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recognized for a
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SEPTEMBER 11, 2019

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Conejos
board
meeting**

A regular board meeting for the North Conejos School District Board of Education will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 17 at the District Administration Office in La Jara. Agendas are available at the District Administration Office, 17890 US Highway 285, La Jara, or on our website www.northconejos.com.

**Property
and home
taxes due**

Personal property and mobile home taxes are due to the Alamosa County Treasurer's Office by 3 p.m. on Sept. 12 in order to avoid additional fees such as advertising costs.

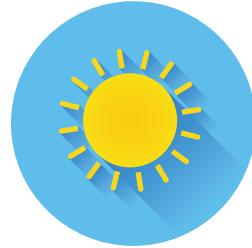
Real estate taxes are due to the Alamosa County Treasurer's Office by 3 p.m. on Sept. 27 in order to avoid additional fees such as advertising costs.

If payments are not received by these dates you not only incur additional fees, but your name will also be published in the paper. Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter.

Our office is open daily from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and we do not close for lunch.

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SLV WEATHER



Sunny
75 / 38

**Thu: Sunny 72 / 36
Fri: Sunny 75 / 39**

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Success follows tragedy as local business grows

BY MARGARET
SANDERSON

ALAMOSA — In May of 2011, Crystal Chisholm graduated from Trinidad State with her esthetician (skin care) degree. She and her then husband, Jerod Chisholm, had already named the spa she planned to create. They wanted the name to reflect God. They agreed on "Essential Radiance." Crystal explained, "Essential because God is an essential part of our lives and because it is essential to take care of yourself; and, Radiance because it reflects the beauty God puts in each and every one of us."

But less than two months after graduation, Jerod died in a tree trimming accident leaving Crystal with two little girls, ages 5 and 2.

Fast forward to February 2013 and Crystal married Robert Anderson who credits her for deepening his own faith. "I went to church with her and I wanted to read the Bible," he exclaimed. Crystal's daughters now have a stepbrother in Robert's son and Robert is crazy about "his" girls.

In January of 2014 with Robert's help, Crystal opened "Essential Radiance" in Alamosa. Since then she has expanded it twice, now occupying the entire 3,500 square foot building where three businesses were once housed. It is located just south across the street and west of the Trinidad State Valley Campus. Robert helps with updates and makes sure all is working properly.

Crystal, who is a dreamer, is grateful for Robert's influence in her life. "There's not a lot of people willing to help pick up the pieces from such devastation and loss," said Crystal referring to Jerod's death. ■ See RADIANCE

"Robert honors and respects all that the girls and I are.



Land deal results in talk of assessor recall

BY BECKY OSTERWALD
Courier Editor

DEL NORTE — The controversy over the sale of land to the Del Norte School District CFO Angela Velasquez has reached a new point. There is now talk of recalling the Rio Grande Assessor, J.J. Mondragon for releasing public information.

Mondragon contacted the *Valley Courier* about putting out a statement concerning public information in her office, most of which are either on the county website or available to inspection during business hours.

She said, "With few exceptions, the records in the Assessor's Office are of public record. ... The Assessor shall deny inspection of records containing social security numbers, Real Property Transfer Declaration forms, Manufactured Home Transfer Declaration forms, and Business Personal Property Declarations and Schedules."

These specific documents are considered private information and must be withheld from public inspection by Colorado State Statutes, she said.

She added that "All deeds are public record. We have a very informative website (www.riogrande-county.org) that is always available to the public.... [it] contains the sales information of all real property in the county." Including the controversial land deal currently under review.

Mondragon stated, "Regarding the complaint [by some] about confidential records released from the Assessor's Office are unfounded and untrue. No confidential records were released being that there are no confidential items regarding the sale in question..."

In a complaint filed with the Colorado Department of Education and the Colorado Attorney General's Office and subsequently to the 12th Judicial District Attorney's Office for investigation, Tom Haefeli claimed that the land deal was sold to Velasquez for \$15,000.

The property was valued at \$52,000, and the discussion to sell Velasquez the property was not done during a public meeting. There was, however, a 65-minute closed-door meeting to discuss the valuation of the property on Jan. 24.

Stephanie L. Miner 5K and Walk celebrating Sweet Sixteen at Cole Park



San Luis Valley Health employee Lindsay Meredith celebrates as she crosses the finish line during the 2018 Stephanie L. Miner 5K and Walk.

ALAMOSA — Lace up your walking shoes, because the Stephanie L. Miner 5K Walk and Run will take place on Saturday, Sept. 21, in Cole Park in Alamosa. One of the largest events held in the valley is now in its 16th year, so the theme for the walk this year is "Sweet Sixteen."

Hundreds of runners and walkers will enjoy a scenic view as they wind their way past Cattails Golf Course, celebrating survivors, supporting those who are facing cancer and remembering those they have lost to the disease. Along with the 5K, there are also a one-mile and 2.5-mile course.

Stephanie Miner was a valued community member, public school teacher, wife and mother of four who lost her four-year-long battle with breast cancer. From 2004 to 2006, the funds raised during the walk by the SLV Health Foundation were used to finance the construction and opening of the Imaging Center. Since then, the funds raised from the event continue to stay local, and this year will go towards the 3-D Mammography Unit located in the Stephanie L. Miner's Women's Imaging Center at SLV Health in Alamosa.

"We are excited to continue to support the Stephanie L. Miner Women's Imaging Center, and are always humbled at the number of people to come out every year to run and walk in this event and honor Stephanie and her family," said Kelly Gurule, director of the SLV Health Foundation. "It is truly an honor for the Foundation to give the community this opportunity to support the services that the Stephanie L. Miner Women's Imaging Center provide."

There will be a "Support the Girls" shop at the park, operated by the staff that works in the Stephanie L. Miner Women's Imaging Center, so runners and walkers can pick up all of their walk accessories. Announcements begin at 9:30 a.m. and will include the auctioning off of a quilt made by Bev Hettinger especially for the event. The race begins at 10 a.m. Water will be provided in Cole Park, courtesy of the Alamosa County Local Marketing District's "Hydration Station." Afterwards, participants can enjoy a free baked potato bar.

Registration begins on Sept. 11. Cost is \$30 per person before Sept. 19, with teams of 10 or more just \$25 per person. After Sept. 19, registration is \$35 per person. You will have the ability to register the day of the event at Cole Park.

For more information or to register, please call Dawn Krebs, foundation administration assistant, at 719-587-6359 or Kelly S. Gurule, foundation director, at 719-587-5707.

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Valley News

Friends of Ski Hi Park reveal plans for new facility

MONTE VISTA — The Friends of Ski Hi Park are pleased to announce some concept drawings for the vision of a new multiuse facility at Ski Hi Park. "The Friends of Ski Hi" are excited about the vision of this proposed design, though we know and understand that some tweaks may still be made", said co-chair Karla Shriver. "The working group has met several times with the architects to come up with this design." The architect and contractor firms selected in an open bidding process to help the working group is Spencer Architects and ALCON Construction, both from Alamosa. The working group includes representatives from the Friends of Ski Hi, the Monte Vista Chamber, representing user groups, Stampede Committee, and the City of Monte Vista. "We are working very hard to make this regional center functional and nice, and yet remain a cost effective project," said co-chair Karla Shriver.

After the grandstands project was completed in 2010, user groups continued to meet to discuss the vision of the multi-purpose building. The vision included a phased process of demolishing the swimming pool area and building a new conference area with several needs including but not limited to meeting rooms with dividers to adjust the size of the rooms, a prep and warming kitchen, bathrooms, storage, and a large open area that could be used for recreation activities and multi-use functions.

In the fall of 2017, interested citizens Kathy (Rogers) Woods and Karla Shriver collaborated on a concept to move the renovation of the current Ski Hi multi-purpose building forward that had been in limbo for numerous years. "It is a proven fact that projects have a higher rate of success when driven by citizens or citizen groups", said Shriver. Woods commented, "This is, and will, continue to be a San Luis Valley Regional Use Facility and Complex. We envision it to continue to host social, cultural, educational and recreation events such as Stampede, the SLV Agriculture Expo, the Crane Fest, as well as, conferences



The Friends of Ski Hi Park held a meeting on Sept. 4 at the Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce building to reveal new plans for a multiuse facility.

and banquets that can host small, medium, and large groups in the several hundred numbers."

The goal is to have the project completed by 2021 for the 100th Anniversary of Ski Hi Stampede. However, planning and fundraising may take a little longer. The group has not yet received cost estimates, but once received; the group will decipher the need to phase the project or have the capability to move forward with both the multi-use portion along with the conference center. "We will then begin our fund raising efforts," said both Shriver and Woods, "and it will take the whole San Luis Valley to make this work. This is for our kids, grandkids, and great grand kids just like our forefathers envisioned the current facility for us to use."

The group has not yet received cost estimates, but once we do, the group will decide if we need to look at phasing the project in some way, or if we can move forward with both the multi-use portion along with the conference center. "We will then begin our fund raising efforts," said both Shriver and Woods, "and it will take the whole San Luis Valley to make this work. This is for our kids, grandkids, and great grand kids just like our forefathers envisioned the current facility for us to use."

then begin our fund raising efforts," said both Shriver and Woods, "and it will take the whole San Luis Valley to make this work. This is for our kids, grandkids, and great grand kids just like our forefathers envisioned the current facility for us to use." The design and concept phases are being funded by a DOLA grant obtained by the City and a grant the Friends of Ski Hi obtained from a local foundation.

In the overall masterplan that was completed for the Ski Hi Complex in 2006, there was a phase in the vision for a swimming pool. "We all want a swimming pool back in Monte Vista," said Shriver, "However, we have to design and build this in phases as we cannot afford it all at once nor is the City set up to maintain it all right now. We are not sure we can afford to do both the new multi-purpose/recreational portion along with the conference center at this time either. What we do know is that is what the user group tells us we need to support current events now held at the facility. There has been some event lost due to lack of infrastructure now at the current building." The difficult part is when you have a complex of this size, costs go up because of building codes, which are needed, which call for certain number of bathrooms, fire suppression, etc. "We have to be real on what the Valley community can afford," said Woods.

Veterans Corner

BY RICHARD NAGLEY

President, Veterans Coalition of the San Luis Valley
For more information email info.vcslv@gjade.org,
www.facebook.com/veteranscoalitionslv
or Box 975, Alamosa, CO, 81101.

VCSLV is a nonprofit and donations are greatly appreciated

I would like to invite women veterans to contact either Mary or Charlotte at VCSLV (719/992-4108).

We have received a number of calls from Veterans who were part of the Blue Water Navy (BWN). We encourage anyone who may have been part of the Vietnam War BWN, check out the Blue Water Navy Association (www.bwnvva.org) website. This is a great place to begin if you think this might affect you. Their website includes a questionnaire and a master list of ships, dates and times of deployment for those that may qualify for VA benefits.

We encourage ALL veterans, who were in the Vietnam War and possibly exposed to Agent Orange and other defoliants to contact their County VSO or the Veterans Coalition for more information.

As we said in a previous Veterans Corner, things for veterans are changing. The VA MISSION ACT is the law of the land. You can either be part of the change or you can watch it pass you by. For more information on VA Health Care and/or Benefits, including the MISSION ACT, contact your San Luis Valley health care provider, your County's VSO, the Veterans Coalition, or look it up online.

The VA has recently released a WELCOME TO VA guide for veterans (www.va.gov/welcome-kit), which finally begins to demystify the VA. The "Records" option (www.va.gov/records) will show how to get different types of identification cards to show your military status or your enrollment in VA health care. Why is that important you may ask? Many businesses, even in the Valley, recognize veterans and offer a discount as a token of appreciation for your service. Check out the Veterans Coalition website (www.vcslv.info) for some of the businesses.

September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. While suicide can be a difficult topic to talk about, it's one we must discuss. Reducing stigma and restoring hope is critical. Veterans are 50 percent more likely to die by suicide than civilians. But you can be part of the solution. For more information visit VA's Together with Veterans program (www.togetherwithveterans.org) and Operation Veterans Strong (www.operationveteranstrong.org). These are great tools VCSLV has been a part of.

VCSLV is a nonprofit and could use your help. Any donation large or small would be greatly appreciated.

VCSLV are volunteers just like you, some veterans, some not. If you would like to learn more about how you can help a veteran or are a veteran in need of help, give us a call (719-992-4108). We'll do what we can.

VCSLV will attempt to submit an article to the paper on some what a regular basis. If you find this information helpful, we'd like to hear from you and tell the paper also. We will try to focus on one topic of interest to veterans and their families or friends. If you have a general issue, you'd like us to address, feel free to contact us, but your County VSO is the best place to start for a personal issue.

The Forum was well attended, and many commented that the Women Veterans Forum was a good networking step for addressing women veteran needs and the information provided was positive and beneficial to those attending.

It is important to the VCSLV to locate as many Women Veterans as possible to be able to invite them to our educational forums. If you know a woman veteran, please have them contact us to get on our mailing list.

On behalf of the VCSLV Board of Directors, I wish thank Charlotte and Mary for this issue of Veterans Corner.

Radiance

■ Continued from
Page 1

He's an incredible man, one of a kind. He makes my dreams richer because he's a doer and wants to see those dreams satisfied. He does the bulk of the handyman work. He's behind the scenes but he's part of the heartbeat in this place as well."

In 2015 when a business in the same building, just east of hers, relocated, Anderson expanded, quadrupling her space which grew her business from two treatment rooms to five.

Anderson took her expertise to another level in 2017, when she entered a national skin care competition. For eight weeks she worked on her model's face to reduce fine lines and wrinkles. Then, she and her family flew to San Francisco where eight skin care specialists from all over the world came to judge. Crystal likened the event to the Oscars in cosmetics, complete with formal wear. "I placed second in the nation which gave me a strong boost of confidence," she said.

In February of this year, she added salon services in a separate space in the same building when another business relocated. Robert helped Crystal install hundreds of black 12-inch plastic squares with cut out flower designs, each attached to the next. These plastic walls hang from the ceiling to about two feet from the floating floor (installed without nails or glue to a subfloor) that Robert installed. The plastic walls divide the large space into separate rooms allowing the technicians to know what is going on around them while maintaining a feeling of privacy. The decor in each space reflects that technician's own style. In the salon technicians offer manicures, pedicures, and acrylic nails as well as hair cutting, coloring, styling, perms and extensions.

The spa entrance is accessed using a combination lock thus eliminating needless foot traffic and added noise. Spa treatments are by appointment only. Often, clientele relax and fall asleep during a treatment in the quiet, peaceful atmosphere. On the other hand, walk-ins are welcome on the salon side of Essential Radiance where lively conversation is the norm.

Crystal, whose own skin is flawless, has continued to attend trainings in order to offer Valley residents a cornucopia of treatments. Skin care is Crystal's specialty, but other technicians offer facial and body sculpting, teeth whitening, eyelash extensions, eyebrow shaping, lash and eyebrow tinting, bridal makeup, makeup analysis and instruction classes, facial and body waxing, customized skin care treatments, anti-aging facial treatments and massage.

Recently she completed a training in Boca Raton, Florida, to learn how to remove tattoos holistically using pure and natural ingredients. She said ink is removed safer

and faster than laser removal taking 3-to-6 treatments compared to 15-to-20 laser treatments and the process has lower scar potential. It acts like a magnet, lifting the ink out of the skin. The products used to help heal the skin after tattoo removal are some of the same products she already uses for skin care. The process, called Xtract, removes all ink colors and is safe for all skin types. Anderson has established a separate room in the salon for that purpose.

When facing the decision about offering tattoo removal, Anderson had the rare opportunity to have lunch with her husband, Robert. She said that might happen once a year. Before she shared her thoughts about tattoo removal, Robert surprised her when he expressed a desire to see tattoo removal offered in the Valley. They had not talked about it before. For Crystal that was a sign, a confirmation from God which gave her the courage to proceed with the training.

A total of 10 technicians now work at Essential Radiance. "They're doing so well," said Anderson. "It's so inspiring and encouraging to see their passion and their creativity and their talents. I want to be a supporter of dreams. They are truly what makes this place great. They love what they do, and the clients know it. We are a sisterhood of businesswomen who encourage and support each other."

"God is very much a part of what I feel Essential Radiance represents," she continued. "I want this to be a place of rest and peace, a time to take a few moments for yourself. We expect people to leave feeling good."

Anderson is grateful to Trinidad State, not only for the training she received that laid the foundation for Essential Radiance, but the training that nine of her ten technicians received. With so many of her technicians coming from Trinidad State, the college continues to play an "essential" part in her on-going business history. Her dream for the future is to double what she has. Robert will help that dream come true.

