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Care Flight of the Rockies lands its helicopter next to San Miguel Search and Rescue's for MHS first Field Experience Day. (Rhiannon Bergman/Montrose Daily Press)

Learning to save lives

MHS bio-med students get firsthand education

By RHIANNON BERGMAN
RHIANNONB@MONTROSEPRESS.COM

If you were at Cerise Park either early Friday morning or mid-afternoon, you probably came across an unexpected scene. Ambulances, not one, but two helicopters and a great number of cops and medics filled up the fields and paths of the downtown park. While this would normally be a frightening sight, at Cerise on this particular Friday this was nothing more than a hands-on learning experience for high school students.

Montrose High School, along with the city, worked with local EMS and SAR, or search-and-rescue, teams to host a field experience day where the school's bio-med students learned about what first responders do during a field call.

"It's difficult to motivate young people to come to the first responder type of career, 'cause there's a lot of demands in being a first responder," said Mark Rackay, Montrose County Sheriff's Posse director and public information officer. "It's nice to try and catch'em early and give'em

an introduction to what we have and what we do in the hopes you reach a couple."

Jon Sullivan, public works special events manager, was the one who received MHS's application concerning a field experience day. Due to a background in EMS as well as SAR, Sullivan said this event pulled on the right heartstrings for him.

"This is a really cool career exposure for kids that otherwise don't really understand what it entails," Sullivan said. "How would you know what these things are as a 15, 16-year-

old unless you had an opportunity like this?"

MHS science teacher Emarae Garcia was the woman who sent in the event's application after coming up with the idea for a field experience day.

Garcia started Project Lead the Way six years ago when she began a four-year STEM pathway course on bio-medicine. Through this program freshman are able to start with Principles of Biomedical Science and go all the way up to Bio-medical Innovation their senior year.

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THE CLERK & RECORDER
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Is the water safe in mobile home parks?

Proposed legislation addresses quality issues

By KYLEA HENSELER
KYLEAH@MONTROSEPRESS.COM

When some residents of Colorado's 800 mobile home parks turn on the tap, quality water isn't guaranteed. The Clean Water For All Colorado coalition — composed of 15 organizations, including the Montrose-based Hispanic Affairs Project of Western Colorado — is hoping to help this issue by advocating for legislation to protect water quality in mobile home parks.

Hispanic Affairs Project Executive Director Ricardo Perez said the issue isn't always the quality of municipal water, but rather that older parks may have outdated plumbing, and the cost of fixing it, if it's fixed at all, can get passed on to residents.

"We want to be sure every resident in Colorado receives the same treatment in regards to water," Perez said.

The coalition's first

goal is to build support for House Bill 23-1257, which creates a water testing program for parks and sets up next steps if a quality issue is detected. The bill, introduced on March 26, is sponsored by Reps. Elizabeth Velasco, D-Garfield County, and Andrew Boesenecker, D-Larimer County, as well as Sen. Lisa Cutter, D-Jefferson County.

"Every person in Colorado deserves access to clean, safe drinking water in their homes. No one should have the burden of purchasing water because the water in their homes comes out bright red, stinking, burning skin and staining clothes," said Velasco in a press release. "We need accountability and we need action. This bill creates both. It's time to respond to the needs of mobile home park residents and support our working families."

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Boys & Girls Club pares back renovations at new site *Gym, classrooms retained; project moving toward bid*

By KATHARHYNN HEIDELBERG
KATHARHYNNH@MONTROSEPRESS.COM

The Black Canyon Boys & Girls Club is taking a small step back in the renovation project for its new home.

"We've scaled back," Executive Director Bud Taylor said Thursday, April 6.

The youth enrichment club, which last year purchased the old San Juan Cinema on East Main Street for \$1.85 million as its first-ever permanent home, has since been working with a local architect firm and a construc-

tion manager. That team considered a \$1 million all-in budget for the renovation project (\$750,000 for the construction component), to determine what could be achieved.

The verdict: The renovation budget is enough for the gym space and three classrooms as planned, but not enough to open up the front lobby space and create a secured entry.

"We are going to have the gym and three classrooms," Taylor reiterated.

Two of the classrooms are for dedicated uses: multimedia (capitalizing on the old movie screens)

for such activities as podcasting, and an arts and crafts room. The third classroom is multi-purpose.

The 23,000 square-foot facility is an upgrade from the tight rented quarters the club once occupied, although the renovation work means not all of the facility is currently in use at present.

The Boys & Girls Club provides a safe, constructive environment to kids 6 and older and helps them forge strong relationships they might not otherwise have through programs, connections and enrichment.

With additional elbow room, the club can expand its membership to more young people. As-is, the club can accommodate 40 to 60 kids per day. (The East Main location is in use and the space open to youths is kept safely separate from where renovations will be done.)

Taylor said the hope is that once construction is done this December the club can "really explode it to at least 200 kids in the summer" with an expansion push.

See CLUB page A16



Executive director of the Black Canyon Boys and Girls Club, Bud Taylor, and Alayna Akins, executive assistant, are shown in the lobby of the former San Juan Cinema on East Main in 2022, when the club purchased the building from the Hunter family and relocated. (Stephen Woody/Special to the MDP)



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STUDENTS

FROM PAGE A1

Students, from freshman to seniors, had the opportunity to attend Friday's EMS/SAR Field Experience Day.

According to Garcia, the high school's biomedical program has about 275 students, and around 160 of which were able to experience firsthand what it is like to locate and triage someone out in the field. With no real patients to treat, the students were given a mock scenario of what a situation might be, and the first responders gave demos on what their roles would be during such a call.

At the Field Experience Day, San Miguel Search and Rescue, Care Flight of the Rockies, the sheriff's posse, MPD, and Montrose Fire EMS were ready to teach the next generation about what they do.

"That's like the core and the heartbeat of how western Colorado operates," said Sullivan. "You know, we're all here to, like, scratch each other's back and help out."

"The support from all of these people to make this happen has been outstanding," Garcia said, reflecting on the participating agencies.

Both Montrose Fire EMS and Montrose County Sheriff's Posse showed students the gear they use to get people out of rough landscapes. The scenario MHS students were given for the event involved the retrieval of a woman thrown over a cliff in Sanborn Park.

"Our role in this is when someone is injured in a very remote location generally EMS can't get to them, and we're sort of the technical rescue people,"



Some of MHS' bio-med students listen to Montrose Fire EMS discuss how to use their equipment and triage patients in the field. (Rhiannon Bergman/Montrose Daily Press)

said Rackay.

During this simulation student's were able to try out the pulleys used to get someone out of a situation like the mock scenario provided.

Officers of the police department and an investigator from the sheriff's office who are certified Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) drone pilots showed the high school students the equipment involved in such work, used to find people quickly and efficiently when lost.

Students were able to see the live footage of one of their drone cameras as well as watch the drone fly above their heads.

PD officers also explained how someone fresh out of high school can receive credentials in their field before the age of 21, which is how old someone must be to become an officer or deputy. Getting a degree in criminal justice or becoming an animal control officer or detention deputy are some options that young adults can do to gain early experience.

But pulleys and drones weren't the only equipment students got to explore. At the SAR stations, students were able to get inside the San Miguel SAR helicopter and understand what it takes to become a nurse or paramedic for Care Flight.

"I couldn't do a lot of this without the support of our community," said Garcia. "I can't thank these guys — to volunteer their time — enough to come in and spend a day with our students and teach them about their career ... these guys are amazing."

She also explained that this event would not have been possible without MHS principal Heidi Voehringer.

MHS science teacher Shane Yanosky also said Friday's event would not have happened without support from administration.

"The whole reason we are able to do this is because of (MCSD superintendent) Dr. Stephenson and Miss Voehringer," Yanosky said.

"Our community has got

to be the coolest people on the planet," said Garcia.

Friday's event follows a similar structure to another annual event Garcia started: Forensics Academy, scheduled for the fall. During Forensics Academy students go to stations where the local coroner, state patrol, along with the Montrose Police Department and sheriff's office teach students about their careers.

"We're doing some cool things in this program," Garcia said.

Just like with Forensics Academy, Garcia hopes to turn the field experience day into an annual teaching experience for students. Sullivan also shares the same plans.

Naturita man dies in Norwood Hill crash

STAFF REPORT

A Naturita man died in a crash on Norwood Hill Thursday, April 6, the San Miguel County Coroner's Office confirmed.

At 1:15 p.m., Charles Roy "CR" Dobbs, 41, was traveling toward Norwood on Colorado 145 when his vehicle went off the road near mile marker 97. Dobbs, who was not wearing a seatbelt, was thrown from the vehicle and died instantly.

First responders found and rescued Dobbs' passenger, who was not

identified; that person was transported by helicopter to St. Mary's Medical Center in Grand Junction, according to the San Miguel County Sheriff's Office.

The agency responded to the crash with the Norwood Fire Department. The SMCSO's Facebook post states Dobbs went off the side of Norwood Hill. Sanborn Park Road was closed at the intersection of 145 for several hours as agencies responded.

The Colorado State Patrol is investigating.

Correction

The bond set for attempted murder suspect Nicholas A. Duran was \$25,000 cash-only. Friday's story, "\$25K bond set for man accused of firing on deputy," listed it as cash or surety.



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