Front (ELF)**, which the FBI has called America’s “number one domestic terrorism threat.” ELF’s



Colorado State News

'Free' School Lunch Tax Hike Expanded To Include Food Stamps

by Savana Kascak.
CompleteColorado.com

DENVER—Colorado voters are set to decide further hiking taxes on high-income earners to prop up the state’s dwindling “free” school lunch program as part of the November statewide ballot. But under a recently amended version of the measure, any excess revenues would be used to also subsidize the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), more commonly known as food stamps.

Colorado’s Healthy School Meals for All program began shortly after the COVID-19 pandemic, when the legislature fully funded “free” school meals for every kid in the public school system for the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years. With funding set to end after 2022, lawmakers asked Coloradans to approve Proposition FF, which raised taxes on Coloradans making \$300,000 or more, to continue funding the program, regardless of family income.

The \$100 million annually cost sold to voters to pass the measure proved to be woefully inadequate, with the program budget quickly seeing a shortfall of around \$56 million, which the legislature has since scrambled to fill.

In response, Colorado lawmakers came back for a second grab at high-income wallets in the regular 2025 legislative session, referring **Proposition MM** (HB25-1274), to the November ballot. The tax increase asks voters to raise an additional \$95 million per year from individuals earning \$300,000 or more, by reducing the maximum deduction for joint filers from \$16,000 to \$2,000, and \$12,000 to \$1,000 for single filers, thus increasing the amount of income subject to taxation.

Passed during the August special session, Senate Bill 25B-003 added a provision to Proposition MM allowing the state to keep and spend any excess revenue from the Healthy School Meals for All program on SNAP benefits, which are projected to be reduced for Colorado recipients due to new work requirements, as well as other changes to the federally-subsidized program enacted by Congress earlier this year.

850 KOA radio host Ross Kaminsky, who adamantly opposed the original Prop FF, says that “our deep-blue state of East California” is taxing Coloradans to give “middle-class and rich kids” free lunches.

“There ain’t no such thing as a free lunch. Instead, there’s just a lunch paid for by somebody else,”

Kaminsky told *Complete Colorado*. “They funded it by stealing tax deductions from people who have good fortune. Now that the program is collapsing under its own weight, they need to steal more from Colorado’s successful people to pay for ‘free’ lunch for other reasonably successful people’s kids.”

Noting that Colorado already has programs to help low-income kids, Kaminsky says this tax increase will have long-lasting negative ripple effects.

“Taxing Colorado’s successful people so aggressively makes it more likely that we’ll end up with fewer of them, resulting not only in the collection of far less tax revenue but also in the loss of sales tax revenue, jobs, and other things that successful people support in our society.”

Another referred measure on the November ballot, **Proposition LL**, de-TABORS excess revenue already collected under 2022’s Prop FF, allowing the state to keep and spend an additional \$12.4 million in over collected tax revenue that would otherwise be returned to taxpayers.

Please see: <https://completec Colorado.com/2025/09/10/colorado-free-school-lunch-tax-hike-expanded-to-include-food-stamps/>



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

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

American Legion and VFW Monthly Meetings

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



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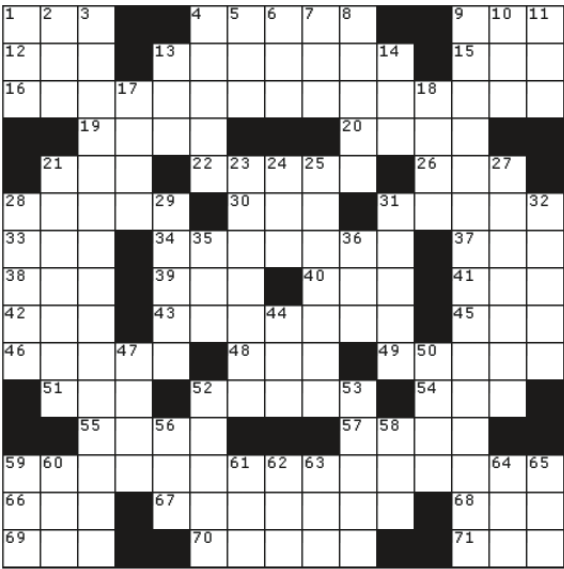


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5 California (abbr.)

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7 Christmas mo.

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14 Chart

17 Stake

18 Very large truck

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27 Closest

28 Lukewarm

29 How God sometimes communicates

31 Adherent of 46A

32 Special menus

35 White-tailed sea eagle

36 Vitality

44 Movie 2001's talking computer

47 Beautiful bird

50 Take a break

52 Crime syndicate

53 Beat it!

56 South southwest

58 Talk incessantly

59 Pair

60 Crimson

61 Annoy

62 "To the right!"

63 Shoshonean

64 Possess

65 Latest
- 42 __ A Small World...

43 Signature Songs

45 Fisherman's tool

46 Rationalist religion

48 Sticky black substance

49 Tie

51 __ Jones Industrial average

52 What a snowman does

54 Dine

55 Space administration

57 Saclike structures filled with fluid or diseased matter

59 Change of appearance (of Jesus)

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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.

Godliness Extends to the Small Things

In Deuteronomy 21:10–25:19, Moses lays out the heart of God’s covenant provisions. These verses contain 74 commands, more than any other in the “Torah,” in English, “the Law.” They cover family dysfunction, moral and legal obligations, sexual behavior, and rules of social responsibility. It concludes with the reminder to remain eternally vigilant against Amalek, a type of Satan, the embodiment of hatred and cruelty. Together, these commands show us that God’s instructions aren’t abstract guidelines but living direction. They set a standard for human conduct in the middle of life’s chaos. As long as people draw breath, a divine compass is needed to order our lives, guard our communities, and shine a light in darkened times.

The Torah shows us that godliness is not just about lofty ideals but everyday choices. One of the most fascinating examples of this comes in Deuteronomy 22:6–7: “If, as you are walking along you happen to see a bird’s nest... you are not to take the mother with the chicks. You must let the mother go... so that things will go well with you, and you will prolong your life.” At first glance, this may seem insignificant, but Maimonides explained in “Guide to the Perplexed” that this commandment is an act of mercy. It spares the bird unnecessary suffering and models compassion. If God cares about the emotional pain of a simple bird, how much more must we extend mercy toward one another? The lesson is clear: obedience in even the smallest matters trains our hearts to honor God and treat others with dignity.

Yeshua, Jesus, echoed this when He rebuked the religious leaders in Matthew 23:23 for straining out small details of the Law while neglecting “the weightier matters of the Torah—justice, mercy, trust.” He taught that both were necessary. Interestingly, the rabbis considered this command about the mother bird “the least of the commandments,” yet its reward mirrors one of the greatest—honoring father and mother, which also promises long life and well-being. This parallel shows that God does not measure obedience by size but by faithfulness. Every act, whether large or small, carries eternal weight. In overlooking “lesser” commandments, we risk missing the very heart of God’s mercy and justice.

In truth, there are no small commandments. Each one carries life within it. Jesus described them as the weightier things of Torah because they expose our character. Do we reflect care and compassion, or do we brush off responsibility when it feels minor? Proverbs 13:14 reminds us, “The law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.” Torah, also means “instruction” or “direction,” literally points us to the mark—like an arrow aimed at the bullseye. It teaches us about sin, guides us to righteousness, and points us to Jesus, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. The Law, rightly understood, shows us our need for a Savior. Shouldn’t we be digging deeper into these things, letting even the smallest commands shape us into people of mercy, justice, and faith?

Bill Wilson
Dailyjot.com Printed with permission.

Kennedy’s Health Commission Leaves Guns Out of Its 20-Page Report

by Lee Williams, Ammoland.com

The recently released Make Our Children *Healthy* Again report (MAHA) by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services should be required reading for parents of all types.

Contained within its 20 pages are scores of topics that are designed to help parents improve their children’s health.

The report examines an increase of childhood chronic diseases. It explains how processed foods can harm kids, as well as what’s behind what it calls the “American Children’s Food Crisis.”

The authors scrutinize toxic chemicals in the environment, as well as why children are “uniquely vulnerable to environmental chemicals.”

The work even examines the decline of physical activity that’s growing among today’s youth, as well as “overmedicalization” and the problems it creates.

Unfortunately, rather than praising Kennedy, his team and their months of hard work, the anti-gunners and their media accomplices were incredibly displeased over one issue: Nowhere within its 20 pages does Kennedy’s report include the word “gun.”

“Kennedy commission child health report ignores gun violence, the leading cause of child death,” screamed a story published Tuesday by *Los Angeles Times* staff writer Corinne Purtill.

“Absent from the document was any mention of guns, the leading cause of death for people under the age of 18,” Purtill wrote. “Firearms have been the leading cause of death for children ages 1 to 17 every year since 2022.”

As “proof,” Purtill links to a 2022 study by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health’s Center for Gun Violence Solutions.

Suffice it to say this report, like most of the anti-gun publications the Center has published, was debunked years ago.

As you can imagine, the young reporter then turns to a stable of so-called experts to help support her faulty theory.

Purtill turned first to Bruce Mirkin, who according to his LinkedIn page, works part-time as a “Writer, Media Relations Consultant, Maker of Trouble.”

“If you’re putting out a report that’s supposed to address how to help our children stay healthier, and you’re not even mentioning the No. 1 cause of childhood deaths, you ought to be embarrassed,” Purtill quoted Mirkin as saying.

She never mentioned that Mirkin’s nonprofit has only existed for 10 months, or that his degree from Pomona College obtained in 1978 was a BA in theater. He has no science background whatsoever, which forced Mirkin to admit his error on LinkedIn.

“I usually avoid being spokesperson for Defend Public Health, preferring to defer to our science and medical folks, but today I had to step into the breach to give a comment for this excellent *L.A. Times* article,” Mirkin was forced to post.

Purtill then turned to an actual doctor for his comments about the new report, Dr. Adam Ratner, whom she described as a “New York pediatric infectious-disease specialist.”

“By ignoring guns as a leading cause of childhood mortality and focusing instead on stigmatizing medication use, Kennedy’s strategy will endanger children while doing nothing to address the root of the problem,” Dr. Ratner told the reporter.

But like Mirkin, Dr. Ratner wasn’t a true neutral expert. In fact, Ratner had strongly opposed Kennedy becoming HHS secretary since he was sworn in.

In an interview on National Public

Radio’s Fresh Air, which was held in February, Ratner made his opinion of Secretary Kennedy very well known.

“To start, I want to be clear that my comments about RFK and about everything that we talk about today are my personal opinion and aren’t the – meant to represent the institutions I work for or anyone else I’m affiliated with. The, – it’s – very disconcerting. It’s very disturbing that someone who has spent so much of his career trying to undermine confidence in vaccines, trying to tear down the infrastructure that approves and recommends vaccines, has the potential to be in a position of power over the infrastructure that has those goals,” Ratner said.

The Commission members who produced the Make Our Children *Healthy* Again report, which Kennedy chaired, are a heady bunch.

They include the secretaries of Agriculture, Housing and Urban Development, Education, Veterans Affairs, the EPA, the OMB and many more. It’s truly a formidable group.

To be clear, the authors never mentioned auto accident deaths or swimming pool drownings either. It’s a medical report.

If a journalist wishes to show that the work the Commission produced is somehow a negative, perhaps she should have used voices more potent than an aging thespian and a physician with an axe to grind.

To download the MAHA report, goto <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/MAHA-Report-The-White-House.pdf>

This story is presented by the Second Amendment Foundation’s (SAF) Investigative Journalism Project and wouldn’t be possible without you. To make a tax-deductible to SAF, goto <https://secure.anedot.com/saf/donate>.

Please see: <https://www.ammoland.com/2025/09/kennedys-health-commission-leaves-guns-out-of-its-20-page-report/>

Nuclear Startup Receives Funding To Bury Its Mini-Reactors A Mile Underground

by Tyler Durden, ZeroHedge.com

—September 12, 2025

The company has taken an unusual path to raise money, completing an alternative public offering (APO) that brought in \$30 million at \$3 per share — well below the \$10 price typical of traditional IPOs. The company will retain its name and

list shares on the OTCQB market, according to Interesting Engineering.

“This is a unique moment for the nuclear industry,” said Liz Muller, Co-Founder and CEO of Deep Fission. “Deep Fission has the right technology, at the right time, and in the right place. With this funding, we can begin building our pilot reactor, with the goal of completion in 2026.” She added the company aims to scale

“rapidly and profitably to address the massive energy demand from AI data centers and other customers worldwide.”

Deep Fission’s design uses small cylindrical reactors lowered into one mile deep, 30-inch boreholes. Each generates 15 megawatts, cooled by proven pressurized water systems.

NUCLEAR STARTUP see page 19

Florida Appeals Court Strikes Down Open Carry Ban as Unconstitutional

—September 11, 2025

by F Riehl, Editor in Chief, Ammoland.com

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Florida’s nearly 40-year-old ban on the open carry of firearms has been struck down as unconstitutional in a unanimous ruling by a three-judge panel of the First District Court of Appeal. The ruling vacates the conviction of Pensacola activist Stanley V. McDaniels and declares the law inconsistent with the Second Amendment and America’s historical tradition of gun rights.

The Case of Stanley McDaniels

McDaniels was arrested on July 4, 2022, while standing at a Pensacola intersection holding a copy of the U.S. Constitution in one hand and waving to cars with the other. He carried a holstered handgun inside his waistband, visible to passersby. Although cooperative with the police and licensed for concealed carry, he was charged with violating Florida’s open carry ban, convicted, and sentenced to probation and community service.

McDaniels, backed by Florida Carry and represented by attorneys Eric Friday and Chris Crawford, appealed the conviction. The case drew support from national gun rights groups, including Gun Owners of America and attorneys connected with the Second Amendment Foundation.

The Court’s Reasoning

Writing for the court, Judge Stephanie W. Ray said bluntly:

“No historical tradition supports Florida’s open carry ban. To the contrary, history confirms that the right to bear arms in public necessarily

includes the right to do so openly”.

The 20-page opinion emphasized that open carry was historically recognized as the lawful and preferred method of bearing arms, while concealed carry was often restricted. The judges declared the law unconstitutional, vacated McDaniels’ conviction, and reversed his sentence.

National & State Reactions

Florida Attorney General James Uthmeier praised the ruling, posting on X:

“Our office fully supports the court’s decision. This is a big win for the Second Amendment rights of Floridians. As we’ve all witnessed over the last few days, our God-given right to self-defense is indispensable.”

Governor Ron DeSantis amplified Uthmeier’s comments, adding:

“The decision aligns state policy with my long-held position and with the vast majority of states throughout the union. Ultimately, the court correctly ruled that the text of the Second Amendment — ‘to keep and bear arms’ — says what it means and means what it says.”

The Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms (CCRKBA) also celebrated.

“This is a huge victory for Florida gun owners, and especially for our friends at Florida Carry,” said Chairman Alan Gottlieb, calling on the Florida Supreme Court to swiftly uphold the ruling.

A Shift in Florida’s Gun Laws

Florida enacted the open carry ban in 1987, making it a second-degree misdemeanor to openly carry a firearm. While concealed carry permits were widely available, open

carry remained prohibited except in narrow situations like hunting or fishing. In 2017, the Florida Supreme Court upheld the ban under a legal test that allowed broad legislative restrictions.

However, the U.S. Supreme Court’s 2022 Bruen decision rejected that “means-end” balancing test and required laws to fit within America’s historical tradition of firearm regulation. Applying Bruen, the Florida appellate judges found no historical precedent to justify a blanket ban.

Judge Ray concluded:

“The Constitution protects the right to carry arms openly for self-defense. Florida’s Open Carry Ban cannot be reconciled with that guarantee”.

What Happens Next

The ruling is not final until the window for further motions closes in 15 days. While the state could appeal, Attorney General Uthmeier has indicated he supports the outcome. If upheld, Florida would join the vast majority of states where law-abiding citizens may openly carry firearms in public.

CCRKBA’s Gottlieb promised the case would be closely monitored:

“We’re going to follow this case to its conclusion, and we’re hoping for a swift resolution which upholds the Appeals Court panel ruling.”

The decision lands just weeks before the annual Gun Rights Policy Conference, where activists are expected to highlight Florida’s reversal as a major Second Amendment victory.

Please see: <https://www.ammoland.com/2025/09/florida-appeals-court-strikes-don-open-carry-ban-unconstitutional/>

NUCLEAR STARTUP from page 18

Burying the reactors in bedrock provides shielding, containment, and a minimal surface footprint. The company says it can deliver power for 5–7 cents per kilowatt-hour using low-enriched uranium and off-the-shelf parts.

“By burying the reactors, the company hopes to solve several problems that plague current reactors,

including concerns over meltdowns and potential terrorist attacks,” TechCrunch wrote.

The Interesting Engineering article says that the startup has already signed a deal with data center developer Endeavor for two gigawatts of capacity and was selected for the Department of Energy’s Reactor Pilot Program, which targets first criticality by July 4, 2026.

Last year Deep Fission raised only \$4 million and was seeking a \$15 million

seed round as recently as April. The reverse merger provides fresh capital but comes with higher regulatory costs that could weigh on the young company.

Even so, Deep Fission calls this a turning point as it prepares to build its first underground reactor by mid-2026.

Please see: <https://www.zerohedge.com/markets/nuclear-startup-receives-funding-bury-its-mini-reactors-mile-underground>



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1776

The Second Amendment Corner

Liberty's Line in the Sand

2025



Updated EDC for 2025: No Gimmicks, Just Gear That Works

by Scott Witner,
Ammoland.com

Your everyday carry says a lot about who you are and what you're prepared for. It's not about showing off gear on Instagram; it's about having the tools to handle whatever comes your way, from the daily grind to

that worst-case scenario you hope never happens.

My EDC isn't built around trends or gimmicks. It's been shaped by years of real-world use, training, and trial by fire. Some pieces have been with me for decades because they flat-out work. Others are



Updated EDC for 2025: No Gimmicks, Just Gear That Works



Spyderco Delica 4

newer additions that had to prove themselves under pressure before earning a place on my belt or in my pocket.

This is the gear I carry every single day, the knife that's survived saltwater abuse, the pistol that's eaten over a thousand rounds without a hiccup, and the watch that's as tough as the Marines who wore it back in the '90s.

Why the Spyderco Delica 4 Still Has a Place in My Pocket

Some gear earns its spot and never leaves. The Spyderco Delica 4 is one of those.

Lightweight, compact, and razor-sharp with its VG-10 stainless steel blade, this knife has been with me through everything from daily utility tasks to backcountry trips.

I've used it for carving, prepping kindling, striking a Ferro rod, and even endured a week of daily saltwater submersion without issue. A quick cleaning and light coat of oil were all it took to bring it back to perfect condition.

For spring and summer runs, I clip the Delica 4 to my waistband. Rain or sweat doesn't phase it, and it has never failed me in years of use. For under \$90, it's hard to find another EDC knife with this much versatility and durability.

Why the Streamlight ProTac 1L-1AA Remains My Go-To Flashlight

Flashlights are often overlooked in EDC setups, but they shouldn't be. The Streamlight ProTac 1L-1AA has been my reliable companion for years, and it's not going anywhere.

GEAR THAT WORKS
see page 21

Legal Standard for Self-Defense Against Grizzly Bear Attacks

by Dean Weingarten,
Ammoland.com

In 1975, when grizzly bears in the lower 48 states were regulated as "threatened" by the federal Fish and Wildlife Service of the Department of the Interior, the standard required to use deadly force against them, in defense of self and others, was unclear. In 2017 and 2021, the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit created a binding precedent that clarified the standard to be used when a person claimed defense of self and/or others against grizzly bears in the lower 48 states.

The standard is different and lower than the standard to be used for self-defense against humans.

From the opinion by the Ninth Circuit issued in 2017, bold added:

"We hold the 'good faith belief' defense for a prosecution under 16 U.S.C. § 1540 is governed by a subjective, rather than an objective, standard, and is satisfied when a defendant actually, even if unreasonably, believes his actions are necessary to protect himself or others from perceived danger from a grizzly bear. Because the district court applied an objective standard, we vacate Wallen's conviction and remand for further proceedings consistent with this opinion."

The Wallen case occurred on May 27, 2014. Dan Calvert Wallen shot three grizzly

bears on his family property in Ferndale, Montana, with a banged-up .22 rimfire rifle.

The bears had killed most of his chickens. He had chased the three adolescent bears from his property with a truck, but the bears returned. Wallen pleaded not guilty and asked for a jury trial. Because the charges were misdemeanors, with a maximum penalty of six months in jail and/or restitution for the bears, a jury trial was not allowed. In the bench trial, Wallen was found guilty by Magistrate Judge Jeremiah Lynch, sentenced to three years of probation, and \$15,000 in restitution. The District Court Judge, Dana L. Christensen, upheld the verdict by the Magistrate.

Wallen appealed the case to the Ninth Circuit. The three-judge panel found that the Magistrate and the District Court Judge, Dana L. Christensen, had not used the proper standard for defense of self and others against the bears. At the second trial, Magistrate Lynch again found Wallen guilty because he found Wallen's testimony to be less than credible. Lynch increased the restitution for the three bears from \$15,000 to \$25,000. At the District Court, Judge Christensen agreed with Judge Lynch for the second time. Wallen appealed to the Ninth Circuit for the second time.

On the second appeal to the Ninth Circuit, the three-judge panel again found the

Magistrate and the District Court judge had acted in error. Too much emphasis was placed on Wallen's credibility, while ignoring quite a bit of evidence that Wallen was indeed fearful of the bears. From the opinion of the second appeal to the Ninth Circuit:

On remand, the trier of fact could not convict based on an adverse credibility finding without then completing the analysis by connecting that finding to the elements of the good faith defense, including taking 5 account of evidence as to Wallen's state of mind other than his own statements.

The Ninth Circuit sent the case back for a third trial. In a separate concurrence, Judge Van Dyke, a member of the Ninth Circuit three judge panel, reminded the Magistrate and the District Judge the federal prosecution had misspoke (lied) to the district court and the Ninth Circuit panel, claiming Wallen never said he was fearful, felt threatened, or that his family was threatened by the bears when he shot them. From footnote 1 of the concurrence:

1 The government misspoke by telling the district court and our court that on the night of the bear shooting, Wallen never said that he was fearful, felt threatened, or that his family was threatened by the bears when he shot them. The record shows that the local game warden repeatedly testified that Wallen told him on the

night of the shooting that "he was afraid of [the bears]" and afraid for "[h]is children and the neighbors that were playing in the yard." In his review of the magistrate judge's decision, Judge Christensen relied on the government's misstatement as a "significant" reason for his decision affirming Wallen's conviction.

Judge Van Dyke reminded the Magistrate Judge and the District Judge that they needed to apply the strict standards of criminal law to a possible third trial.

In 2021, the federal prosecutor in the case asked for dismissal of the case, and asked the restitution money, \$25,000, be returned to Wallen. In the docket for the case, the money is reported as being returned on February 10, 2021.

The precedent is now well established in the Ninth Circuit. To convict a person who claims they killed a grizzly bear in defense of self and/or others, the government must prove the defender did not believe they were threatened or that others were in imminent danger by the bear.

The subjective belief on the part of the person making the defense of self and others claim is the key criteria. The person making the claim does not have to show they were objectively threatened. They need to show they believed they and/or others were in imminent danger.

Self-defense against humans has

a higher standard. The person claiming the defense has to show they had a "reasonable belief" they and/or others were in imminent danger from the other person.

Defense of self and others is a clear exception to the ban on firing guns in National Parks.

Most of the grizzly bears in the lower 48 states are within the area served by the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. The exception is Wyoming. The Ninth Circuit standard will likely be advocated and/or used in future Wyoming cases.

Grizzly bears are not classified as threatened in Alaska. The state statute covering defense of life and property (DLP) cases applies to defensive shootings of bears in Alaska.

Dean Weingarten has been a peace officer, a military officer, was on the University of Wisconsin Pistol Team for four years and was first certified to teach firearms safety in 1973. He taught the Arizona concealed carry course for fifteen years until the goal of Constitutional Carry was attained. He has degrees in meteorology and mining engineering and retired from the Department of Defense after a 30-year career in Army Research, Development, Testing, and Evaluation.

Please see: <https://www.ammoland.com/2025/09/legal-standard-for-self-defense-against-grizzly-bear-attacks/>

GEAR THAT WORKS
from page 20



Streamlight ProTac 1L-1AA

Compact enough to ride in a pocket, it features dual-fuel capability—running on either a CR123 for maximum brightness or a standard AA battery if that’s all I can find. That versatility alone makes it an invaluable tool for travel, work, or emergencies.

The serrated bezel adds a measure of defensive utility, and its simple tailcap switch ensures intuitive operation. No matter where I am, I know I’ll have reliable illumination when I need it most.

Why I Switched to the Citizen Promaster Diver

Some gear you try for a season and move on from. Other gear becomes part of your story. For me, the Citizen Promaster Diver is in the second category.



Citizen Promaster Diver

In the early 1990s, I was stationed at Camp Lejeune, serving as an Infantry Mortarman (81 mm), and later deployed with the 24th MEU (SOC). At the base PX, I picked up a Citizen Promaster Diver. That watch never left my wrist. Jungle humidity, saltwater swims, cold-weather field ops, nights sleeping in the rain, it took the same abuse I did and never quit.

No batteries to swap, no babying required. It just worked. And when you’re a young Marine bouncing between deployments, that’s exactly what you need: gear you don’t have to think about.

Fast forward 30 years, and Citizen is still making a nearly identical watch: the BN0150-28E Promaster Diver. Same rugged DNA, just tuned up for today. You’re still getting ISO 6425-certified 200-meter water resistance, a stainless steel 44mm case, Eco-Drive solar power (no batteries required), a screw-down crown, and lume that cuts through the darkness.

Yeah, I’ll admit it—part of why I bought one again was nostalgia. That original Promaster saw me through some of the most formative years of my life. But it’s not just about the past. This watch remains a legitimate tool watch today. It’s built to take a beating, keep running, and look good doing it.

The fact that Citizen didn’t feel the need to reinvent it after three decades says everything you need to know. Some things just get it right the first time.

Why the Ridge Wallet Still Fits My Needs

Minimalist carry has its advantages, and the Ridge Wallet nails it. Mine is titanium, slim, and built tough. It holds 8–12 cards securely, keeps a few folded bills on hand with the cash strap, and blocks RFID scanning.



RFID Blocking Ridge Wallet

I switched from a bulky leather wallet years ago, and I’ve never looked back. For around \$85, it’s a sleek, durable option that simplifies my everyday carry.

Why I Switched from the Glock 17 to the PSA Dagger Compact

For years, my everyday carry pistol was a Glock 17. It’s a classic for a reason: reliable, proven, and backed by decades of service. But carrying a full-size pistol every day has its trade-offs. I wanted something a little more compact, optics-ready, and easier to live with day in and day out, without giving up reliability. That search led me to the PSA Dagger Compact.



PSA Dagger Compact

I’ll be honest, at first, I wasn’t sure the Dagger would hold up. PSA had its share of criticism when these first hit the market. But after putting one through its paces, my doubts disappeared quickly.

The ergonomics are solid. The grip angle locks in naturally, the extended beavertail keeps slide bite away, and the slight magwell flare gives extra support where it counts. The trigger has a cleaner break than I expected, with less of that spongy feel you get from a bladed safety. Add in PSA’s stainless guide rod instead of a polymer one, and the gun feels more refined than its price suggests.

But the real test was on the range. Over the past few months, I’ve run more than 1,200 rounds through the Dagger, using everything from 115-grain FMJ to 147-grain poly ammo from HOP Munitions, with Magpul, Glock OEM, and Mec-Gar magazines. It’s eaten everything without a single malfunction. For a pistol that costs around \$320, that’s impressive.

The only hiccup I’ve had? The factory suppressor-height front sight worked loose after a range session. A little Loctite fixed it, and since I’m running a red dot anyway, it wasn’t a dealbreaker. Speaking of optics, I mounted a budget-friendly red dot on mine, which gives me a complete, carry-ready setup for under \$500.

The best part? It fits in the Glock 19/17 holsters I already own, so the transition from the Glock 17 was seamless. That alone made it easy to carry daily without having to rework my entire setup.

Bottom line: the Glock 17 earned my trust years ago, but the PSA Dagger Compact has now earned its spot in my EDC. It’s smaller, optics-ready, and—so far—just as reliable.

- **Holster:** Tier 1 Concealed
- **Magazines:** MEC-GAR 18-round Metal Mags
- **Ammo:** HOP Munitions 147-grain HP

Conclusion: The Gear That Earned Its Place

EDC isn’t about carrying the newest gadget or filling your pockets just to say you’re “prepared.” It’s about gear that proves itself, day after day, in the real world.

My setup isn’t flashy, but it’s dependable. The Spyderco Delica 4 has been with me through years of hard use and still rides with me on daily runs.

The Streamlight ProTac 1L-1AA is the light I know will work, whether I have a CR123 or just a spare AA battery lying around. The Citizen Promaster Diver has been on my wrist since my Marine Corps days, and the updated version hasn’t skipped a beat. And the PSA Dagger Compact—a pistol I was skeptical about at first—has now gone over 1,200 rounds without a hiccup and fully earned its spot in my carry.

At the end of the day, that’s what matters. Every piece of gear here has been tested, proven, and trusted, not because of a brand name or a price tag, but because it works when I need it most. That’s the only standard that counts.

Please see: <https://www.ammoland.com/2025/09/updated-edc-for-2025-no-gimmicks-just-gear-that-works/>

Six Soldiers Honored
for Subduing Fort Stewart Shooter,
Aiding Wounded



Six soldiers received the Meritorious Service Medal on August 7, 2025 for their actions during an active shooter incident that wounded five service members at Fort Stewart, Georgia, last Wednesday. Photo Credit: Sgt. Bernabe Lopez/U.S. Army

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Saturday, September 20, 2025
12 PM to 3 PM
Gate will be open at 12 PM

★ Where:

Sangre Shooting Sports Club Range,
54560 CO Highway 69
Westcliffe, CO 81252

★ What:

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Tour of the Custer County Sherrif's Office MRAP
(Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicle)

*(\$25 ammo fee)



Colorado State News



Poncha Springs / Buena Vista Vigil for Charlie Kirk

by Jennifer Engel

Organizers of a peaceful Charlie Kirk Memorial Vigil held last Saturday evening at Poncha Springs’ Chipeta Park deemed the event a big success. Nearly 200 people gathered together to honor a very charismatic man.

The event was the brainchild of Lisa Carpenter from Poncha Springs. “After Charlie Kirk’s death, I felt the need to be around like-minded people who share basic Christian values. Coming together as a community after a devastating circumstance seemed to be a vital step in healing hurting hearts. No matter what side of the fence we are on, the assassination of a son, brother, husband and father, who had the courage to stand up and speak out for what he believed, should make each and every one of us stop and reflect on where we are as a society and country.”

The vigil was a non-political event. Lisa stated it was just a time for those who share the same values and views to come together in solidarity for a man worthy of respect and appreciation who literally gave his life for what he believed.

Pastor Jim Mundy from Poncha Springs was the main speaker. “It was an honor to honor the awesome short life of Mr. Kirk, a young man that put himself out there every day and helped thousands of college students with the simple message of getting and keeping a relationship with the Lord. Get your education,

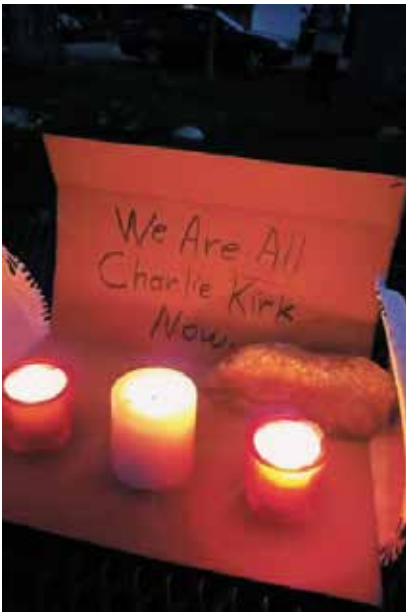


get married, have children, and live a productive life. I was and am totally humbled.”

Inspired by the words of Pastor Mundy who orated from the top of a picnic table, the crowd interjected several “Amen’s” throughout the pastor’s heartfelt speech. Another attendee, Jesse Kelly from Salida, also stepped up alongside Mundy and contributed well received thoughts and sentiments.

Tim Heikes from Salida assisted in organizing the vigil and generously brought a food truck from his business, Sonny’s Food Truck & Moments to Memories Catering, and provided free hot dogs, hamburgers, and beverages. Linda Heikes also helped with the event.

Photos from Jennifer Engel





Buena Vista Chapter Fundraiser
at the
Smith & Wesson Days Event

Salida Gunshop
7345 W Hwy 50, Salida
Friday, Sept 19 (9am-6:30pm)
& Saturday, Sept 20th (9am-4pm)

Citizens Inspired to Fund TPUSA Chapter

A growing number of individuals in Chaffee County are hoping to see a successful Turning Point USA chapter created in Buena Vista so that local high school students can join in the national movement promoting freedom-loving American values.

A fundraiser is scheduled in support of this effort all day Friday and Saturday (September 19 and 20) at the Salida Gunshop’s Smith and Wesson Days event. Hot dogs and drinks will be available.

The Turning Point USA Buena Vista Chapter Fundraiser is being sponsored by Assent Opportunity Development Division 2A (AODD2A), a 501-C-3 corporation that runs Chaffee County Young Guns and Lake County Sharp Shooters.

Salida Gunshop Upcoming Events

Friday, Sept. 19, 8:45-11am: CCW Refresher
Monday, Sept. 22, 6-8pm: RMGO Event
Saturday, Sept. 27, 9am-2pm: Steel Slayer
Friday, Oct. 3, 4-6:30pm: New Shooter Friday
Saturday, Oct. 4, 7:45-4pm: CCW
Tuesday, Oct. 7, 5-6:30pm: Veterans After Action Coffee
Saturday, Oct. 11, 8:45-11am: CCW Refresher
9am-1pm: Steel Challenge

Please call or go online for details and to sign up!



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SCHOOL SAFETY from page 1

have accessed many more students and the outcome could have been much much worse. At the time of the shooting, the School Resource Officer (SRO) was 11 months into medical leave and the part time replacement SRO had been called away to respond to a vehicle crash. The Jefferson County Sheriff’s Office has informed Evergreen High School and the rest of that district that they will ensure a full time SRO moving forward.

The Custer County School District (CCSD) in partnership with the Custer County Sheriff’s Office (CCSO) already employs a full time SRO with a designated vehicle. The CCSD SRO, Kobe Lewsader, is on duty at the school during school hours and at other events as required. Custer County has the added benefit of the Sheriff’s Posse. Posse members are frequently on campus for additional safety and support of our students and staff. Since January 1, 2025, the Sheriff’s Posse has given 423 hours of safety coverage to the school and its extra activities.

The schools in Jefferson County are required to pay 50% of the SRO’s salary. A cost the JeffCo parents believe the District let get in the way of providing a full time SRO in the small mountain town’s high school. In comparison, the SRO cost to the CCSD is less than 50% for now. The CCSO applied for and received a three-year Department of Justice COPS grant which funds 75% of the SRO salary. The Custer County

school district pays the remaining 25%. The grant ends in 2027.

In April of 2023, Sheriff Smith requested an independent assessment of the Custer County School District’s security. Lewsader has been working diligently on the recommendations from that assessment. The school now has locking classroom doors, better signage, and other improved safety measures. The Custer County School District, CCSO and other stakeholders have been proactively working to make our schools as safe as possible.

The NIJ study also highlighted the fact that leakage is a common occurrence with mass shootings. Leakage provides an opportunity for intervention. Anonymous reporting systems may increase the likelihood of leakage. Sheriff Smith wants everyone in Custer County to know that we offer Safe to Tell as a method that students and others can anonymously report. Safe to Tell tips for Custer County go to the Undersheriff, SRO, and detective for follow up. <https://post.colorado.gov/le-resources/colorado-safe2tell>. Threat assessment teams that intervene with a holistic, collaborative approach to intervention are promising.

It’s important to note the written words of one CCSD parent to the Custer County Board of Education in April 2025. “As parents, we daily say goodbye to those little people we treasure most in this world, and trust the school administration and staff to make the safety of our children of utmost importance in regard to every decision they make.” It’s a trust that both the CCSD and the CCSO value and will continue to work tirelessly to uphold.

BOCC from page 1

This lack of early medical care is one of the reasons that Colorado ranks low for healthcare for kids.

Custer County is known as a childcare desert. There is no licensed childcare available on Fridays or when school is closed. There are only nine full time day slots available, five slots for infants, five for toddlers and eight full day preschool slots. There are an additional 16 half-day slots available.

Custer County Students are struggling in CMAS testing math and language scores. However, the Custer County School District has a much higher graduation rate than other counties in the state, according to Kids Count.

CCSO will be posting deputies at Road and Bridge active work zones. The speeding has gotten out of control and is posing danger to road and bridge employees while also tearing up the road work they are trying to accomplish. Deputies will not be giving warnings, according to Canda, they will be issuing tickets for violations in the work zones.

Epp made a motion to sell the old landfill compactor because the cost of maintenance is higher than it would be to rent or lease one if a backup is needed. They also discussed adding the old garbage truck to the list of equipment to sell.

Barry Keene, representing the work force housing committee, asked the commissioners to sign a predevelopment letter of intent for “The Village at Silver Cliff”, This is a project proposal for a total of “18 doors” on 12 lots. Most will be duplexes, modular or metal buildings with the goal of housing 45 people. A grant is available for predevelopment costs, however they are required to send a letter of intent before they can apply. This is necessary to move things forward to a “shovel ready” project. Keene said the application is due October 1st and BOCC admin Katlyn Wommack will have access to the grant portal. Keene as a rep for the

committee says they are asking for the \$54,000.00 maximum. Our DOLA housing rep says our application looks good (if only he was the decider of funds granter). One of these homes will be specifically for in-home childcare. According to Epp, “We have to get this done no matter which route we choose.... This part of the project has to be done to make it shovel ready.”

Stacy Terrill says there is a local childcare planning grant available through DOLA. Grant money would be used to hire a third-party contractor to do a countywide childcare needs assessment to help make informed decisions. A true childcare needs assessment has not been done since no one can remember when. Terrill is submitting the grant request for \$20,000.00. The WMVCF CCKC funds and local donations will cover the \$5k match if needed. Commissioners gave approval for a letter from the county to give her permission to apply for the DOLA grant.

Airport liability insurance renewal provides coverage for the operations of the airport. Set to expire September 1st. This short-term policy gets us to December and then the policy will be rewritten to get all policies on the same cycle.

Epp made a motion to give PILT Title III to Search and Rescue in the amount of \$12,000.00. As there had been no public comment for 45 days opposing such a move. The money will be used for training for core rescue team members.

Commissioners voted to send a county unfunded mandate letter to the Governor and legislative leaders stating that Custer County will join other counties in upholding CRS 29-1-304.5(1). Which indicates that when the state increases mandates required by law without funding then they become optional. Commissioner Canda said, “We are united in our commitment to uphold our statutory rights. This is a deliberate and lawful step allowed in the statute. Bobby Daniels, commissioner from Mesa, started the effort with the goal of getting all the counties to sign the letter and present it to the governor.” An audience member added,” Hopefully this letter lands with the finance committee.”