

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY FOR MORE THAN 50 YEARS... THE DEDICATED MEN AND WOMEN OF THE MONTROSE COUNTY SHERIFF'S POSSE!

By Mark Rackay

MONTROSE-For more than 50 years, the Montrose County Sheriff's Posse has been serving our community. The posse is split into an East and West End division to better respond to the emergency call outs of our large county.

The east division has around 25 members, while the west division has around 15. All of the members are strictly volunteers, each donating their time and personal equipment to the posse.

These dedicated men and woman spend a great deal of time training. All members are trained in areas such as first aid, CPR, AED, wild-land fire fighting, traffic control, tracking, GPS, communications, wilderness survival, ice water rescue, ropes, swift water rescue, helicopter extraction and ATV, to name a few.

The sheriff of each county is required by Colorado Statute to provide search and rescue services. Members of the posse are here to answer that call by being on stand-by 24/7, 365 days a year.

Posse President Dave Fowler said, "It seems we have been called out on just about every holiday, over the years. I remember a child who got lost from his campsite with his parents on Memorial Day. We also responded to a jeep accident on the Fourth of July."

Sheriff Rick Dunlap said, "The posse saves the county well over \$100,000 a year. With a county as large as Montrose, there is no way we could provide search and rescue without the posse."

In the year 2016, the posse donated more than 3,000 hours to the community. Many hours were also spent training.

"Members are expected to take part in the training. It is a great way for all of us to learn to work together as a team. In 2016, we had over 17 separate trainings



Members of the MCSP search for a lost hunter on the Uncompahgre Plateau. Courtesy photo.

for our members," said Fowler.

Some notable missions the posse conducted this past year include taking part in the search for Mary Finnegan, who went missing from Montrose earlier this summer. The posse also conducted a search for a missing 57-year-old female near Buckeye reservoir. Last May, the posse rescued three stranded persons from Dry Creek when their ATV became disabled.

West End posse members rescued several people stuck on Carpenter Ridge and conducted the recovery of a male hiker near H54 Road.

The posse also provided security at the Montrose County Fair and for many of the events. Members were present for security at the Ranch Rodeo and the Senior Class Party for the graduating students of

Montrose High School.

During the week of January 16, the posse kicks off its annual fund drive. Each Montrose County household will receive a letter requesting a donation. This letter is the only request the posse makes of the community each year. Donations can be made anytime by mailing a check to Montrose County Sheriff's Posse at P.O. Box 717, Montrose, Colorado, 81402

"Thank you for supporting us. Without your help, we could not do our job," said Fowler.

Mark Rackay is a freelance writer who serves as a Director and PIO for the Montrose County Sheriff's Posse. For information about the Posse call 970-252-4033 (leave a message) or email info@mcspi.org.

WARRANT ISSUED FOR ARMED AND DANGEROUS SUSPECT

Special to the Mirror

REGIONAL-A warrant has been issued for a SW Colorado man who is wanted for multiple offenses and is considered armed and dangerous. Mr. Robert William Koontz, 33 years-old, is wanted for 3rd degree assault, domestic violence and menacing. Mr. Koontz is 5'10", 135lbs. with blonde hair and blue eyes. Mr. Koontz allegedly assaulted his wife Friday night and was last seen at his Egnar residence in San Miguel County. Mr. Koontz owns a 1979 Chevrolet pickup truck, grey in color with CO expired license plate of 326 LQZ. It is unknown if he has the truck in his possession or if he escaped on foot. Sheriff Bill Masters warns, "At this time this man should be considered armed and dangerous." If located, please contact the San Miguel Sheriff's Office at 970-729-0911.