RIO BLANCO
Herald Times

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WINTERFEST AT RHS ...

MATT SCOGGINS PHOTO

This year's Winterfest queen and king are Crimsen Blankenship and Anthony Lujan.

COUNTY BEAT

By LUCAS TURNER
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RBC I Commissioners began Tuesday's business with work sessions on the following topics.

CR 73 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT

Rio Blanco County Engineer Van Pilaud updated the board on the CR 73 bridge. A September 2020 inspection report recommended the bridge be replaced, though it has been allowed to stay open due to a change in width restrictions. Potential replacement alternatives could include installing a pier in the river for approximately $350-400,000. Pilaud noted that such a project would also involve NEPA and other permitting processes. He also spoke about some of the flaws in the existing bridge, noting that some of the existing bolts and steel plates used in construction were not suitable for that type of structure. Pilaud said he would like to see the bridge replaced this year for an estimated cost of $1.9 million. The board decided to make a final decision on replacement at their next meeting on March 9, 2021.

SEELY RANCH CPW SALE

The board heard comments about the proposed sale of Seely Ranch up the Williams Fork. Colorado Parks and Wildlife has expressed interest in purchasing the land, and recently asked the board to sign a letter in support. Melton Sullivan told the board that he normally "wouldn't stick his nose into his neighbor's business," but made an exception since he said the sale would affect his property. Sullivan called the existing property line "not manageable" and expressed doubts that CPW needed the land for wildlife management purposes. Three other neighboring landowners shared similar remarks opposing the sale. Reasons specified included the potential for increased public access to negatively impact wildlife habitat, CPW's ability to manage the land effectively, and the belief that there should not be more publicly-owned land in Rio Blanco County. Commissioner Rector said "I don't understand how much ground they [CPW] need to own in this county." Commissioner Gates expressed some concern over wildland fire danger from having more people in the area. Commissioner Moyer said his biggest concern was the county's declining tax base. Moyer stated he "didn't know if it makes sense to restrict citizen's ability to do productive things that will benefit Rio Blanco County." Moyer also said he was leaning towards signing a letter opposing the purchase.

IT UPDATES

County IT Director Trevor Nielsen shared updates with the board on potential improvements to broadband infrastructure in an effort to achieve more reliable service to customers. In the near term, the county will contract services from One Technology Corporation for $9,980 to replace some equipment with outdated firmware that was affecting the speeds of some customers who purchased gigabit-speed service. Nielsen's department has been unable to replace the equipment to this point due to a barrage of maintenance work that has been required to keep county broadband tower sites online.

Nielsen said the outages were a result of "site design issues" noting that some of the county's broadband tower sites were not initially designed with enough solar generation and/or storage capacity. He proposed solutions including replacing existing batteries, adding more panels, and installing propane generators. Total costs for the fixes could cost anywhere from $11,000-50,000 for each of the 11 sites where the improvements are needed. Nielsen also expressed concern that "next year it could be different sites" in need of the same types of improvements.

REGULAR MEETING

During their regular meeting the board approved a Letter of Support for the reappointment of Marie Haskett to the CPW Commission. They awarded a bids to GMCO Corporation not to exceed $321,503.14 for the 2021 dust control project, and $116,713.06 to Van Diest Supply Company for weed and pest herbicides. The board approved work orders for Meeker and Rangely pavement and maintenance projects for $57,291.48 and $49,201.76 respectively. They also approved a consulting services agreement with One Technology Corporation for $9,980 to install new equipment mentioned by Nielsen.

During public comment, Meeker resident Mona Avey addressed the board for nearly eight minutes regarding "social media comments" about the board. Avey said she "didn't like hearing dirty laundry out in public," and spoke against future recall efforts. She also emphasized her support of the commissioners. "Under the circumstances, you all are doing a great job, and it's not an easy job," said Avey.

COMMISSIONER UPDATES

Commissioner Moyer commented on a letter to the editor from former Road and Bridge Director Dave Morlan published in the *HT* last week. Moyer said he wanted the public to hear the "entire story," not just Morlan's side. "Because much of our discussion was held in executive sessions, we are prohibited by the law from disclosing those discussions," said Moyer. He invited Morlan to sign a "waiver and release" that would allow the county to disclose the contents of the executive sessions and "inform the public of what was behind the board's decision."

PUBLIC HEALTH

Public Health Director Alice Harvey shared updates on new CDPHE metrics, case counts and vaccination numbers. Harvey said there have been 33 positive cases and two hospitalizations in the last two weeks, with a case positivity rate of 5.88%. Assuming positive cases don't spike, RBC could enter blue-level restrictions on the state's new COVID dial in the near future. Harvey also reported that state vaccine allocation numbers were "very good." So far 1,260 Rio Blanco County residents have been vaccinated. Harvey said the public health department vaccinated 215 residents at a recent clinic, noting "that was in two hours; we think we even could double that." Harvey said her department is fully prepared for the next vaccination tier, which is set to begin on March 5. She said "a lot of people" in RBC will qualify, including people aged 16-65 with two or more high-risk conditions, and frontline essential workers.

Rangely board discusses fiscal stability, grants

By LUCAS TURNER
lucas@ht1885.com

RANGELY I Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) employees shared a work session presentation on "Fiscal Stability" with Town of Rangely officials Tuesday. State Demographer Elizabeth Garner detailed statistics on the economy, population, age distribution, growth projections and more. Nationally the United State's population growth slowed to an all-time record low from 2019-20. Reflecting the national trend, Colorado's population growth slowed to 0.85% in the same time period. Garner noted the state has also slowed in births, job growth, and in-migration for the first time in a number of years. Rio Blanco County and Rangely both reflect statewide trends, including a slowdown of population growth which is expected to continue trending downward.

Garner said projections for age distribution in the county could restrict the available labor force. Similar to other rural counties, RBC has a net-negative migration of young 20-somethings. Additionally there are many residents approaching retirement age, though Garner noted that Rangely is younger on average than both Rio Blanco County and Colorado due in part to CNCC. She suggested RBC and Rangely could help maintain the labor force by implementing apprenticeship programs to attract more young people and harness the expertise of many older workers before they retire. She also said projected growth along the Colorado's I-25 corridor could be leveraged with remote work and online-learning opportunities. Garner emphasized that officials should be planning ahead for population and demographic changes, keeping in mind specifically how demographic changes will impact government revenue projections and sources as well as necessary expenditures.

DOLA Budget Information and Resources Program Manager Parker Crowe shared analysis of the Town of Rangely's audited financial statements from previous years. Overall he said the Town has been doing a good job managing finances, with revenues consistently outpacing expenditures. Crowe pointed out healthy reserves in many town funds, noting balances that could cover up to 3 years of expenditures. He advised council and staff members to give consideration to whether or not those fund balances could be better leveraged. As an example Crowe said the town could use reserves to pursue matching-fund grants for infrastructure improvements and other projects. He also advised the council to work with staff on developing a collection of clear financial policies for future decision making processes. Crowe also suggested developing a comprehensive assessment of town assets for future planning purposes.

REGULAR MEETING

Rangely Marketing Coordinator Jeannie Caldwell shared an update with the board during their regular meeting. Caldwell said the first edition of "Rangely Review" will come out next week, and noted other efforts to promote Rangely in various other publications like *Outside Magazine*. Caldwell reported she has been revamping parts of the Town's website, adding a "support" page to the economic development section. The town's law enforcement website is also getting updated with employee bios, an anonymous tip form and other features.

Town Manager Lisa Piering reported that the town has been awarded a $750,000 grant for the "Head works project," and was in the final stages of a "Can Do It" grant which would award the town $50,000. Piering also discussed working with a consultant who is providing information on transitioning the Town's dispatch communications system to something with more reliability and redundancy. Moving forward Piering is set to work on developing financial and HR policies for future managers and council members.

Trustees approved the January 2021 check register and renewed a liquor license for Willis Rangely Enterprises LLC dba Rangely Liquor Store. They also approved an EIF grant application to DOLA for $522,338 to replace the water line on Mesa Circle, and a letter of interest from ColoCPA to perform an audit of the town's 2020 financial statements for $12,450. There is still a vacancy on the Town's Planning and Zoning Board, for more information email Lisa Piering at *lpiering@rangelyco.gov*

LIGHT IT UP ...

DOMINICK CARDILE PHOTO

Meeker Sand and Gravel's ski-themed float rolled down Main Street during Saturday's Parade of Lights. The event is sponsored by the Meeker Chamber and is usualy held in December, but was postponed this year due to the pandemic and coincided with the second annual Meeker Skijor (photos of that on PAGE 8A.) Download the free Zappar app and scan the code to watch the full parade livestream (click in the digital edition)

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THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING COMMUNITY JOURNALISM!

Sat: 30s/10s
Sun: 30s/10s
WAXING GIBBOUS 96%

HT receives public records from Rio Blanco County

By HT STAFF
Special to the Herald Times

RBC I After a Feb. 9 meeting brought forth commissioners' issues with the public health department, the *HT* requested public records from Rio Blanco County in an attempt to verify "major concerns" regarding the relationship between the department and the county's two hospitals.

While other complaints weren't specific, commissioners and the county attorney all expressed direct opinions on the hospital matter.

"I think we oughta be a supporting role for our hospitals, and we shouldn't be mandating policies … I'm not sure that's exactly how they feel right now," Commissioner Jeff Rector stated.

Commissioner Gary Moyer said, "I feel we've been misled as to what the relationship has been with these other partners," and Commissioner Ty Gates stated, "There's been instances that the administration feels was overreaching maybe, or could be taken as throwing them under the bus."

County Attorney Todd Starr told Harvey, "You don't have a good read of your relationship with either hospital," noting that "hospital administrators expressed grave concern about their relationship with public health," the week prior to the meeting.

Public Health Director Alice Harvey responded she was unaware of any concerns, and that nothing had been brought directly to her department.

CORA REQUEST

The *HT* submitted a Colorado Open Records Act request Feb. 12, and received a total of 30 text messages and seven emails 10 days later, Feb. 22. The *HT* was charged $385, equivalent to 11 hours of county employee time.

OUTBREAKS

As some of the records related to outbreaks, we are including this information for reference. COVID outbreaks reported at healthcare facilities during November and December 2020 included the following, according to public reports from the CDPHE:

■ Walbridge Wing outbreak reported Nov. 20, resolved Dec. 18; nine staff positive, eight residents positive, one confirmed resident death.

■ Rangely District Hospital (RDH) outbreak reported Nov. 30, active, 25 staff positive.

■ Pioneers Medical Center (PMC) outbreak reported Dec. 9, active, 27 staff positive, one attendee positive.

IMMEDIATE JEOPARDY

The CDPHE completed a survey on only one of those entities – PMC – after receiving an anonymous complaint. The *HT* contacted the CDPHE for further information and was told complaint specifics are not available for public review.

The survey was completed Dec. 16 and found five deficiencies at PMC.

"Due to the nature of the survey findings," the report reads, "an Immediate Jeopardy was declared on 12/9/20 at 4:35 p.m. The facility failed to ensure healthcare personnel (HCP) who were symptomatic for COVID-19 were excluded from work … document review and interviews revealed multiple instances in which HCP who reported symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or a positive test result for COVID-19 were allowed to work and potentially spread a highly contagious infectious disease."

CDPHE's Records Manager Michael Lastoczy provided the full survey report to the *HT,* and clarified the "immediate jeopardy" designation.

"It means their actions were putting a resident's life at risk," he said.

Additionally, the survey put the facility out of compliance with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services condition of participation for Infection Prevention and Control and Antibiotic Stewardship Programs.

The facility was directed to devise a plan to address the situation, and after the plan was submitted by PMC, immediate jeopardy was removed Dec. 11 at 9:51 a.m. "However, deficient practice with condition level findings remained."

Other deficiencies cited in the report included:

■ "The facility failed to employ methods to prevent and control the transmission of COVID-19 … specifically the facility did not ensure healthcare personnel who were symptomatic or positive for COVID-19 were excluded from work." Interviews in the report reference numerous employees, including patient financial services technicians, directors, the facility compliance officer, an employee health specialist, the Chief Nursing Officer and the CEO.

■ The hospital was cited for failing to report the outbreak to public health in accordance with their own facility policy "in order to establish a plan to manage and investigate the potential outbreak."

Between Nov. 1 and Dec. 3, 24 healthcare providers (HCP) tested positive, and one was designated a probable case. Nine of those people worked in the Wing, but because some staff was "flexed" between facilities, "this created the potential for facility HCP to be exposed to COVID-19 positive HCP in the long-term care facility." See below for correlating correspondence from our CORA request.

■ The hospital's screening process was also cited. "Based on document review and interviews, the facility failed to ensure a process was in place to screen all healthcare personnel for symptoms of COVID-19."

■ Finally, the facility "failed to ensure staff responsible to oversee the health of healthcare personnel (HCP) at the facility were educated on public health guidance and facility processes … to prevent the transmission of COVID-19. The failure created the potential for the spread of COVID-19 at the facility."

PMC's plans of correction for each citation are included in the full report, with an alleged compliance date of Jan. 11. The plans were approved Jan. 20 and were signed by Chief Nursing Officer Karen Iacuone. The full CDPHE report is available at *https://www.theheraldtimes.com/ht-receives-public-records-from-county/rio-blanco-county/*.

PUBLIC RECORDS: OUTBREAK REPORTING

The first chronological public record we received from our open records request is a Nov. 18 email from PMC's Rachel Gates to county commissioners which states, "Liz Sellers would love to have a cup of coffee and visit about concerns that were shared." The following day, Moyer responded he would be there. PMC told the *HT* this meeting did not take place.

On Nov. 20, the COVID-19 outbreak at the Walbridge Wing was reported to the CDPHE.

Next, the *HT* received an email exchange between Public Health Director Harvey and CDPHE Epidemiologist Brianna Merritt. The exchange occurred Nov. 25, five days after the Walbridge Wing outbreak was first reported, and five days prior to the RDH outbreak being reported.

Harvey asked about publishing the outbreaks on the county website after public requests for the information. "Our priority is of course working with the businesses/organizations themselves and then reporting to you, but is this something you think we should consider?"

Merritt responded that the matter was up to the county's discretion. "It may open some transparency, but also not completely necessary." The county ultimately did not publish outbreak information on their website, but was required to continue to report outbreaks to the CDPHE, where the information is available to the public on the CDPHE website.

On Dec. 2, Harvey emailed Merritt again, to ask if releasing any outbreak information publicly could involve a HIPAA violation, as she had been told by County Attorney Todd Starr.

Merritt's response: "All outbreaks are required to be reported to CDPHE and go to the public facing (CDPHE) website, this is not a HIPAA violation. Your attorney can reach out to the CDPHE attorney if they have more questions or concerns." Harvey then forwarded the info to the county commissioners, the county attorney and county employee Vicky Edwards.

On Dec. 4, an email exchange took place between Starr and all three county commissioners with the title "Bad contact with A. Harvey." This email was excluded from the CORA based on "attorney-client privilege."

Five days later, a hospital infection preventionist and the public health department both emailed the state "to inquire if there was a requirement for the facility to report clusters of respiratory illness or positive COVID-19 tests as outbreaks," according to the CDPHE report. The state responded the same day confirming providers were to report known or suspected outbreaks.

PUBLIC RECORDS: TEXT MESSAGES

Text message threads received in response to our request occurred between Jan. 18 and Feb. 9. Due to the way the messages were cropped, it is difficult to determine who is doing the texting, but extrapolating from the content, some conversations about public health likely went on between commissioners outside of the public eye.

You can view all of the documents we received at *https://www.theheraldtimes.com/ht-receives-public-records-from-county/rio-blanco-county/*.

One thread references a Jan. 26 executive session that took place with both PMC CEO Liz Sellers and RDH CEO Kyle Wren. The executive session was called "for the purpose of receiving legal advice on specific legal questions," according to the agenda.

On Jan. 27, an unidentified commissioner asked Commissioner Rector if he had emailed the "PH statute to the hospitals." We were unable to determine which public health statute this is in reference to.

On the following day, one commissioner texted Rector again. "Hey bud, need to visit with you about public health."

An email on that same day, Jan. 28, was also excluded from our CORA due to "attorney-client privilege." The email was sent from Starr and Edwards to the commissioners with the title "Re: Qualifications Statute Public Health."

ATTORNEY EMAIL

On Feb. 4, Starr sent an email to Sellers, Wren and Moyer. "The BoCC has asked that I reach out to you again communicating the Board's displeasure at the way the County has allowed the relationship with each of your entities to deteriorate and to reaffirm the county's commitment to get this set right."

Starr then states that though he understands the hospitals could not assist in "taking over the Public Health functions on an interim basis," they could perhaps take over testing and vaccination functions. "I believe we have a stable of volunteers that we could provide to assist with this function," the email reads.

"Finally, I wish to confirm that if the BoCC goes public with its concerns about the Public Health Department we could state in public that one of the reasons for the Commissioner's displeasure with county staff is the poor relationship with the hospitals."

FEB. 9 MEETING

On Feb. 9, the commissioners scheduled an executive session with public health "for the purpose of receiving legal advice on specific legal questions and determining positions that may be subject to negotiations: developing strategy for negotiations: and instructing negotiators." Harvey and other public health employees asked the meeting be kept public due to the personnel issues to be discussed. You can find our report on that meeting at *https://www.theheraldtimes.com/county-beat-board-addresses-friction/rio-blanco-county/*.

HOSPITAL BOARD INVOLVEMENT

On Tuesday, the *HT* attempted to ask PMC board members some questions about the situation during their regular meeting, but audio trouble prevented a direct conversation. Instead, the *HT* emailed questions to each board member and received the following response from PMC's Rachel Gates:

Q: Did any board members attend a Nov. 2020 meeting between the CEO and one or more county commissioners to discuss "concerns"?

A: No

Q: For Ms. Sellers, specifically: did the November "coffee date" referenced in county emails take place?

A: No

SEE CORA PAGE 3A

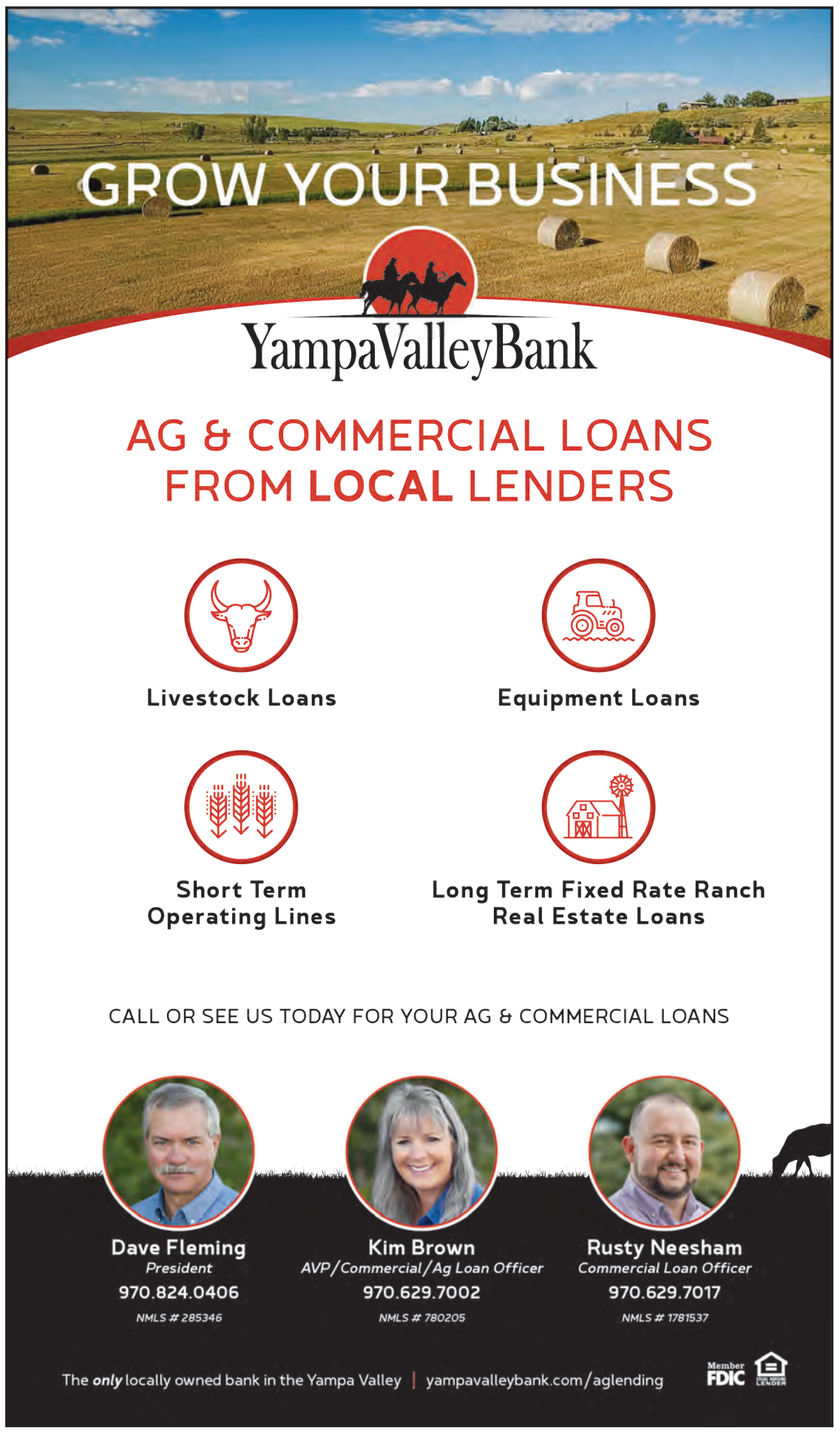
Pioneers Pulse

COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic at PMC

WHO: Tier 1B.2	Individuals age 65+ Pre K - 12 teachers & child care workers
WHAT:	COVID-19 Vaccine FIRST DOSE ONLY
WHEN & WHERE:	Tuesdays in March 3/2, 3/9, 3/16, 3/23 & 3/30 4:00 PM Meeker Family Health Clinic

*Clinics will occur based on State allocation of vaccine.

This is NOT a walk-in clinic.
You must register
Call the Clinic: (970) 878-4014
Register Online: www.pioneershospital.org



NEWS BRIEFS

Upcoming RBC free legal clinic

RBC | Wednesday March 10, 2021 from 2-5 p.m. Contact your local library at 970-878-5911 to be added to the sign-up sheet. As a COVID work-around, instead of clinic patrons coming to your local public library (which has limited access), your local library staff will schedule all appointments. It is especially important to provide a reliable phone number, so the volunteer attorney can call the clinic patron's telephone directly, during scheduled clinic hours. Space is limited.

BLM to gather excess wild horses in Piceance East Douglas area

PRESS RELEASE
Special to the Herald Times

RBC | The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) White River Field Office signed a decision to gather and remove excess wild horses from the Piceance-East Douglas Herd Management Area in northwestern Colorado.

"The BLM is committed to sustaining an ecological balance in the Piceance-East Douglas HMA," said White River Field Manager Kent Walter. "Our goal is to have healthy horses on healthy rangelands."

The appropriate management level in the HMA is 135-235 horses. Current estimates place the herd population at 838 wild horses. As part of the decision, helicopter and/or bait trapping methods may be used for gather operations. Fertility treatments will be used to curb annual herd population growth.

The decision and its associated documents are available online at https://go.usa.gov/x7fcQ. Appeals to the decision will be accepted over the next 30 days and must be submitted in writing to: Field Manager, BLM White River Field Office, 220 East Market St., Meeker, CO 81641.

For information about the BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Program, visit https://www.blm.gov/programs/wild-horse-and-burro.

IT'S A WAY OF LIFE ...

COURTESY PHOTO

The It's a Way of Life Community Club met Feb. 16 at 6 p.m. The highlight of the meeting was the coffee cup suet bird feeders. Each member brought a coffee cup and the club supplied the materials for the STEM project. The club elected 4-H Council representatives Luke and Liam Olson, to attend the 4-H council meetings and report on our club's activities. Hayden Garcia gave a very exciting demonstration on hatching poultry eggs. She showed the group pictures of eggs being candled for fertility. President Sierra Gomez reviewed completion requirements with all of the members in attendance. Our activity next month will be pottery and planned by Samuel Merz.

Samuel Merz

Amack named to honor roll at University of Kansas

Special to the Herald Times

MEEKER | Annelise Amack of Meeker has earned honor roll distinction at the University of Kansas College of Liberal Arts and Sciences in Lawrence, Kansas, for the fall 2020 semester. Honor roll criteria vary among the university's academic units. Some schools honor the top 10% of students enrolled, some establish a minimum grade-point average, and others raise the minimum GPA for each year students are in school. Students must complete a minimum number of credit hours to be considered for the honor roll.

Annual Meeker Club Wrestling Fundraiser Dinner 2021

The Meeker club wrestling team is raising money to send several of its wrestlers to the Annual National Highschool Wrestling Championships in Virginia Beach. Additional funds raised will be contributed to the Meeker Wrestling Club.

HOW: Enjoy a taco bar at the Mexican House while the participating Meeker wrestlers clean up after you.

WHERE: Mexican House - 642 Market Street Meeker, CO 81641

WHEN: Wednesday, March 3rd from 6:00 PM to 8:30 PM

WHAT: Taco bar including corn or flower tortillas, hard shell tacos, carne asada, pastor, shrimp, ground beef, chicken, and all you need to make the tacos of your choice.

DONATION: $16 dollars per person, higher donations welcome.

CORA: *continued*

CONTINUED FROM 2A

Q: Did any board members attend a 5 p.m. Jan. 26 meeting between hospital CEOs and the county commissioners? I believe this was listed as an exec session "to discuss legal matters."

A: No

Q: Did the board as an entity have any other communication with the commissioners or county attorney Todd Starr during the months of Nov., Dec., or Jan.?

A: No

Q: Has the hospital board discussed or expressed "grave concerns about public health" during a public meeting in the last three months? What were those concerns regarding?

A: No

Q: Were there concerns expressed by or to the board related to any of the following: public health outbreak reporting, HIPAA violations, Dec. complaint filed against PMC and the subsequent survey that put the facility in immediate jeopardy, or something else?

A: No

Q: Did the board approve the following messaging from County Attorney Todd Starr emailed to hospital CEOs Feb. 4, "I wish to confirm that if the BoCC goes public with its concerns about the Public Health Department we could state in pubic (sic) that one of the reasons for the Commissioners' displeasure with county staff is the poor relationship with the hospitals."

A: No.

Q: Is the board aware of/does the board support County Attorney Starr's Feb. 4 query to have the hospital take over the testing and vaccination functions of public health?

A: No.

We will review past board minutes to confirm.

The *HT* also submitted questions to RDH CEO Kyle Wren, but did not receive a response by press time.

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Honey Bear
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4 ct. Food Club
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32 oz. Food Club
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14 oz. Food Club Brown or White INSTANT RICE $1.99
16-18 oz. Don Julio TORTILLA CHIPS 2 for $5
4.6-5 oz. Betty Crocker BOXED POTATOES $1.49
24 oz. Barilla PASTA SAUCE $1.99
10-12 ct. Old El Paso TACO SHELLS $1.49
12 oz. La Victoria TACO SAUCE $1.99
10 oz. Old El Paso ENCHILADA SAUCE $1.49
122.5-150 oz. Arm & Hammer Liquid Laundry DETERGENT $6.49

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7.5-8 oz. Land O' Frost Deli Shaved LUNCHMEAT $1.89

DAIRY

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16 oz. Food Club COTTAGE CHEESE 99¢
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5.3 oz. Ratio YOGURT 4 for $5
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8 oz. Pillsbury CORN BREAD $2.29
14.1 oz. Pillsbury PIE CRUST $2.99
16.5 oz. Pillsbury COOKIE DOUGH $2.99
16 oz. Pillsbury Ready to Bake CHOC CHIP COOKIES $2.99
16 oz. Food Club CHEESE BLOCKS $3.29

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130 ct. Totinos PIZZA ROLLS $10.99
10.5-14 oz. Marie Callender ICE CREAM 2 for $5
15 oz. Marie Callender POT PIES 2 for $5

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3 ct. Romaine LETTUCE HEARTS 2 for $4
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EDITOR'S COLUMN

A sad milestone

"No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friend's or of thine own were: any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bells tolls; it tolls for thee."

~ John Donne

By NIKI TURNER
editor@ht1885.com

The United States marked a sad milestone this week: 500,000 deaths attributed to COVID-19. You can argue about the numbers. You can insist that the doctors who are treating those patients are fudging the numbers for nefarious reasons. You can say most of those people would have died anyway because they were old or had a pre-existing condition. You can say it's no worse than the flu (although the lack of flu cases this year does leave one wondering if wearing masks, staying home when you're sick, and washing our hands has had an impact on flu).

Regardless, half a million people are dead in the U.S. alone, leaving millions more in the grip of grief. The effects of that loss will be felt by generations to come, and will have an impact on us all. As much as we like to take pride in our "independence," especially out here in the West, the truth is we're all much more interconnected than we want to admit.

LOOSE ENDS

Thankful for sunshine

By DOLLY VISCARDI
Special to the Herald Times

MEEKER I There ought to be a law. Ever hear someone mutter that phrase when they are frustrated or angry? Lately it might have been used in regards to recent decisions and actions taken by the County Commissioners.

There are a couple of legislative mandates addressing the lack of openness when local governing bodies make decisions. Colorado's Sunshine Laws are designed to ensure that the actions taken have followed the decisions that have been made at a regularly scheduled board meeting. All board business is conducted at a public meeting, unless it is a personnel matter that requires an executive session with the decision to keep it open made by the employee or staff member being discussed.

This state mandated legislation is so important to all of us. Years ago, "bidness" as the good ole boys put it, was often carried out in a variety of places throughout the community before it was finalized in a board meeting. This made it difficult for a reporter. I often returned from meetings without the information I needed to let the community know what decisions had been made. It was frustrating to me, the editor, as well as the public who counted on the newspaper to keep them up to date on the County's business and how the Commissioner's decisions would affect their daily lives.

Living in northwest Colorado enables us to have a lot of sunshine. The number of days each year has been documented by many experts. It seems that most of us are grateful, but unable to feel the same way about the changing political weather. We should not take these light-filled days for granted.

If state-mandated laws have been ignored or misinterpreted, we need to stay vigilant. They were enacted to keep the public informed. The importance of local government conducting open meetings has to continue to be recognized by everyone in the community.

Dolly Viscardi

We just cannot revert to shrugging our shoulders and dismissing the need for all of us to get involved. So many of us seem to take notice only when something of personal interest is to be discussed

That just will not be enough.

Yes, there are plenty of times when we can mutter, "That ought to be a law." but this isn't one of them. The Sunshine Laws will continue to provide the protection we all need. Come on, open the blinds and let the streaming rays of light in. Let's take advantage of all this sunshine that comes out after gloomy weather.

Looking for Kaye's Corner? Check page 3B for a specially-themed piece with photo this week!

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WRITERS ON THE RANGE

Restoration economy

By JONATHAN THOMPSON
Special to the Herald Times

Jonathan Thompson

RBC I Farmington, a city of 45,000 in the northwestern corner of New Mexico, has run on a fossil fuel economy for a century. It is one of the only places on the planet where a 26-kiloton nuclear device was detonated underground to free up natural gas from the rock.

The city's baseball team was called the Frackers, and a home run hit out of their practice park was likely to land next to a pack of gas wells. The community's economy and identity are so tied up with fossil fuels that the place should probably try a new name like Carbonton, Methanedale or Drillsville.

Over the last decade, however, the oil and gas rollercoaster here has shuddered nearly to a halt, and one of two giant coal-fired power plants is about to shut down. The carbon corporations that have been exploiting the local labor and landscape for decades are fleeing, taking thousands of jobs with them. Left behind are gaping coal-mine wounds, rotting infrastructure and well-pad scars oozing methane.

The pattern of abandonment is mirrored in communities from Wyoming to Utah to Western Colorado to the Navajo Nation. Community leaders scramble to find solutions. Some cling to what they know, throwing their weight behind schemes to keep coal viable, such as carbon capture, while others bank on outdoor recreation, tourism and cottage industries.

Yet one solution to the woes rarely comes up in these conversations: Restoration as economic development.

Why not put unemployed miners and drillers back to work reclaiming closed coal mines and plugging up idled or low-producing oil and gas wells?

The EPA estimates that there are some 2 million unplugged abandoned wells nationwide, many of them leaking methane, the greenhouse gas with 86 times the warming potential of carbon dioxide, along with health-harming volatile organic compounds and even deadly hydrogen sulfide.

Hundreds of thousands of additional wells are still active, yet have been idled or are marginal producers, and they will also need plugging and reclaiming.

Oilfield service companies and their employees have the skills and equipment needed and could go back to work immediately. A 2020 report from the Columbia Center on Global Energy Policy found that a nationwide well-plugging program could employ more than 100,000 high-wage workers.

Massive coal mines are also shutting down and will need to be reclaimed. Northern Arizona's Kayenta Mine, owned by coal-giant Peabody, shut down in late 2019, along with the Navajo Generating Station, resulting in the loss of nearly 300 jobs. The Western Organization of Resource Councils estimated that proper reclamation of the mine could keep most of those miners employed for an additional two to three years.

Peabody, however, still has not begun to meet its reclamation obligations. This is a failure not only on Peabody's part but also of the federal mining regulators who should be holding the company's feet to the fire.

Who will pay for all of this? Mining and drilling companies are required to put up financial bonds in order to get development permits, and they're forfeited if the companies fail to properly reclaim the well or mine. Unfortunately, these bonds are almost always inadequate.

A Government Accountability Office report found that the Bureau of Land Management held about $2,000 in bonds, on average, for each well on federal land. Yet the cost to plug and reclaim each well ranges from $20,000 to $145,000. An example: In New Mexico, a company can put up as little as $2,500 per well that costs at least $35,000 to plug.

Colorado Democratic Sen. Michael Bennet tried to remedy this last year by crafting a bill that would increase bonds and create a fund for plugging abandoned wells. Republicans kept the bill from progressing, but with an administration that touted reclamation of mines and abandoned wells in a climate-related executive order, and a new Senate in place, the bill stands a good chance of going forward.

Economic development focusing on restoring the land once miners leave is a natural fit for beleaguered towns suffering the latest bust. Plus, by patching up the torn landscape these communities will help clear the path for other types of economic development, such as tourism or recreation.

"Restoration work is not fixing beautiful machinery … It is accepting an abandoned responsibility," wrote Barry Lopez, the renowned nature writer who died recently. "It is a humble and often joyful mending of biological ties, with a hope clearly recognized that working from this foundation we might, too, begin to mend human society."

Jonathan Thompson is a contributor to Writers on the Range, writersontherange.org, a nonprofit dedicated to spurring lively conversation about the West. He is a veteran reporter specializing in economic and environmental issues.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A somewhat different opinion

Dear Editor:

As I read the Letters to the Editor in last week's paper it seemed pretty obvious to me there were several people who seemed to think our county health director is our savior from the big nasty CV and the county commissioners are evil and mean to her. Well I have a somewhat different opinion and am quite sure some people will disagree with me and that is fine. As the old saying goes opinions are like a part of our body that everyone has one of so I am going to share my opinion. First I want to thank the County Commissioners and our Sheriff for having the intestinal fortitude to stand up for the citizens of our county against Polis and his dictator type policies pertaining to this so called deadly virus and allow us the freedom to choose what we feel is best for ourselves and our family. (The last report I saw was there have been two deaths in the county associated with CV). After attending several County Commissioner meetings and reading about Miss Harvey it seemed pretty obvious to me she doesn't seem to care what her bosses (the commissioners) wanted and she was going to follow what the state directives were. I can assure you as a former business owner and serving as Mayor and on several different boards if an employee treated me that way they would be unemployed. I feel she has done everything in her power to delay the opening of businesses, schools and private gatherings in our county to appease the state health dept. regardless of what the commissioners had requested.

I am glad to see that the vaccine is available to the citizens who want it and sincerely hope nobody has any serious side effects from it. Personally I have no intention of ever taking the shot. It would be nice if the people who think the shot is so important would have the common courtesy to quit trying to shame us who choose not to get the shot or wear a face diaper. If those things work as well as you say they do you should be safe and I will be to. I remember almost a year ago when Fauci and the government said if we would shelter in place for two weeks it would flatten the curve and we would be fine. Well I see now some SO CALLED experts are saying that a third shot might be necessary and you need to wear TWO masks. I can hardly wait until next week to see what new flavor of koolaid they will try to sell us. As long as people are willing to act like blind sheep and follow every new directive this will NEVER end. One last thing, I think if Miss Harvey would follow the policies put forth by the commissioners instead of trying to appease the state it would make for a better working environment for everyone involved.

Frank Huitt
Rangely

Recall Moyer

Dear Editor:

As I stated last week, I'm heading up a recall to remove Gary Moyer from the Rio Blanco County Board of Commissioners. In my opinion, in the two years he's been in office, he's abused the power of his position and does not represent the values of the citizens of Rio Blanco County.

As most of you know, one of his latest stunts was to verbally abuse and intimidate Alice Harvey, Public Health Nurse, in a public meeting on February 9, 2021. Who knows what would have happened had she not decided to make the meeting public?

It appears Moyer's priority is to eliminate the county of certain department heads and employees, without regard of their leadership, experience and expertise. It's these dedicated, hardworking people who help make Rio Blanco County such a great place to live.

We've seen Moyer show favoritism to certain employees. We've seen him spend hours in the offices of his favorites. Many employees are afraid for their jobs and aren't happy in the environment created by Moyer. It's not healthy nor productive.

Last summer, Commissioner Gary Moyer was instrumental in trying to eliminate the Rio Blanco County Dispatch Center without giving citizens or our concerned sheriff an opportunity to voice their opposition or have any input about this decision.

There are so many reasons he shouldn't hold the office of commissioner, but I think it boils down to the fact he doesn't have the heart and compassion to lead our county. Leadership is not pointing your finger at people and saying, "You need to remember, I am your boss!" Leadership is respecting people and inspiring them to make our community better.

If you feel we need a change now, before more damage is done, I encourage you to sign the petitions that will be circulating in each town. A team of people will be going door to door collecting signatures from registered voters. If we miss you and you would like to sign, or even help, please contact me, Dave Morlan, 970-942-8093 in Meeker, or in Rangely contact Terry Smalec, 970-675-2355.

Thank you,
Dave Morlan
Meeker

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CONSERVATION CORNER

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The Grace of the Moral Law (2)

By Dr. J. D. Watson
Pastor-Teacher, Grace Bible Church

■ Dr. J.D. Watson

CONCLUDING the third of five principles in this preface to the Moral Law, we consider again the *grace* of the Moral Law.

David, therefore, also tells us in Psalm 119 that he "hid" God's Word in his "heart" (v. 11). "Hid" is *ṣāpan*, to hide or conceal something of great value. "Heart" is a pivotal word in the Old Testament. It is the Hebrew *lēḇ*, which has a wide range of meanings. While it refers to the physical organ, it much more often refers to one's inner self and nature, including the intellect, emotions, and will, that is, the human personality. So where do we hide God's Word? *In our whole personality!* As the Psalmist also writes "The law of his God is in [the righteous man's] heart; none of his steps shall slide" (Ps. 37:31). The Word of God, including the Moral Law, must govern our entire being.

First, it touches the *head*, the intellect. I once heard a preacher say long ago, "You might not be what you think you are, but *what* you think, you are." That is precisely the meaning of Proverbs 23:7: "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee." Instead of *lēḇ*, "heart" is *nepesh*, which means breath or the act of breathing and figuratively refers to the inner being with its thoughts and emotions.

Even more significant is the Hebrew verb behind "thinketh" (*sa'ar*), which appears only here in the entire Old Testament and means to calculate or to set a price on. The context here is that of misers who count the cost of everything their guests eat or drink. They find no enjoyment in their guests but only worry about the cost of it all. And so it is that whatever we value, whatever we truly love, is what will monopolize our thinking. If we, therefore, think about the Ten Commandments, we will, as Puritan Thomas Watson put it, value them as "a chain of pearls to adorn us [and] our treasury to enrich us." We will be able to say with the Psalmist that our "delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law [do we] meditate day and night" (Ps. 1:2).

Second, the law touches the *heart*, the emotions. I use "heart" here as does our Western culture, as the seat of our emotions. "What is the sum of the Ten Commandments?" asked Puritan Thomas Watson. Quoting Deuteronomy 6:5, his answer was to "love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." Think of it! If we say we love God, how can we not love His commandments? "If ye love me," Jesus said, "keep my commandments" (Jn. 14:15), and, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love" (15:10). To love God is to love His Law, and to love His Law is to love Him. There is no dichotomy here, rather a wondrous unity. As "righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Ps. 85:10), *law and love embrace at the Cross*. "Man's law binds the hands only," Watson again observed, "God's law binds the heart."

Third, the Moral Law touches the *hands*, that is, the will. What goes on in the head and heart is not theoretical; it is real and energizes actions. If I may put is this way: what the *head* cogitates, and where the *heart* meditates, the *hands* are sure to reciprocate.

As we prepare to meditate on these commandments, let us realize that a desire to keep these moral mandates is proof positive of a regenerated life. By our very nature, none of us desires to obey God (Rom. 3:10–12). Such desire comes only by a transformed life. What does it mean to be a "new creature"? It means that "old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17). No, the law does not *save* us, but it certainly aids in *sanctifying* us.

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Two BMS students win regional math competition; MES Principal Kathy Collins to retire

By NIKI TURNER
editor@ht1885.com

MEEKER I Barone Middle School students Sam Hightower and Tucker Chinn were celebrated at Monday's school board meeting for winning first and second place in the regional MathCounts contest.

The MathCounts club meets twice a week after school to practice. Of the six students participating this year from BMS, Hightower and Chinn qualified to move up to the next round of competition.

Meeker Elementary School Principal Kathy Collins submitted her resignation to the board after 30 years in education, 26 of those in Meeker. Collins has served as MES principal since 2014, and worked in the administration building and as a teacher before that. She plans to help her parents on the family ranch and pursue her passion for animals.

In construction updates, board member Kevin Amack asked about the lighting in front of the new bus barn, saying the lights seem "extremely bright." Board member Dr. Bob Dorsett agreed, adding that the lights at the high school "obliterate the view of the night sky." Principal Amy Chinn said the high school can experiment with turning some of the lights off, or shutting off the lights at various times.

In the superintendent's report, Chris Selle said "attendance is in line, maybe a touch better" than previous years, although the interpretation is slightly different because of COVID quarantines.

Selle also said with additional, unexpected revenue that has come to the district, they are considering a bonus for staff. "Every staff member in the school district has put in more time and effort this year."

Selle also said the state legislature is discussing asking the federal government for a waiver to suspend certain standardized tests this year for the purpose of not giving up two to three weeks of instructional time preparing for and administering tests.

Board member Tom Allen said he believes "instructional time is more important right now."

"Teachers are scrambling to get kids caught up," said MES Principal Kathy Collins. "Tests are worthwhile, when we get back to reality."

BMS Principal Jim Hanks agreed, "This would just be another disruption. Right now I don't see it being beneficial."

The board approved a resolution in support of suspending state assessments this year.

COVID UPDATE

Selle told the board things have been going well with regard to COVID.

"County health has continued to be outstanding support for the school district," he said.

Unfortunately, two students from one family tested positive on Monday, less than 48 hours after playing in two basketball games. Compliance with the Colorado Department of Public Health and the Colorado High School Activities Association requires anyone who is a "contact in a sports setting" to quarantine for 14 days, effectively ending the basketball season for the teams Meeker played last weekend.

"We're applying the targeted quarantine we've been applying," Selle said. "The challenge will be if those two teams are shut down by their local public health and they see we're playing Rangely next Thursday, and I'm a parent, CHSAA is getting a phone call."

Tuesday afternoon, the school quarantined the girls' basketball team.

Ever dreamed of being a mustang horse trainer?

Meeker Mustang Makeover seeks trainers for 2021 event

Special to the Herald Times

MEEKER I The third annual Meeker Mustang Makeover is on the hunt for horse trainers!

Last year, 15 trainers from across the state picked up their horses on a dusty afternoon, and 100 days later, performed and competed to show off the contrast from a horse that had never been touched to one that could move cows, handle an obstacle course, and show off its paces in front of a crowd at the Meeker Rodeo Fairgrounds. All horses sold at the end with trainers receiving 50% of the proceeds of their horse, in addition to taking home prize money, scholarship funds, and BLM incentive money.

For 2021, trainers will have 120 days to gentle their unbroken and untouched horse for a unique competition, followed by an online and live auction of all the horses to their forever homes. Last year's auction, handled by Longhorn Video Auctions, attracted 22,000 views on the website. The event will be livestreamed for those who want to attend virtually, by LevelHead Audio and the Rio Blanco Herald Times.

Tickets for the Meeker Mustang Makeover at the gate will be $5, with children 12 and under free. The event runs all day Saturday, and visitors to Rio Blanco County can then spend the weekend enjoying some of the best trout fishing in the state on the White River, view the unparalleled Trappers Lake, and take in the sights and history of

Colorado's most undiscovered and remote wilderness such as the White River Museum with the story of the Meeker Massacre and remarkable Ute Indian artifacts. Hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding is just a few miles up the Blue Flower Scenic Trail on Route 8 to take the adventurous into the White River State Park.

Using mustangs from the region, the event includes both 1-year-old and 3-year-old horses, being trained by all ages from 10 and up.

Added to the Youth/Yearling In Hand Event will be an event for Over 60 horse lovers with yearlings in halter as well. Both groups will have to satisfy the requirements of handling an obstacle course for their wild horse yearlings while they perform a creative freestyle performance that they devise.

Following the competition, horses will be auctioned off to the crowd. The payoff for trainers is big: There will be $10,000 in prize/scholarship money and trainers will also receive 50% of the proceeds of their horse's sale, in addition to the BLM Adoption Incentive Program money of $500 after two months and an additional $500 if they adopt the horse at the end of the year.

COURTESY PHOTOS

(Top) Leah Wood, 11, has competed each of the last two years on a saddle horse, and won first prize with her sister Dena the first year. (Bottom) Last year the Allred family all participated, each with their own mustang: Wade and Rylee Allred shown, also Colt Allred (not pictured.)

The final date applications will be accepted is April 1. Applications are available at meekermustangmakeover.org. Trainers will pick up their horses on May 1 at the Rodeo Fairgrounds in Meeker, Colorado, and show their mustang magic on Saturday, Aug. 28 at the Rio Blanco County Meeker Fairgrounds.

Interested trainers will find the application online at meekermustangmakeover.org

Questions, email Robyn Blackwood Kelley at *RobynBlackwood71@gmail.com*.

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OBITUARIES

Estella "Elaine" Webber

Dec. 13, 1938 ~ Feb. 4, 2021

Estella "Elaine" Webber was born on Dec. 13,1938, to Antone Bryan (Whitey) and Mary Jean Eliasen on the Sleepy Cat Ranch. Elaine was the second of 15 children in the Eliasen family. She was raised in Rio Blanco County and graduated from the Meeker High School in 1956.

On Nov. 7, 1958, she married Ray Webber from Steamboat Springs, and they lovingly raised their five children. The Webber family moved to Craig in 1975, Elaine worked as a cook, and a waitress, and was a longtime member of the VFW Ladies Auxiliary. She loved cooking and making candies, banana bread, chokecherry jelly, and homemade wine. She also loved to knit and crochet making hundreds of hats and mittens which she donated to schools and those in need. She enjoyed making quilts for those she loved.

Elaine Webber

Elaine loved working in her yard, as well as camping and spending time with her family.

She is survived by her five children and their spouses, Mary and Dan Williams, Donna Webber, Alan Webber, Kathy and Darrell Norskog and Brian and David Webber, 10 grandchildren, 17 great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandson, and numerous nieces and nephews.

Elaine was preceded in death by her beloved husband Ray, great-grandson Layne Grajeda, sister Liz DeVore, brothers Earl, Ellis and Elton Eliasen, nephews Scott Anding, Justin C. Eliasen, Matthew Richardson, and niece Brandi Jennings.

Elaine passed away at her home Feb. 4, 2021, with her family at her side.

At her request no funeral service will be held, but a celebration of her life will be held this summer.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorial contributions be made in Elaine's memory to BUST of Steamboat in care of Grant Mortuary.

Timothy Wayne Smith

May 4, 1956 ~ Feb. 17, 2021

Timothy Wayne Smith (Tim Smith), 64, died peacefully in his home in Erda, Utah, on Feb. 17, 2021. Tim was born on May 4, 1956, at the Middletown hospital in Middletown, Ohio, to mother Clara Mae (Bowman) Smith and father John Frederick Smith. He attended Maple Park Elementary and graduated from Middletown High School. Tim had a great love for music and started playing when he was just 10 years old. He started with guitar and drums, settling on bass guitar in his late teens. He played in numerous bands around town — one called Max Hunter with his cousin Bill Bowman.

In 1980 Tim and his wife moved to Rangely, Colorado, where he became a roughneck and spent many years working at the oil field. While living in Rangely, Tim and Sue enjoyed four wheeling, days at the lake, and time with friends and family. Eventually settling in their home in Grand Junction, Colorado, before returning to Middletown, Ohio. When Sue, Tim's wife, passed in 2016 he made the move to Utah to be closer to his kids and grandchildren. If you knew Tim, you knew he could fix absolutely anything, and he regularly applied his MacGuyver skills fixing things for anyone in need. His kind and giving spirit will be dearly missed by many.

Tim Smith

Tim is survived by his two children, Lori Tatom and Derek Conn; brother Randy (Lisa) Smith; grandchildren Amanda, Zach and Makayla Tatom, Brittany, Shane and Nicholas Conn, Paris Dick; eight great-grandchildren, and niece and nephews.

Tim will be joining his loving wife of 43 years, Susan Faye Smith; parents Clara Mae and Fred Smith; nephew Andy Smith; daughter-in-law Jody Conn; granddaughter Kursten Conn and a host of beloveds gone ahead. Tim's celebration of life will be forthcoming. In lieu of flowers we ask that you enjoy a cold Busch Light with those you hold dear.

FUNERAL NOTICE

Oscar Elvis King Jr.

Feb. 4, 1937 ~ Feb. 15, 2021

Oscar King, Jr., of Craig, died Monday, Feb. 15, 2021, at St. Mary's Hospital in Grand Junction. Funeral services will be held at 2 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 27, 2021, at The Journey at First Baptist Church in Craig. Interment will take place in Orchard Mesa Cemetery in Grand Junction.

Memorial donations may be made to The St. Mary's Foundation in care of Grant Mortuary.

FUNERAL NOTICE

John Murray Stocks, Jr.

Jan. 21, 1944 ~ Feb. 13, 2021

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, Feb. 27 at 11 a.m. at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Rangely, Colorado.

OBITUARY POLICY: The Rio Blanco Herald Times chooses not to charge a publication fee for obituaries or death notices with a local connection to the county. It is our opinion that publishing obituaries is a matter of public record and part of our responsibility as a newspaper to maintain a living record of our local history. If you need to submit an obituary or death notice, please stop by the office or email editor@ht1885.com

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MKT-P0108

MURDER IN THE HEIR ...

MATT SCOGGINS PHOTO

RHS drama put on Murder in the Heir for family and friends. You can watch a full video at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qs76XGBva0w

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RBC PUBLIC HEALTH VACCINE CLINICS

Rio Blanco County has limited supply of vaccines.Community clinics are limited to Rio Blanco County residents* in the following groups:

· Individuals 65 and older
· PreK-12th grade educators and child care workers in licensed child care programs

**Proof of residency required may include utility bills, lease, photo id, pay stubs or similar documentation.*

Walk-In Clinic Dates and Times

Rangely Walk-In Clinic
******BOOSTERS & FIRST DOSES******
Thursday, Feb. 25, 3 to 5:30 p.m.
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints
125 Eagle Crest St.

Meeker Drive-Through Clinic
******BOOSTERS & FIRST DOSES******
Monday, Mar. 1, 4 to 6 p.m.
Meeker Fairgrounds, 700 Sulphur Creek Rd.

**Limited scheduled in-office appointments will be available for high-risk individuals who have mobility issues or severe conditions that limit their ability to stand in line.*

Testing Schedule:

Free COVID testing is available at Meeker and Rangely public health from 10 to 11 a.m. Drive-up clinic; vehicles will be served in order of arrival.

· Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays (no appointment needed)
· Fridays (by appointment only - call the numbers below to schedule)

RBC Department of Public Health & Environment
970-878.9520 Meeker · 970.878.9525 Rangely
Questions? Email *publichealth@rbc.us*

SKIJOR RETURNS

SOPHIA GOEDERT/CAITLIN WALKER PHOTOS

The second annual Meeker Skijor event held last Saturday and Sunday at the Rio Blanco County Fairgrounds was a success, with close to 100 teams competing from multiple states.

Final results were expected to be posted at the Meeker Skijor Facebook page this week.

New this year, the full event was streamed live. If you weren't able to attend (or would like to watch it again), you can find both videos on the Meeker Skijor Facebook page.

Check last week's edition for a full list of sponsors, and watch for a thank you in the coming weeks.

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Sports stories are posted in the HT as space allows in the following order: varsity stories, junior varsity stories, junior high stories, miscellaneous stories. Contact us at editor@ht1885.com with questions.

TIFFANY JEHOREK PHOTO

MHS freshman Ainsley Selle (24) had eight points in the Kremmling game and 13 in the Hayden game. The girls season came to an end this week due to COVID-19 quarantine require-

Lady Cowboys take two wins before season ends

By TIFFANY JEHOREK
Special to the Herald Times

MEEKER I Head coach Jamie Rogers and the lady Cowboys basketball team had a great weekend against league opponents, going 2-0 for Friday and Saturday's games.

"I am so proud of the girls rebounding and defense this week. Our post players worked hard for the past two weeks in practice boxing out and ripping down rebounds and it really paid off in both games this weekend," commented Rogers.

Friday in Kremmling the West Grand Mustangs allowed an early lead by Meeker which widened by 19 points in the third quarter. The final score was 47-24, juniors Sarah Kracht with 17 points and Makayla Wille with 11 led the team offensively. Rebounding string was Ainsley Selle with eight, Wille with seven, and Hadley Franklin with six.

Saturday the home crowd got to watch as the Cowboys took on the Hayden Tigers. Once again Kracht broke 20 points, scoring 23 of the 45 in the 45-41 victory.

The Cowboys had a great first quarter which was answered by the Tigers, but the Cowboys kept their lead.

"Sarah and Savvy's defense on top created a lot of turnovers that they converted into points," said Rogers.

Freshman Selle was the only other Cowboy to break double digit scoring, adding 13 herself and leading in rebounds with 15, just ahead of Franklin who had 14 and Wille with 10.

Joy to play volleyball for Luther College

Special to the Herald Times

MEEKER I Addie Joy, a 2020 graduate of Meeker High School, is a freshman setter for the Luther College volleyball team.

On Sept. 22, 2020, in response to directives from the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), the President's Council of the American Rivers Conference (A-R-C), voted to move the fall sports of football, women's and men's soccer, and volleyball to the spring 2021, for the safety off all involved in these sports due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The volleyball schedule will be against league opponents only (eight matches total) and will begin Saturday, Feb. 20. Luther will travel to Buena Vista University on the 20th.

Luther's complete schedule can be found on the athletics website at *https://luthernorse.com/sports/womens-volleyball/schedule?path=wvball.*

The Norse are coached by Brittany Sisk, who begins her third year at the helm of the program.

Joy is the daughter of Leif and Margie Joy of Meeker, Colorado.

Luther College, located in Decorah, Iowa, is a member of the American Rivers Conference and affiliated with the NCAA Division III. The Norse compete in 10 men's and nine women's intercollegiate sports.

Since 1922, Luther's men's and women's sports have combined to capture 248 conference championships. The men's teams have won 166 and the women's teams have won 82.

More information on the new Luther athletics website - *https://luthernorse.com.*

Panthers drop two

Special to the Herald Times

RANGELY I The Rangely Panthers had a tough schedule this week, starting with Manila. The boys were in for a fight as Manila is one of the top five 1A teams in Utah. Straight out of the gate Manila put pressure on Rangely, keeping the Panthers to 15 points in the first half compared to their 39. Rangely started to slow the game down in the second half, holding Manila to 17 points in the third and 15 in the fourth. On offense however, the Panthers were unable to overcome the tough defense ending with a score of 40-71. Gabe Polley led the offense with 10 points followed by Sydney Cole with nine.

Rangely's second game of the week was Vail Christian. Both teams came out strong in the first quarter: Rangely holding the Saints to 12 and Vail holding the Panthers to 11. In the second quarter the Saints found their rhythm at the three point line scoring 20 while the Rangely boys scored 12. Vail continued their luck in the third with 18 points while Rangely found their footing at the freethrow line with 16. Ultimately, fouls in the fourth quarter and the Saints 3's proved to be the Panthers demise with a final score of 50-64. On offense, Cole led in scoring with 18 points. He was followed by Myers who had 10 points and five assists. Cole and Myers also led on defense with 11 rebounds and five deflections between them.

The boys ended the week with a tough matchup against Vail Mountain. The Rangers towered over the younger Rangely guards, causing turnovers and deflections. Vail Mountain's strong defense mixed with Rangely having a hard time finishing in the paint resulted in just 13 points for the Panthers in the first half. Coming out of halftime the Rangely defense played hard, holding a team that had just scored 25 points in a half to just five points in the third quarter. As the fourth quarter came around the Panthers lost their rhythm. While the defense worked hard, turnovers handed the Rangers 23 points against Rangely's four. The Panther boys' bad luck at the basket and the 27 turnovers is what decided the victor in this game with a resulting score of 22-53. Cole showed up on defense again with 13 rebounds and Myers had five deflections and three rebounds.

MATT SCOGGINS PHOTO

Timothy Scoggins, junior at RHS, takes a shot at a basket.

First home dual Friday for RHS

GAYLE ZIMMERMAN PHOTO

Kobey Chism pinned Meeker's Jake Blazon in the dual last week.

Special to the Herald Times

RANGELY I The Panthers only had one dual last week, and that is when they traveled to Meeker last Thursday.

"Meeker is a tough team," said head coach JC Chumacero, "I'm not disappointed in how we wrestled, but I did feel we looked a little sluggish."

Kobey Chism pinned Jake Blazon and Zane Varner won 9-4 over Trinden Powell giving the Panthers nine points to Meeker's 66.

After the loss Chumacero said the guys "were upset and ready to hit the room hard and get ready for regionals."

This Friday the Panthers are scheduled to have their first home dual hosting Dove Creek, Nucla, and a team of Soroco and North Park combined.

"We are happy to have a home showing; these young men have been working hard and deserve to compete in front of their friends and family," commented Chumacero.

The visiting teams will wrestle first and the Panthers are scheduled to wrestle the third dual of the evening against Soroco/North Park, followed by Nucla and ending the evening with Dove Creek.

The matches begin at 3 p.m. with Nucla and Soroco, Rangely is scheduled to hit the mat at 5 p.m., but the times posted are tentative, if the previous duals wrap up faster the following will begin immediately.

CHSAA-mandated restrictions are currently in place for all high school sports.

Updates at *https://chsaanow.com/coronavirus/*

Lady Panthers win two of three

Special to the Herald Times

RANGELY | The Rangely lady Panthers basketball team played three games in three days last weekend, and winning two of the three games improved their overall record to 5-4 on the season and 3-0 in Western Slope Northern League play. The league win against the Saints from Vail Christian kept the Panthers in a tie with the Soroco Rams for first place in the league.

The first game of the weekend came on Thursday in Manila, Utah, where the Panthers corralled the Mustangs in a non-league match-up. The lady Panthers came out in a fast-paced offense accompanied by stifling defense to take a halftime lead of 27-3. Junior Adelynn Halcomb led all Panthers in the first half, scoring eight points, followed by freshman Ryann Mergelman who scored six points. The Panthers only surrendered three total points in the first half. All three points for the Mustangs came as free-throws.

The second-half defense by the Panthers proved to be as great as the first half. The Panthers did not surrender any points in the third quarter until the one-minute mark left when the Mustangs scored four points. At the end of the third quarter, the Panthers led 39-7. The fourth quarter commenced with the Lady Panthers non-starters completing the game in mop-up duty fashion. The game's final score ended up 43-23 in favor of the Panthers and their fourth win on the season.

On Friday, the Panthers hosted the Vail Christian Saints in a match-up of unbeaten Western Slope North league teams. In an earlier meeting in January, the Saints defeated the Panthers by three points in the non-league game. The Panthers were hungry for the rematch, knowing that it would separate them in league play.

The Panthers found themselves down 18-10 at the end of the first half. They struggled to convert on their field goal attempts, and hot shooting for the Saints gave the Saints the first-half advantage. Eager to change the predicted outcome of many, the Panthers buttoned up their defense and intensely crashed the boards to bring the third-quarter score to 30-20 in favor of the Saints. Leading the Panthers in scoring during the first three quarters was freshman Ryann Mergelman who accrued 13 points. Next for the Panthers was junior Mary Scoggins with five points.

As the fourth quarter commenced, the Panthers knew they would have to continue to drive to the paint, rebound with fire, and shut down the Saints' outside shooting to mount a comeback and win the game. As the Panthers buttoned down their defense, senior Dixie Rhea stepped up her great defense and shut down the Saints leading scorer, who averages 15 points a game for the Saints. Rhea cut the average in half and only allowed seven points all night. Mary Scoggins was tasked with guarding the Saints leading scorer, who averaged 21 points a game, and Scoggins held her to 14 points.

Mergelman, Scoggins, and Halcomb stepped up their scoring for the Panthers as they played an integral role in the Lady Panther's 18 point quarter. Mergelman led all Panthers in the quarter with nine points, Scoggins added five, Halcomb with two, and freshmen Cantrell and Dembowski each scored one point. With the 18 points by the Panthers and the Saints eight points, the game ended in a tie-in regulation that brought on four more minutes of overtime to decide the game's outcome.

In overtime, the Panthers scored eight points compared to the three by the Saints and secured the win in the game with a final score of 46-41. Scoring leaders for the Panthers were Mergelman with 23 points, Scoggins with nine points, and Halcomb with four points. The other scorers in the game were Cantrell with three, Dembowski with three, Rhea and Maya Mercado, each added two points for the 46 total points for Panthers. With the win, the Panthers moved ahead of the Saints with a 3-0 mark in league play to stay in a tie for first place in league with Soroco.

The Western Slope League has been split into a northern division and a southern division, with teams playing each other once in their division. To determine the Western Slope League Champion, the two teams that finish in first place in their division will play each other and the two teams who finish second and so on. Teams do match-up in cross-division play, but the game does not count towards their league standings. This was the case in the last game of the weekend for the Panthers as they hosted the Paonia Eagles. The Eagles came away with a 38-25 victory over the Panthers. Leading the Panthers in scoring was Halcomb with 11 points, followed by Mergelman with five, sophomore Kyrah Phelps scored four, Rhea and Dembowski each scored two.

The Panthers will play three games this week for five days as two of the games are essential league games coming against West Grand and Soroco. Three of the remaining four games are all league games. They will determine the final seatings for the league standings and thus adding into the CHSAA 24-team state tournament bracket that is chosen on a set of ranking systems and evaluates the team's seasons across the state to have the best representatives playing for the 2021 state title.

MATT SCOGGINS PHOTO

RHS junior Adelynn Halcomb

Cowboys win two, lose one

By TIFFANY JEHOREK
Special to the Herald Times

MEEKER | The Cowboys have a full schedule this week as they move into the final games of the regular season. They are 3-0 for league play and 6-2 overall.

Friday in Kremmling the team came out fast and strong, up ten points by the end of the first quarter, 13-3, and stretching that further by the half, 34-19, final score was 53-41.

Three Cowboys put up some big points, Liam Deming and Spud White, each with 16 and Ryan Phelan with 11. Phelan also led the team defensively with 11 defensive rebounds, 13 total, and five steals.

The Cowboys came out just as strong against the Tigers on Saturday, each quarter stretching the lead further for a final score of 67-41. White was top scorer with 12 points, and both Zagar Brown and Braydon Garcia had 11. Rebounding, Phelan ten, White nine, and Deming seven.

This week the team has games Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday.

Tuesday's game was a non-league game against the 3A Moffat County Bulldogs. At the half the Bulldogs had a 10 point lead, but by the end of regulation the teams were tied 48 all. In single overtime play the Cowboys were outscored 11-2 and unable to pull off the win, final score 59-50.

At this point in the season White is leading the team with 110 total points, this doesn't include any points from Moffat County as those stats have yet to be entered. White is leading with 28 offensive rebounds and Phelan with 52 defensive rebounds.

Friday's game against North Park will be boys varsity beginning at 5 p.m. Saturday the JV begins at 1 p.m., and boys varsity starts at 5:30 p.m..

TIFFANY JEHOREK PHOTO

Liam Deming, pictured, and Sbud White had 16 points each against Kremmling. Deming added seven more agains the Tigers, and White is leading the team in season points with 110.

Two weeks to regionals

By TIFFANY JEHOREK
Special to the Herald Times

MEEKER | Cowboys wrapped up their final duals of the varsity regular season on Saturday in Palisade after wrestling both Thursday and Friday nights at home.

The season was to consist of 20 regular season duals before entering the postseason. The Meeker Cowboys were fortunate that they were able to secure 20 duals with only a few of the team members missing here and there due to COVID related absences. The team regularly filled 13 of the 14 slots which made them competitive and sought after for competition. There are teams in the league that have only wrestled five to six duals for the year so far.

"The kids did really good this week," commented head coach JC Watt.

TIFFANY JEHOREK PHOTO

Meeker's Tyson Portwood came away with wins last week that will be used for seeding at regionals.

Opening up the week with the county rival Rangely, the Cowboys won 66-9. Pinning for the Cowboys was Colby Clatterbaugh at 190 lbs who opened the evening, Judd Harvey (220), Tanner Musser (285), Trae Kennedy (126), Connor Blunt (145), Brendan Clatterbaugh (170), and Dax Sheridan (182). In exhibition Tyson Portwood (145) and Kelton Turner (170) also came away with wins for the evening.

Friday Meeker hosted its final dual at home until regionals. Traveling to Meeker was Hotchkiss, Glenwood Springs and Basalt as a combined team, and Steamboat Springs. The Cowboys added three "W's" to their record.

The scores were 54-16 over Hotchkiss, 56-12 over Glenwood Springs/Basalt, and 60-24 over Steamboat Springs. Adding wins to their records were Owen Hanneman (120), Kennedy, Portwood, and B. Clatterbaugh. Winning all the matches they wrestled for the evening were Hanneman, Blunt, Trinden Powell (152), Turner, Sheridan, C. Clatterbaugh, Harvey, and Musser.

Saturday the team wrapped up their final season in Palisade, opening first to Palisade and winning 43-13, the team moved onto Hayden winning 49-24 and finally closing with the second win of the season against the Moffat County Bulldogs 43-31.

Kennedy, Portwood, Blunt and Powell all added wins to their final regular season record that will be used for seeding of the regional tournament.

Turner, B. Clatterbaugh, Sheridan, C. Clatterbaugh, Harvey and Musser all swept their opponents.

The following Cowboys are ranked in class 2A, Ty Goedert at 113 lbs in third, Kennedy at 120 lbs (7), Blunt at 145 (9), Turner 160 (4), B. Blatterbaugh 170 (9), Sheridan 182 (6), C. Clatterbaugh 195 (2), and Musser 285 (9).

There were some significant opponents for the Cowboys this past weekend, at 132 pounds Portwood pinned Kyler Campbell who is ranked 13 at 138 pounds, Blunt won 6-0 over Wyatt Murphy from Hayden who is ranked two spots below him at 11, and Musser pinned Byron Mackay from Rangely, ranked one spot above him at eight.

Rangley and Hayden were the only teams in Meeker's class that they wrestled this weekend. Moffat County and Basalt are each in class 3A, Kennedy pinned Brody Wiser who is ranked fifth at 120 pounds, Blunt won by decision over Ryan Duzik who sits in 12th, Turner won 9-4 over Pepper Rhyne who is ranked fifth, and C. Clatterbaugh over Ruben Samuleson who is ranked third at 195.

"We have two weeks to get ready for regionals," commented Watt, "the kids are in good shape and we will be ready and should have a full and healthy team."

"The kids have had a lot more discipline this year and it is showing," wrapped up Watt.

Regionals, hosted in Meeker on March 5 and 6, will be a two day event, but the bottom seven weights will wrestle their entire tournament day one and then day two the top seven weights will wrestle theirs.

Stay tuned for more information.

The JV final dual for the season Friday has been canceled.

THE STRIP #43

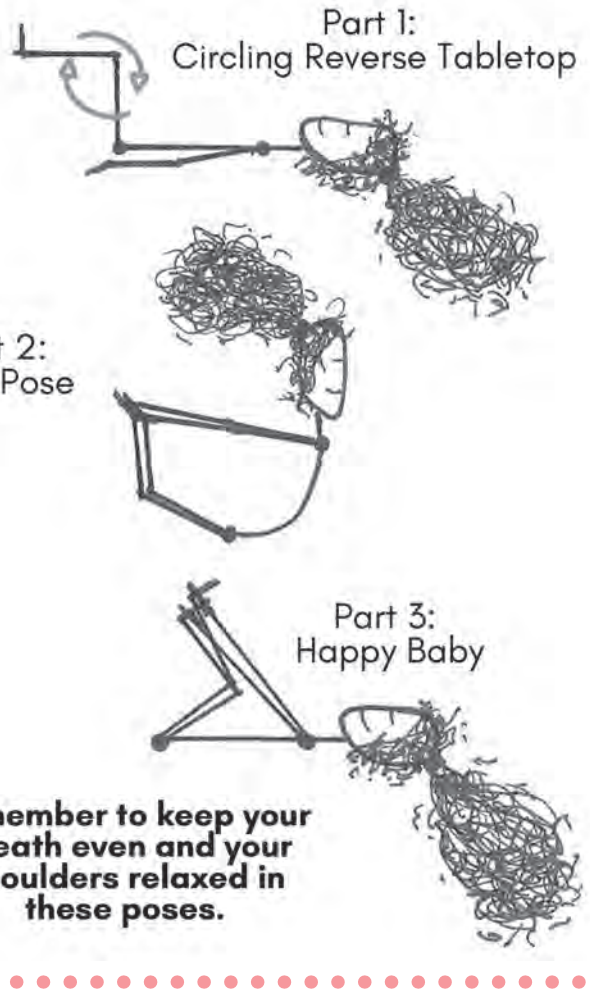
THE STRIP from SLEEPY CAT YOGI SHOP — For Lower Back Strength & Space: Parts 1-3

SLEEPYCATYOGISHOP.COM

First Steps To Every Pose

1. Lengthen through the crown of your head, tucking your chin in just a smidgen to straighten out your cervical spine; stand, sit, or lay tall.
2. Pull your belly button up and then back towards your spine to engage your core and lift your pelvic floor.
3. Stay relaxed through your shoulders and maintain steady/natural inhales and exhales.

Using the guides from the last three week's papers to insure you have proper alignment, you can now flow through this full series.



Remember to keep your breath even and your shoulders relaxed in these poses.

Five MHS girls competing on Moffat County Bulldogs swim team; the team practices in Meeker at the Rec Center

COURTESY PHOTO

Meeker High School swimmers on the Moffat County High School swim team include Kate Lockwood, Nora Gianinetti, Hailey Knowles, Vivian Brown and Wagner Brown. The MCHS swim team practices at the Meeker Rec Center.

Special to the Herald Times

MEEKER I The Glenwood Springs Demon Invite brought many positive results Thursday, Feb. 18, for the Moffat County High School Bulldog swimmers in both individual races and relays. The lady Bulldogs competed in 30 events and recorded impressive time cuts in 26 of those events.

MCHS's varsity relay team of Hailey Knowles, Ellina Jones, Kelsey McDiffett, and Alexa Neton took third in the 200-yard freestyle and sixth in the 200 medley and the 400 free relay, with respective times of 1:54.64, 2:06.99, and 4:16.17.

"The focus of this meet was our relays so most of the girls swam in three relays and one individual event. Last year these times would have qualified us for state, but this year we have to be in the top 20 to go. Right now we have all three relays in the top 20," stated head coach Melany Neton.

The B relay team Tiana Nichols, Sarah Johnson, Kate Lockwood and Megan Neton took eighth in the 200-free relay 2:07.50, tenth in 400 freestyle relay with 4:55.64 and tenth in the 200 medley relay, 2:29.11.

The C relay team Cristiann Reyes, Ana Iglesias, Allison Jacobson and Alexei Reyes finished 11 in the 200 freestyle relay with a time of 2:39.54.

In individual events, Alexa Neton cut five seconds in her 200 Free for a time of 2:30.70, placing 10th.

Seven Bulldog swimmers, Wagner Brown, Vivian Brown, Ana Iglesias, Alexei Reyes, Cristiann Reyes, Megan Neton and Kate Lockwood, competed in the 50 free and made excellent time cuts.

Kelsey McDiffett placed seventh in the 100 breaststroke, 1:19.27. Johnson dropped 4.49 seconds in her breaststroke for a time of 1:34.77.

In the 100 backstroke, time cut of four seconds Ellina Jones placed seventh, 1:12.01. Nichols dropped 4.01 seconds for a new best of 1:32.05. Competing for the first time in the backstroke were Vivian and Wagner Brown, 1:34.54 and 1:36.88.

Knowles placed eighth in the 100 fly, 1:13.26.

For the 100 freestyle, Cristiann Reyes and Alexei Reyes each had more than six second time cuts in the 100 freestyle. Wagner Brown placed 18th with a time of 1:16.11, Jacobson a 1:20.56, Vivian Brown a 1:21.27, and Ana Iglesias 1:37.66.

"It was a great meet with lots of personal best times for the whole team. It's a great group and fun getting to know the Moffat County swimmers. Thanks to coach and all of our teammates," stated Vivian Brown, freshman from Meeker High School.

The team has a week to prepare and make adjustments for their next meet in Montrose on Feb. 27.

OPINION: KAYE'S CORNER

A winter walk in Meeker

By KAYE SULLIVAN
Special to the Herald Times

MEEKER I If you like to exercise with frequent walks, I have a new opportunity to share with you. It's even indoors, warm, and does not require a user fee.

Head over to the new Meeker High School and get your exercise on the track above the gym. From Feb. 16 – April 29, the track is available on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 8:30-9:30 a.m. Registration is not required. A gym supervisor will be on hand, but you can walk at your own pace as much or little as you wish.

Please note that this program is limited to adults 18 and older. Masks are required at the school at all times, including walking. To access the gym, park in the guest parking lot and enter through the main front door. The front office can give you directions and get you logged in.

A minimum of four people must show up by 8:45 or the program will be closed for that day. With COVID restrictions and schedules changing frequently, you can check current accessibility by contacting the front desk at the Rec Center, 970-878-3403.

This is a gem of a resource to use during our harsh and changing winter conditions. I made my first visit last week and it is a cheerful, well lit, friendly place and you'll find many generations out there on the track together. I guess you joggers could run too, although I just saw walkers.

If you're habilitating from injury or surgery, use a cane or walker, or just need a very level surface to walk on, this is a perfect choice. An elevator is available as an alternative to the steps plus there is convenient handicapped parking in front of the school.

The track is flat, safe, and offers a splendid view of the new gym floor. You can dream about basketball, wrestling, volleyball and other sports, current and past, as you walk. There are benches and chairs right outside the track to put on your walking footwear, leave your winter coat, or take a breather.

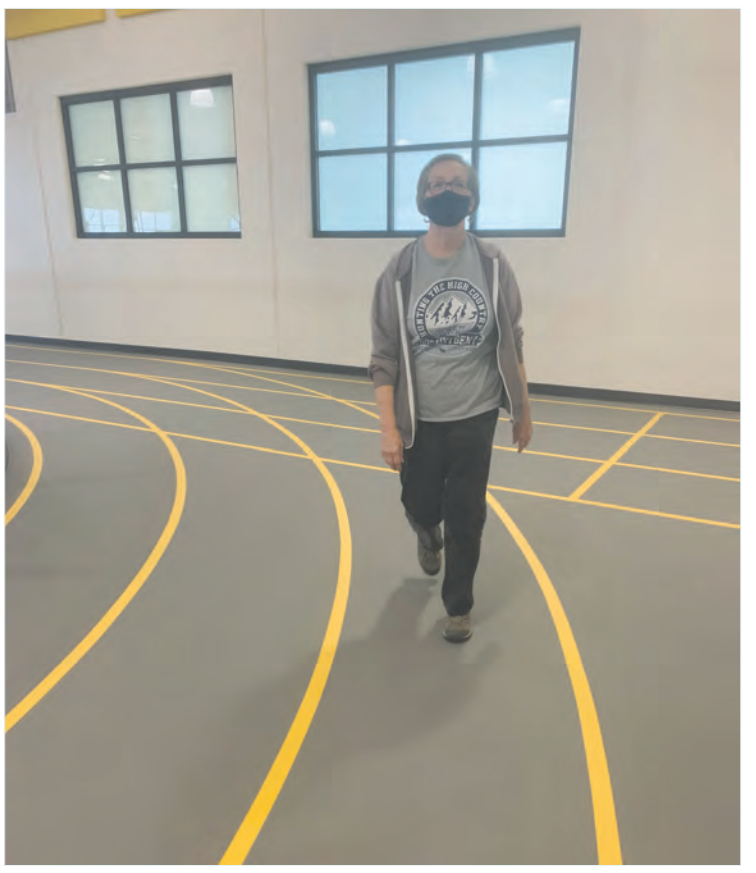
Kaye Sullivan

Thanks to collaboration between the high school and Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan (ERBM) Recreation and Park District this school resource used by our young athletes is also available to the public. ERBM staffers Dylan Mobley and Jay Edwards oversee this program and monitor the track during public use.

We owe both organizations and the school design team a debt of gratitude for planning and implementing public access while maintaining security and now COVID precautions as part of the new school. Shared public resources are just awesome to me.

On behalf of the high school and ERBM who encourage more walkers, I invite you to use this resource if you seek an indoors, dry walking space. Spring may be just around the corner, but I can't wait for warm weather or dry conditions to get in some exercise. Hope to see you there.

Thanks to Amy Chinn, Dylan Mobley, and Jay Edwards for their contributions to this article.



KAYE SULLIVAN PHOTO

Walkers and joggers of all ages can make use of the new raised indoor track at Meeker High School for a safe, indoor exercise option during inclement weather.

SUDOKU

	8				3		2	
		5		1			7	
			8	2			1	
				4	6	1		
4								8
		9	3	7				
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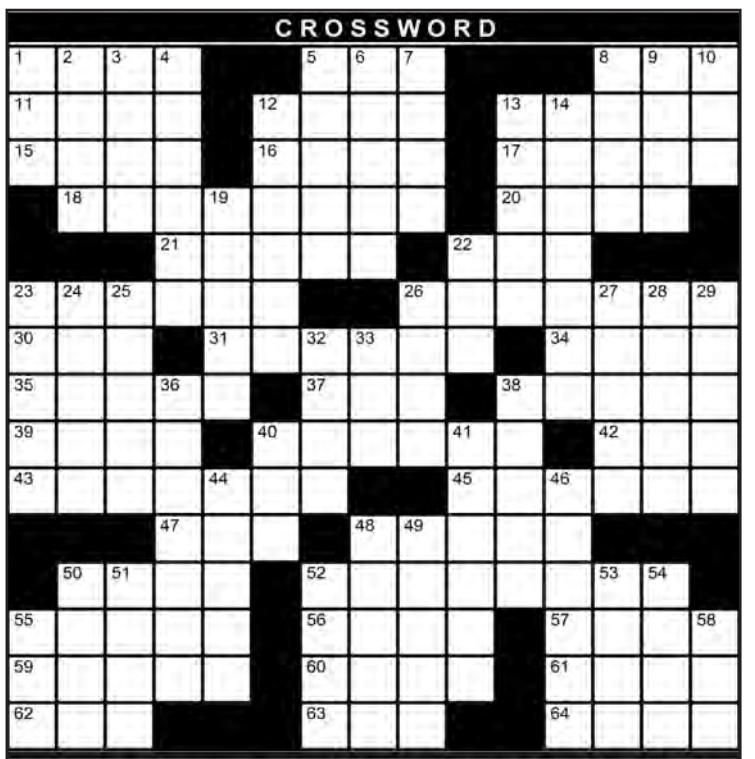
Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

CROSSWORD



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THEME: MARCH MADNESS

ACROSS
1. Theories
5. T in Greek
8. Tarzan's mom, e.g.
11. Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, e.g.
12. Ingredient in talcum powder
13. Spectator
15. 5,280 feet
16. Tiny river
17. Note taker
18. *Last NCAA basketball winner
20. Any day now
21. Antiquarian's concern, pl.
22. Diana Ross and Michael Jackson movie, with The
23. Saw a nightmare
26. Caribbean rattles
30. Witch's spell
31. Flocked-to destinations
34. Goo or slime
35. Plural of ostium
37. Leo mo.
38. Eurasian goat-like antelope
39. Showing signs of use
40. "Yo, ____!"
42. *Nothing but it
43. Wrap a baby
45. *_____-elimination
47. Outrage
48. Fraternity K
50. One of the Bridges
52. *_____ 1 schools only
55. ____less but pennywise
56. Decanter
57. In a frenzy
59. Threesome
60. Turkish monetary unit, plural
61. Dumpy establishment
62. Common conjunction
63. New York time
64. Male deer

DOWN
1. Singular of #1 Across
2. Rikers Island weapon
3. Burkina Faso neighbor
4. Himalayan mountaineer
5. Tarnish
6. "____ ____ fair in love and war"
7. *School with most NCAA basketball titles
8. Choir member
9. Hammer part
10. Blunder
12. Sad, to mademoiselle
13. Radio studio sign
14. *Mid-major school that's become major powerhouse
19. Kind of ray
22. Is no longer
23. Arabian sailing vessels
24. Restart from seed
25. Uncredited actor
26. The Wise Men
27. Acting as a prompter
28. Snow impression
29. Eric Heiden's "shoe"
32. *Oklahoma State's super freshman ____ Cunningham
33. Mixed breed puppy
36. *2021 NCAA Tournament location
38. What Edward Scissorhands does
40. Stout relative
41. Dream big
44. Ancient Celtic priest
46. Water nymphs
48. Fuzzy fruit, pl.
49. Deflect
50. Sanders' campaign slogan "Feel the ____"
51. "National Velvet" author Bagnold
52. Expunge
53. Fail to mention
54. Scotia preceder
55. School-related org.
58. Liquor store pony

Rio Blanco Herald Times Correction Policy

While we strive for accuracy in all our reporting, it is an inescapable fact that mistakes will occur. When a mistake is brought to our attention, it will be addressed in one of three ways, depending on the nature of the error.

Clarification: We didn't say anything untrue, but we didn't state things clearly enough to avoid confusion or new information has come to light.

Correction: We made a factual error. Here's what we should have said.

Retraction: The story is wrong in its entirety.

Corrections are clearly labeled as such, and are published as soon as possible following notification of an error.

To submit a correction, call 970-878-4017 or email *editor@ht1885.com*.

DAYS GONE BY

The Meeker Herald
125 years ago

■ A deadly explosion in the Vulcan mine in New Castle was reported after an explosion occurred. It is said that 50 men are reported dead so far.

■ It is suspected that Meeker will endure a building boom this summer.

■ This past week the weather has stayed consistent with warm days and cold nights.

The Meeker Herald
100 years ago

■ The weather seemed to be very changeable according to last week's weather patterns.

■ In observance of Washington's birthday, the Masonic bodies of Meeker will hold a gathering at their hall.

■ The Uintah basin and the Rangely section are prospects for big oil development according to the *Grand Junction Sentinel.*

■ It is reported that hay is going for $6 per ton in Craig.

The Meeker Herald
50 years ago

■ John and Margaret Huffman have opened a new business called The Ponderosa. The business will include shoe repair work, selling of tack, leather goods and other goodies.

■ Sheep Producers Day will be held at Kilowatt Korner on the 26th after a new approach made by CSU. In their goal to reach more livestock producers, Livestock Days will be held at different locations around the state.

■ Meeker School Board made the decision to make their meetings open to all interested parents after a group of parents were curious about the workings of the board.

The Meeker Herald
25 years ago

■ At the recent Meeker School District Accountability Committee meeting, the discussion over a four day school week versus a five day week continued. With a presentation by Elementary School Principal Bill Ertmer on a split calendar, with some months five day and some four day.

■ Starting Feb. 26 truck loads of coal will be traveling through Meeker on Market St. every day. 80 truckloads will be traveling from Colowyo to Rangely and will generate a lot of new jobs for truck drivers, loader operation, and other related jobs.

Rangely Times
50 years ago

■ A model site for an oil shale was selected in Douglas Creek. This site would produce a maximum of 200,000 barrels a day by the fifth year of operation. This site is said to be in operation for 68 years if all goes according to plan.

■ The president of Rangely College, Dr. John Roberts, submitted his resignation to the board. Until that time he requested an immediate leave of absence. After an executive session Dr. Kenneth Bailey was named the acting President until a replacement is found.

■ After an executive committee meeting, Rangely College may become a base for satellite vocational schools for other towns in the area. Representatives in Meeker and Craig will come up with courses they would like to see offered that fit the students interests.

Rangely Times
25 years ago

■ In a meeting of the Rangely area fire protection district board, the board members discussed the payout for the secretarial position Tricia Gilbert held. After going into a brief executive session, the meeting was made public by Gilbert's request. The rest of the meeting was spent discussing what to pay Gilbert in regards to sick leave and attorney fees, with some public comments.

■ The Rio Blanco County Commissioners discussed TV needs, an aviation fuel contract, mineral lease dollars, and a nursing program at their regular meeting on the 20th.

■ After a car break-in, Rio Blanco County Crimestoppers are seeking information on the crime from anyone with information. The break-in occurred on the CNCC campus.

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We're going to a sugarhouse...

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...to have pancakes with maple syrup.

Kids: color stuff in!

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Maple-Sugaring Time

When winter is ending
and snow is disappearing;
when spring is coming,
before buds are appearing;
When the temperatures rise
to warm the day;
when later they fall
to freeze the night;
When the sap starts to
flow from the maple trees;
when farmers tap the trees
to collect it in buckets;
When the sap is poured
into tanks on sleds;
when a horse team pulls it
to the sugarhouse;
When the sugarhouse is opened
and roaring fires are built;
when the sap is boiled, skimmed
filtered and canned;
When the first syrup is poured
sweet and warm over pancakes...

It's maple-sugaring time!

steel
graded
wood
country
sugarhouses
horses
buckets
foam
tank
syrup
Is the syrup up here?
No, go away!
Oh, look at the sap dripping into the bucket.
Large farms today may use plastic tubing to deliver the sap from the trees directly to the sugarhouse.
maple sugar!
Now!
(Farmers – traditional)

Read the clues to fill in the puzzle with how a farm may do its maple sugaring.

1. _____ are built in groves for storing equipment and boiling sap
2. teams of _____ are harnessed to pull sleds to gather the sap
3. holes drilled in trees, spouts placed, tin _____ catch sap
4. sap gathered into a _____ on horse-drawn sled, pulled to camp
5. sap boiled in shallow, rectangular stainless _____ pans
6. a roaring _____ fire is kept going in firebox under pans
7. sap filtered, temperature checked, amount of sugar in sap measured, _____ carrying dirt skimmed off the top
8. sap flows through pans as it thickens, temperature checked, filtered, _____ "A" or "B" and canned
9. _____ used on pancakes, in beans, on meats
10. family uses, sells on farms, trucks deliver around the _____

First People To Develop the Process For Maple-Sugaring

Native Americans were the first to discover and process the sweet gift of the trees. They used small birch bark parts to catch the maple tree sap. **To learn more about what they did to make this wonderful syrup, read the clues and fill in the puzzle:**

1. the people _____ in maple groves
2. held ceremonies and _____ to celebrate the sap harvest and coming of spring
3. peeled loose birch _____ to make pans; sliced trees and placed pans to catch sap
4. gathered sap in containers, _____ it to sugar camp
5. boiled it in hollowed-out _____
6. dropped hot _____ into sap to boil it
7. skimmed scum and _____ from the top
8. kept boiling until almost _____ or grainy so it would keep a long time
9. ate dried yellow _____ + corn meal + beans
10. used to sweeten, satisfy _____; sometimes sold to local markets or to fur-trapping companies

Back Then!
(Native Americans)

dances
hunger
logs
dirt
bark
stones
sugar
dry
carried
camped

Maple syrup, Dude?
Not yet!
No!
Is the syrup here?

Can you find and circle at least 8 words that end with the suffix "–ing"? Notice that some are action words showing "action that was happening and is still happening" and that others describe things: "roaring fire".

We are the "keys" to the future of the maple trees. We ripen in late summer. We twirl through the air on a soft breeze!

Who are they?

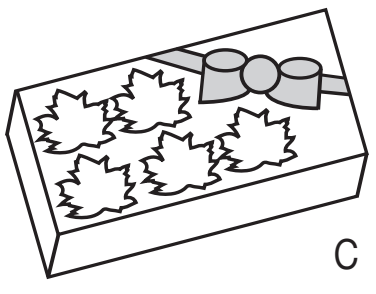
They are winged seeds. They will land and grow into new maple trees.

Spring Math

cider + doughnuts + maple syrup on clean snow = Sugar-On-Snow Party!

Sweet Maple Treats!

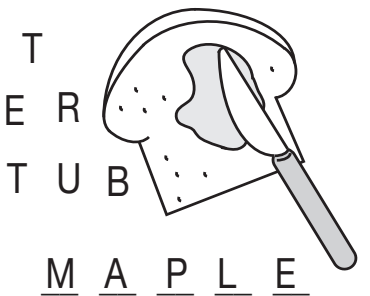
There are only two countries in the world that produce maple syrup. Canada produces the most maple syrup in the world...about 80%! States in the northeastern part of the United States are famous for their delicious maple syrup. **Unscramble the letters to name four delicious maple sugar products.**



N Y A D C

M A P L E

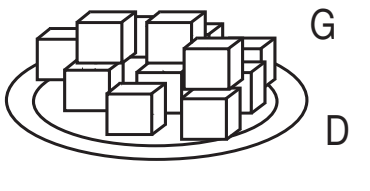
_ _ _ _ _



T E R T U B

M A P L E

_ _ _ _ _ _



E F U G D

M A P L E

_ _ _ _ _

U R S P Y

M A P L E

_ _ _ _ _

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PUBLIC NOTICES

• BID REQUESTS •

2021 RIO BLANCO COUNTY
CHIP SEAL PROJECT
REQUEST FOR BID

PROJECT NAME, LOCATION AND GENERAL SCOPE OF WORK
2021 Rio Blanco County Chip Seal Project. Work consists of seal coating and fog coating approximately 23.46 miles of County Roads in the Meeker District. Be aware there may be other County and/or State projects in the area that may affect material transport routes and/or travel delays.

CONTRACT DOCUMENTS
Contract Documents shall be available on-line at **www.govbids.com/scri pts/co1/public/home1.asp** , or on the county's website at **www.rbc.us** on the Bid Postings page, or at the Rio Blanco County Road and Bridge Dept. 570 2 nd Street, Meeker, Colorado 81641 on February 25, 2021.

VENDOR QUALIFICATIONS
Vendors must be listed on the most current CDOT Pre-qualified Contractor Listing.

WORK SCHEDULE
This project shall start June 1, 2021 and complete by June 25, 2021, pending delays due to adverse conditions. Contractor shall submit a firm work schedule with bid.

PROJECT SUPERINTENDENT AND QUESTIONS
Van Pilaud, County Engineer, (970) 878-9590, Fax (970) 878-3396. Mailing address: Rio Blanco County Road and Bridge Dept., 570 Second Street, Meeker, CO 81641.
All Vendors must examine the sites and become familiar with all site conditions. Any questions regarding this project are to be directed in writing to Van Pilaud before March 16, 2021 at noon at the above address or fax number.

MANDATORY PRE-BID MEETING
Vendors must attend mandatory pre-bid meeting: March 11, 2021 at 11:00 A.M. at the Rio Blanco County Road & Bridge Dept., 570 Second Street, Meeker.

BID SUBMITTALS
Bids shall have Vendor's name and address and **"SEALED BID-2021 CHIP SEAL PROJECT"** written on the sealed envelope. All required documents shall be included with the bid or it shall be rejected.
Each bid must include a certified check or cashier's check in the amount of not less than five percent (5%) of the total bid, made payable to Rio Blanco County, or by a bid bond in like amount executed by a surety company.
Mailed bids are due no later than 4:00 P.M. on Wednesday, March 17, 2021. Do not depend on overnight delivery. Mailing Address: RBC Commissioners, P.O. Box 599, Attn: Lori Zentmeyer, Meeker, CO 81641.
Hand delivered bids will be accepted from 8:00 A.M. to 10:45 A.M. on March 18, 2021. Hand-delivery address: Rio Blanco County Commissioners, 555 Main St., 3 rd Floor, Meeker, CO.

BID OPENING
Bids shall be opened and read in public at 11:15 A.M. on March 18, 2021 at the Rio Blanco County Courthouse, 555 Main Street, 3 rd Floor Board Room, Meeker, CO . Bids submitted after 10:45 A.M. will be returned not opened. Bids submitted and opened shall not be withdrawn for 30 days thereafter.

BID PREFERENCE
C.R.S. 8-19-101, *et.seq,* shall be observed on all construction contracts on public projects. The law states that when a construction contract for a public project is to be awarded to a bidder, a resident bidder shall be allowed preference against a nonresident bidder from another state equal to the preference given or required by the state in which the nonresident bidder is a resident.

BID AWARD
The Rio Blanco County Board of County Commissioners reserve the right to reject any or all bids; to waive any informalities in bids; and to accept the bid that, in the opinion of the Board, is in the best interest of the County of Rio Blanco, State of Colorado.

TITLE VI COMMITMENT
Rio Blanco County, in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252, 42 US.C. SS 2000d to 2000d-4) and the Regulations, hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, disadvantaged business enterprises will be afforded full and fair opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award.
RIO BLANCO COUNTY, COLORADO
Dated: February 25, 20201
By: Gary Moyer, Chairman
Published: February 25 and March 4, 2021
Rio Blanco Herald Times

Lower White River Pest Control District
Bid Request
Aerial Spray
The Lower White River Pest Control District is accepting bid proposals for commercial equipped applicators to spray insecticides/larvicide on private land located within the District. Bids will be opened by the Board of County Commissioners on Tuesday, March 16, 2021, County Annex, 17497 State Hwy 64, Rangely, Colorado at 10:30 am. For bid specifications and time line details contact Wade Cox at 970-462-5835 for bid packets. If mailed, bid packets are due to the Board of Commissioners, Box 599, Meeker, CO 81641 no later than Friday, March 12, 2021, at 4:00 p.m. If hand delivered the day of the bid opening (March 16th), the bids must be received no later than 10:15 am by the Board of County Commissioners, County Annex, 17497 State Hwy 64, Rangely, CO. Bid packets must be clearly marked **Aerial Spray AND Lower White River Pest Control District** on the outside of the bid packet.
Published: February 25 and March 4, 2021
Rio Blanco Herald Times

Lower White River Pest Control District
Bid Request
Commercial Equipped Applicator
The Lower White River Pest Control District is accepting bid proposals for commercial equipped applicators to spray herbicides on private land located within the District. Bids will be opened by the Board of County Commissioners on Tuesday, March 16, 2021, County Annex, 17497 State Hwy 64, Rangely, Colorado at 10:30am. For bid specifications and time line details contact Wade Cox at 970-462-5835 for bid packets. If mailed, bid packets are due to the Board of Commissioners, Box 599, Meeker, CO 81641 no later than Friday, March 12, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. If hand delivered the day of the bid opening (March 16th), the bids must be received no later than 10:15 am by the Board of County Commissioners, County Annex, 17497 State Hwy 64, Rangely, CO. Bid packets must be clearly marked **Herbicide Spray AND Lower White River Pest Control District** on the outside of the bid packet.
Published: February 25 and March 4, 2021
Rio Blanco Herald Times

PUBLIC NOTICE
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS - PHOTOGRAPHER
The EASTERN RIO BLANCO METROPOLITAN RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT, a political subdivision of the State of Colorado, is soliciting proposals from qualified photographers to take team/individual pictures for various youth sports on specified picture days.
ERBM will coordinate with the photographer to determine picture day. The photographer will use their own equipment to take pictures, will create their own envelopes with packages and pricing, will be responsible for collecting the money and will be responsible for distributing pictures to the participants. Photographers will retain all revenue. Interested parties are required to submit an organized letter which contains:
For more information contact Shelly Rogers, Recreation Manager, at shelly@erbmrec.com or 970-878-7415. **Proposals must be received by the District before 5p.m. on March 19, 2021 at the Meeker Recreation Center, 101 Ute Road, Meeker, CO 81641.**
EASTERN RIO BLANCO METROPOLITAN RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT
By: Sean VonRoenn
Sean VonRoenn, Executive Director
Published: February 25, 2021
Rio Blanco Herald Times

BID REQUEST
Piceance Weed and Pest District
Aerial Spraying and Hand Spraying of Pesticides
The Piceance Weed and Pest District is soliciting bids for pesticide aerial spraying and pesticide hand spraying. Bid packets are available by calling Chris Uphoff at 970-379-9244 or email tcupoff@msn.com. Mailed bids are due to the Board of County Commissioners, P.O. Box 599, Meeker, CO, 81641 no later 4:00 p.m. on March 10th, 2021. If hand delivered, the bids are due no later than 1:30 p.m on March 11, 2021 to the County Commissioners, Rio Blanco County Historical Courthouse, 555 Main Street, 3rd Floor, BOCC Room, Meeker, CO. The bids will be opened on March 11, 2021 at 2 p.m. All bids must be clearly marked Piceance Weed and Pest Bid with "Pesticide Aerial Spraying or Pesticide Hand Spraying" on the outside of the bid.
Published: February 25 and March 4, 2021
Rio Blanco Herald Times

• MISCELLANEOUS NOTICES •

County Court, Rio Blanco County, Colorado, Corey Maxwell Russell FOR A CHANGE OF NAME TO: Maxwell Zollie
PUBLIC NOTICE OF PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME
Public Notice is given on February 11, 2021 that a Petition for a Change of Name of an Adult has been filed with the Rio Blanco County Court.
The petition requests that the name of Corey Maxwell Russell be changed to Maxwell Zollie.
By: Joan Gibson
Clerk of Court
Published: February 25, March 4 and 11, 2021
Rio Blanco Herald Times

DISTRICT COURT, RIO BLANCO COUNTY, COLORADO
Court Address: Rio Blanco County Courthouse
455 Main Street, P.O. Box 1150
Meeker, CO 81641
(970)878-5622
(970)878-4295
IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION FOR ORGANIZATION OF THE RIO BLANCO WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT
Case Number: 1990CV026
Attorneys for: Rio Blanco Water Conservancy Dist.
Name: Edward B. Olszewski, Esq.
Address: Olszewski, Massih & Maurer, P.C.
1204 Grand Avenue, P.O. Box 916, Glenwood Springs, CO 81602
Phone #: (970) 928-9100
Fax #: 970) 928-9600
E-mail: ed@ommpc.com
Atty. Reg. #: 24723
PUBLIC NOTICE
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:
PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Motion has been filed in the above referenced action requesting the appointment of Directors C and D to the Board of Directors of Rio Blanco Water Conservancy District. Said Petition requests the appointment of Directors for four-year terms to expire on or about May 1, 2025.
The Court will hear said Motion on the 20th day of April, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. in the District Court, Rio Blanco County Courthouse, Meeker, Colorado. All persons desiring to attend may do so by calling into the Court at (970) 928-3095 or (970) 878-5622. Applications for appointment as Directors will be accepted by the District Court until March 20, 2021. Applications and resumes may be sent to the District Court of Rio Blanco County, Colorado, at 455 Main Street, Meeker, CO 81641, with copies submitted to the Rio Blanco Water Conservancy District in care of Edward B. Olszewski, Esq., Olszewski, Massih & Maurer, P.C., P.O. Box 916, Glenwood Springs, CO 81602, on or before March 20, 2021. Applicants must have resided within the Rio Blanco District for a period of one year, and shall be the owner of real property within the Rio Blanco Water Conservancy District, and shall be knowledgeable in water matters with a background reflecting the agricultural, municipal, industrial, or other interests in the beneficial use of water within the Rio Blanco Water Conservancy District. Further information may be obtained from the District's counsel, Edward B. Olszewski, at (970) 928-9100.
/s/ Edward B. Olszewski
Edward B. Olszewski, Esq.
Olszewski, Massih & Maurer, P.C.
P.O. Box 916
Glenwood Springs, CO 81602
Published: February 25, 2021
Rio Blanco Herald Times

Excomm, LLC proposes the construction of a 109-ft AGL monopole communication tower to replace an existing 75-ft AGL guyed tower located at County Road 4 in Meeker, CO. The monopole is to be located at latitude 40-00-54.72 N and longitude 107-52-39.62 W and will be equipped with a med-dual (red and white) lighting system. Interested persons may raise environmental concerns about the proposed structure by filing a Request for Environment Review with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The FCC strongly encourages interested parties to file Requests for Environmental Review online, and instructions for making such filings can be found at http://www.fcc.gov/asr/environmentalrequest. The proposed communications site can be identified by FCC Form 854 File Number A1185121 and interested persons may review the application by going to www.fcc.gov/asr/applications and entering the FCC Form 854 File Number A1185121. The mailing address for interested parties that would prefer to file a Request for Environmental Review by paper copy is as follows; FCC Request for Environmental Review, Attn: Ramon Williams, 45 L Street NE, Washington, DC 20554.
Published: February 25, 2021
Rio Blanco Herald Times

MEETING AGENDAS

TOWN OF MEEKER
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Tuesday, March 2, 2021
5:30 p.m. DOLA Workshop for Best Management Practices
7:00 p.m. Regular Board Meeting
Town Hall
345 Market Street, Meeker, CO
Due to COVID-19 precautions, the public is invited to attend by calling 970-878-8091.
Call to Order
Pledge of Allegiance
Roll Call
Approval of the Agenda
Approval of the Previous Minutes
Approval of Monthly Disbursements
Public Participation
This is an opportunity for Citizens to bring comments and questions to the Board of Trustees not being addressed in the Regular Meeting Agenda. In consideration of other regularly scheduled agenda items, comments will be limited to 3 minutes or less. Citizens are asked to approach the podium state their name and address for the record.
New Business:
a. Appointment of new Board member to fill a vacancy and administer the Oath of Office.
Mayor's Remarks
Town Manager's Report
Other Board Business
Adjournment
Published: February 25, 2021
Rio Blanco Herald Times

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RECYCLE ME: WASH YOUR WINDOWS!

HOW TO READ A LEGAL NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that

Published: Never 7, 8, 9, 2500
Rio Blanco Herald Times

Title
This is the easiest way to pinpoint the purpose of a notice. Sometimes this will be very general, maybe even just "PUBLIC NOTICE". Keep reading for the ...

Description
This is the 'meat' of the legal notice, telling you what it's about. For agendas, it's what will be discussed in the meeting. Other types of notices vary.

Publication Date
This is the date the notice is scheduled to be published. Many public notices have requirements for publication set by state statute.

Newspaper of Record
A newspaper of record must meet certain requirements to be able to publish public notices.

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FUN FACT:
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(For reference, a first class stamp in 1993 cost just 29 cents!)

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To see full list of open positions, see our website or scan the code below.

PIONEERS MEDICAL CENTER

Complete an application online by scanning the code above or by navigating to www.pioneershospital.org

The Rangely School District RE-4 currently has teaching, sub teaching and food service positions available; please refer to www.rangelyk12.org for employment opportunities, and applications."

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MEEKER SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-1

Employment Opportunities

Meeker Elementary School
- Elementary School Principal

Application Deadline April 1, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. MST

ADA/EOE
Subject to change at any time!
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970-878-9040

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Meeker and Rangely
11:00 – 1:30 M, T, W, F
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- Relief Dispatcher
- Relief Radino Driver, Rng
- Temporary Health Nurse
- Temporary Road & Bridge Laborers, Rng

For details and a Rio Blanco County application, please go to www.rbc.us or Rio Blanco County HR at 555 Main St., Meeker, CO. 970-878-9570.
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Washington Post & New York Times v. United States of America, 1971

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You can send story ideas and news tips* to editor@ht1885.com, call 970.878.4017 or message us on Facebook or Instagram.

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Let's talk about logical fallacies–gaps in logic that invalidate an argument or opinion.

 # 10 Appeal to Authority

Using the opinion or position of someone in authority (or that of an institution) to justify an otherwise illogical argument.

Happy fallacy-finding!

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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878-3131

Rangely Victim Services: An open door for the protection and care of abused and battered persons. Non-emergency call 629-9691. Emergencies call 911. Providing assistance for victims of violent crimes.

RBC | Attention Rio Blanco County Veterans: Veterans may be eligible for mileage reimbursement for travel costs to receive VA medical care. If you do not currently receive VA travel compensation please contact the Rio Blanco County Veterans Service offices. Rangely: John 'Hoot' Gibson, 970-878-9695. Meeker: Joe Bob Dungan, 970-878-9690. Travel compensation is made possible through the Veterans Trust Fund Grant and VFW Post 5843.

RIO BLANCO Masonic Lodge #80 meets 2nd and 4th Thursday, 7:00 p.m., at 7th and Park, Meeker.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Veterans Service Offices Rio Blanco County: Veterans Service Officer - Joe Dungan, Wednesday, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., County Administration Building, 200 Main Street Suite 300, Meeker. 878-9690 office, 878-3219 home. Fax 878-9581. Rangely: Veterans Service Officer - Hoot Gibson, Tuesday and Thursday, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., County Annex, 17497 State Hwy 64, Rangely. 878-9695 office, 675-2669 home.

AA & Al-Anon Meetings - Rangely Alcoholics Anonymous - Open meetings Tues & Thurs, 7 p.m., 115 Kennedy Dr., St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, Rangely.
Al-Anon meets Monday, 8:15 p.m., 207 S. Sunset, 1st Baptist Church, Rangely. Al-Anon info call 970-629-5064 or 970-629-2970.
Women's NA/AA meetings, Monday 1:30 p.m., St. Timothy's.

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Meeker, CO 81641

AUCTIONS

Electrical Shop Auction Saturday, March 6th 10:00 a.m. 424 Russell Street, Craig, Colorado. 1999 Chevy Boom Truck, 1983 Int. Bucket Truck, Hand and power tools of all kids, metal and wood shelving, 3 desks, file cabinet, safe, parts books, multiples of: wire - light bulbs - breakers - fuses - fixtures - copper - brass - fittings - conduit - wood, fiberglass and aluminum ladders, tires, well pumps, electric motors, etc etc. For more info call Steve Claypoole, CP Auction Service, 970-260-5577. Must see web cpauction.com "Call us about a sale for you"

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223 8th St.: Prime location, retail business & spacious residence . . . . . PENDING
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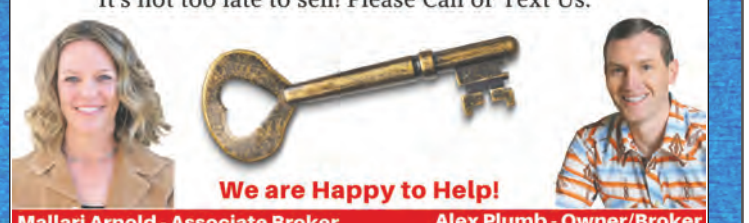
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