

Democrats fighting Democrats," Coram told those attending Wednesday's session of The Forum at Heidi's Brooklyn Deli. "You never knew where your alliances were going

Coram "terred," Coram said. "With two weeks remaining, 200 bills were still coming from Senate." Most of those were bills that were

of legislation was a bill to reclassify the state's Hospital Provider Fee as an enterprise fund. The fee was originally approved in 2009 as a way of leveraging more

"It was a total war," Coram said. Coram, a Republican, supported the legislation, but many Democrats did

See SESSION page A3



Bonnie Smith, chairwoman of the Colorado Association of REALTORS, explains the ways fire prevention and mitigation benefit homeowners, and the role real estate agents can play in connecting them with resources. (Montrose Daily Press/Katharynn Heidelberg)

In it together: Experts, area REALTORS unite to cut fire risks

By KATHARYNN HEIDELBERG
MONTROSE DAILY PRESS SENIOR WRITER

Piñon-juniper clustered close around the winding driveway, leading to a nice, tucked-away wooden home. Like other properties in Log Hill Village, this one came with a stunning view and put its occupants up close with nature's glory.

But, in the wrong conditions, the breathtaking vista becomes a hazard: Nature burns, and wildland fire can lead to catastrophic loss.

That risk does not have to become destiny. Representatives from several firefighting and mitigation agencies, along with the Colorado Association of REALTORS drove home that point Wednesday, as part of the association's Colorado Project Wildfire tour.

The project began last year, with the goal of reducing or preventing

property loss and injury due to wildfires. Real estate agents are in a unique position to help spread the word about the importance of risk mitigation directly to homeowners, said Bonnie Smith, Colorado Association of REALTORS chairwoman.

Wildfire affects everyone, not just property owners directly in its path, Smith said. A devastating blaze can affect air quality, as well as the economy.

Colorado has so far this year been spared large-scale wildfires, which makes for "the perfect time" to spread the word about mitigation, Smith said.

"We are eager to step up and lead." The association strongly supports legislation that, if signed by the governor, will increase the income tax deduction for eligible wildfire mitigation work from 50 percent to 100

percent.

That, and education, stands to have the greatest effect on reducing fire risks, Smith indicated.

"Doing paperwork has never solved a problem, and it's never stopped a fire," she said.

Everyone has responsibility to cut the risks, said Lilia Colter Falk, director of the West Region Wildfire Council, headquartered in Montrose.

The wildland/urban interface — where human habitation intersects, or is close to, flammable, natural terrain — is expected to grow by 300 percent in the next 15 years. Two-million Coloradans already live in wildland/urban interface, Falk said.

The Log Hill community has been proactive in reducing risks, but more work needs to be done.

See RISKS page A4

Bubble-caps part of bark beetle treatment plan

By LEE ANN LOUPE
U.S. FOREST SERVICE

The Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests, Ouray and Norwood Ranger Districts have been actively treating bark beetle infestations this spring.

For the fifth year, harvesting of dead and dying beetle-infested trees has been completed in the Amphitheatre Campground and in the Nagache day use area near Ouray.

The wood has been cut and stacked in the campground for persons with a valid forest

service fuelwood permit to remove prior to the Memorial Day weekend.

Additional work that has occurred includes placing white "bubble-caps" on trees in the campground and along the Jud Wiebe Trail near Telluride. Placement of bubble-caps is anticipated to occur

along the Divide Road on the Uncompahgre Plateau over the next two weeks.

The bubble-caps are visible and members of the public are asked to leave them undisturbed and not to remove them from trees for them to work and help prevent further infestation.

Bark beetles and other insects communicate using pheromones. The bubble-caps contain MCH which is a naturally-occurring chemical compound that mimics the bark beetles' anti-aggregate pheromones that communicate to

See BEETLE page A3

INDEX CALENDAR A2 A&E A11-12 SPORTS A14
OBITUARIES A4 COMICS A5 CLASSIFIEDS A6-10



Published for the Uncompahgre Valley and Jeryl Beard of Montrose



Cedar Creek Vineyards

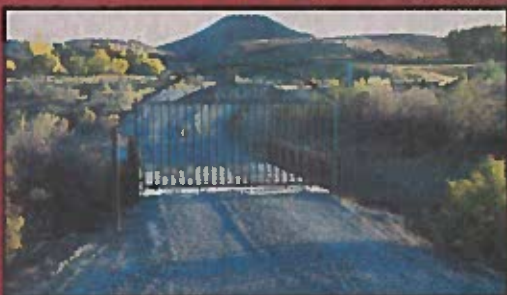
Barndominium for Sale!

Cedar Creek Vineyards Subdivision Open House this coming
Saturday 5/28 Sunday 5/29 and Monday 5/30; 10:00 am-4:00 pm.

Woodgate -Kinking-left on 6700 rd. two miles south of S City Market

Property One: 6+ acres 2 bd 2 bath, master suite and guest bedroom.
Patio room and carport included. Total area under roof at 2,600 s/f +
Across gated bridge. **Asking price is \$338,000**

Property Two: 2nd home 75% complete master suite and 3+ acres.
Multiple 3 acres lots built to suit! Starting at \$40,000.00.



6700 Rd off Kinnikin Rd Call Garry at 970-275-2472 Check us out on Zillow! Or at cedarcreekvineyards.com!

RISKS

FROM PAGE A1

"We are proud of the efforts ... to better protect our mesa," Log Hill Fire Protection District Chief John Rogers said. "However, we can't rest on our achievements."

Log Hill in 2012 produced a property-specific recommendation report, which spurred several homeowners into action; still, only about 30 percent of homes there have, in fact, established defensible space, Rogers said.

Remember the home described above? The problems, from a fire-fighting standpoint, are apparent from the road. Or, perhaps more accurately, not apparent: the home cannot be seen from the road, leaving firefighters to guess conditions.

The address should be on reflective metal, with numbers/name in letters at least 3 inches high, to assist any emergency responder in locating it. And that driveway? Too narrow, especially with all the dense fuel around it.

"I worry about survivable space for my firefighters," Log Hill Assistant Fire Chief Tom Austin said, after WRWC's mitigation and education coordinator Jamie Gomez pointed out some of the home's vulnerabilities to the more than 50 tour attendees.

"I'm not going to risk their lives to save a home. ... You've got to do some mitigation," Austin said.

Homeowners should also understand that mitigation is more than cutting back trees, Gomez and Colorado State Forest Assistant Director Austin Shelby said. Structural ignitability demands attention.

A home's roof plays a large role in whether a home survives a wildfire — it is the largest horizontal, or nearly horizontal, space and can become a landing strip for "firebrands," or embers, which can be carried quite a distance.

The quality of roof on the home in question was quite good, but the home's siding was wooden, and it also had a large, wooden deck,

West Region Wildfire Council

The council has area-specific resources for fire mitigation in Montrose, Delta, Gunnison, San Miguel, Ouray and Hinsdale counties that can help communities adapt to live with fire. Through the council, 5,000 home-specific assessments have been done.

- WRWC cost-share programs

The WRWC also coordinates and, through grant money, partially funds homeowners in developing defensible space and in wood-chipping. The Colorado State Forest Service is a critical partner in the cost-sharing program.

The program reimburses a portion of costs associated with wildfire mitigation work on eligible properties. The first step is to contact the council, (970) 615-7300, and schedule a site visit.

Landowners should consult a natural resources professional to set up a project idea, prepare a project map, and information about the scope of work.

The landowner and WRWC spell out the cost-shares in a formal agreement; the landowner then hires a contractor, who ordinarily must complete the work within three months.

More information can be found at www.COwildfire.org.

Colorado Project Wildfire

Information about this Colorado Association of REALTORS program can be found at www.coloradoprojectwildfire.com. The site provides information about how to protect homes from wildfire, current Colorado danger zones, and who is affected by wildfire.

The site offers access to city, county state and federal resource organizations, mitigation education, and more.

The association is partnering with local fire-mitigation and prevention organizations to spread awareness in hopes of getting more property owners to protect their investments.

Defensible space zones

Zone 1: The first 15 feet beyond the structure should have only a small amount of vegetation; free of accumulated dead vegetation and flammable debris; and plants should be kept well irrigated.

Zone 2: Fuel reduction area to decrease intensity of approaching fires. Trees and shrubs should be thinned to provide at least 10 feet between tree crowns. The zone may extend out to 100 feet or more from the home, depending on the type of fuels present and the property slope.

Zone 3: This zone can extend all the way to the property boundary. Trees and large shrubs can be pruned to prevent a ground fire from climbing into the crowns of trees. Remove dead and down debris.

under which were gas cans, a wooden patio bench and other flammable items. Grass grew thick around the home; in a few months, it will be dry enough to act as tinder.

"We could do lots of mitigation, but if those vulnerabilities continue, this home is still at risk," Gomez said.

The WRWC conducts site visits and assessments, which focus on structures, in addition to defensible space. Recommendations for the home in question included replacing the wooden deck with synthetic

decking material, and changing the siding to something less flammable, when the time comes for those updates.

Up the road, just outside the boundaries of Log Hill Village, Barthold Lichtenbelt has taken advantage of the WRWC's cost-share program for fire mitigation, and protected his home in the process.

The home is clearly visible from the road, as is the reflective address sign. His wide drive leads to a concrete parking apron that extends several feet beyond the home, which itself

is located uphill. While Lichtenbelt's large deck is a vulnerability, apart from its posts, the decking material is synthetic. The home's siding looks like wood; it is cement board.

"A lot of his choices are excellent. He has a large, hardened area around the home," Gomez said.

Through the cost-share program, Lichtenbelt thinned the fuels on his property, removing some trees, while pruning others, and removed all Gambel oak and serviceberry. The rise upon which his home sits is sloped and graveled, which could further serve to slow a fire.

In all, Lichtenbelt treated 3 of his 9 acres, which has served to open up the view and make his property more accessible for his own enjoyment, he said. And of course, there is the safety factor — when the weather turns hot and dry, he feels even better about what he's done.

"Don't be afraid. It's very painless," Lichtenbelt said of the cost-share application process.

Wednesday's tour also stopped at a 20-acre shaded fuel break created in 2013. Thinning fuels on the escarpment can slow or halt a fire carried by the dominant winds along the southwest side of the mesa, Austin said.

Plus, the project helps people see what creating defensible space actually looks like, and helps dispel perceptions that it means clear-cutting, he indicated.

Wednesday's Colorado Project Wildfire tour drew representatives from regional, state and federal agencies, as well as government officials. Smith said that highlights the importance of ongoing partnerships.

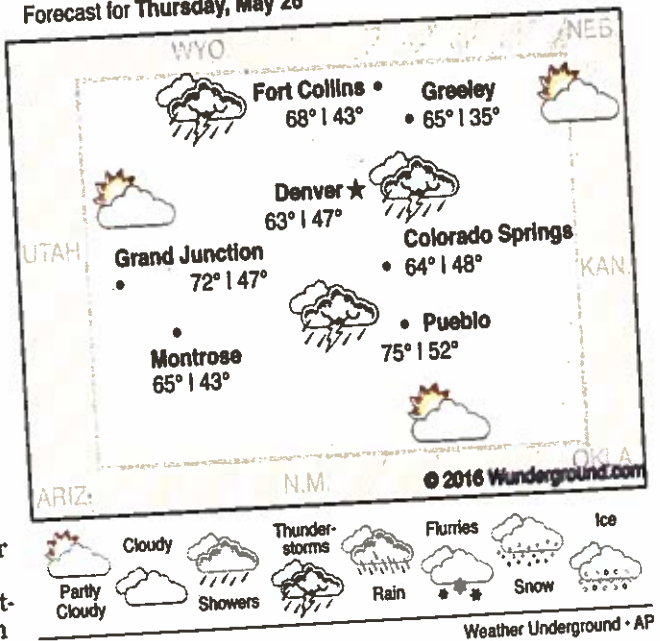
"It does take a village to make this happen," she said.

"Log Hill has led the way in showing Ouray County what can and should be done," Ouray County Commissioner Ben Tisdell said, adding that he's pleased to have the REALTORS association involved, along with many other partners, including the private landowners. "It takes not only a village, it takes a state."

Today's Forecast

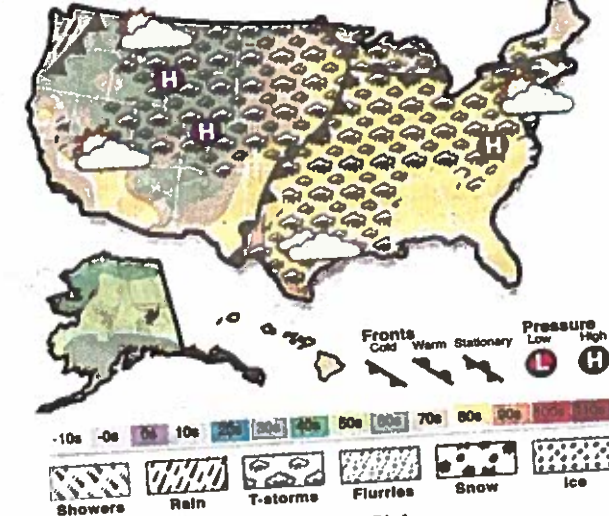
Forecast for Thursday, May 26

City/Region High | Low temps



National forecast

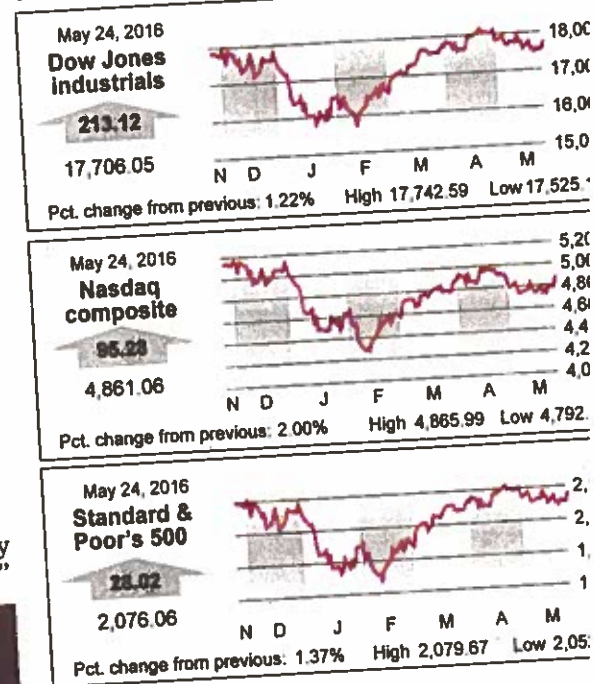
Forecast highs for Thursday, May 26



Storms Likely Over The Southern Plains

A storm system will produce a chance of scattered showers and thunderstorms over the Plains and east over the Ohio Valley and the mid-Atlantic region. More scattered showers will be expected over the Rockies.

A DAY ON WALL STREET



News tip or story idea?
Contact the Daily Press: 249-3444 or email editors@montrosepress.com

You Sell Auto LLC

19185 S. Hwy 550 • Montrose
Monday-Saturday 9:30am-5:30p
RATES STARTING AT 2.9%
with approved credit

970-249-2485

<p>CONSIGNMENT SPECIAL \$49.95!!</p> <p>BUY! SELL! TRADE!</p> <p>WE BUY CARS!!!!</p>	<p>2012 TOYOTA COROLLA \$13,889 STOCK #4626 - PLUS TAX</p>	<p>2005 HONDA ELEMENT \$10,349 STOCK #4624 - PLUS TAX</p>	<p>2008 FORD EXPLORER \$9,650 STOCK #4622 - PLUS TAX</p>	<p>2005 NISSAN FRONTIER \$13,650 STOCK #4657 - PLUS TAX</p>	<p>2008 HYUNDAI SANTA FE \$6,495 STOCK# 4598 - PLUS TAX</p>	<p>2005 TOYOTA AMV \$6,940 STOCK #4606 - PLUS TAX</p>
	<p>2003 FORD EXCURSION \$12,499 STOCK #4655 - PLUS TAX</p>	<p>1988 HITCHHIKER II \$4,995 STOCK #4445-5 - PLUS TAX</p>	<p>1995 COLEMAN TRAVEL TRAILER \$4,449 STOCK 34601 - PLUS TAX</p>	<p>2003 KEYSTONE MONTANA \$17,349 STOCK #4623 - PLUS TAX</p>	<p>2006 JEEP \$12,900 STOCK #4533 - PLUS TAX</p>	<p>2010 FORD F-150 \$20,300 STOCK #4654 - PLUS TAX</p>
<p>BARN 8 X 8 \$80.79 /Month</p>	<p>UTILITY SHED 8 X 10 \$1,895</p>	<p>LOFTED BARN 10 X 16 \$3,610</p>	<p>CABIN 8 X 12 \$2,670 NO CREDIT CHECK! FREE DELIVERY!</p>	<p>CAR PORTS STARTING AT \$695 INCLUDES INSTALLATION!</p>	<p>SIDE LOFTED BARN \$3,500 NO CREDIT CHECK! FREE DELIVERY!</p>	<p>173.61 /Month</p>