



OUTDOORS:
BACKCOUNTRY TRIP? BRING YOUR BEACON
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A home of its own

Shepherd's Hand Center gains surety with building purchase

By KATHARHYNN HEIDELBERG
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Shepherd's Hand Center is no longer a tenant — about one year after leasing 505 S. Second St., the charity closed on the building on Thursday.

"We were finally able to sign all the documents. We are now the proud owners of a mortgage," Shepherd's Hand founder Gary Martinez said.

"I can truly say now that we are not homeless. We have a home. That's something to celebrate, not only a fresh, new year, but a fresh, new building."

Martinez founded Shepherd's Hand to provide hot meals; clothing and other services to the homeless and food for anyone who needs it. He first operated out of the MADA building, then other locations, before leasing the South Second Street location with a three-year option to buy it from Grand Junction attorney Joseph Coleman, who worked closely with Martinez on the lease to purchase option.

"He's been working very cooperatively with us all along. We give thanks to him for that," Martinez said, also saying a number of substantial donations were critical to allowing the purchase to move forward.

"Being able to have something like this is super important," realtor John Renfrow said. "I'm hoping it will serve the community for years to come."

Renfrow's father, Jim, works closely with Martinez and, with Martinez, is on the board for the Lighthouse Ministry. The Lighthouse operates the season-

SHEPHERD'S HAND CENTER

- Breakfast is Monday — Friday, 8 — 9 a.m.
- Lunch is Monday — Friday, 11:30 a.m. — 12:30 p.m.
- Shepherd's Hand also provides and prepares food for Region 10's Retired Senior Volunteer Program volunteers to deliver to enrolled seniors.
- Food box distribution is Monday and Thursdays from 9 a.m. — noon. No income requirements. Also open-shelf selection available.
- Center hours: 7 a.m. — 5 p.m. Monday — Friday at 505 S. Second St.
- Information/services/volunteering/donations: 970-275-7215 or shepherdshandmontrose.org.

al, overnight emergency shelter north of town.

Coleman's cooperation allowed Shepherd's Hand to buy the South Second Street building below the \$534,888 list price, for \$505,000. The late Chris Hauck helped advance the purchase, John Renfrow said. "He probably would have been happy to see that come to fruition," said Renfrow.

According to real estate listing information, the 10,447 square-foot building — a stone's throw from the Montrose Police Department and the library — includes 5,865 square-feet of commercial space; basement space; offices and two apartments, both of which are being rented and will continue to be let out through a property management company.

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Montrose's Got Talent is coming back

Auditions are on Jan. 18 at the Pavilion



The Montrose's Got Talent first-place winners from 2020, Eddy Gonzalez and Ana Archer, perform their vocal duet. (Daily Press file photo)

By ANNA LYNN WINFREY
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After a COVID-induced hiatus last winter, event organizers for Montrose's Got Talent are excited to put on the Montrose's Got Talent event for the fourth time.

Talented Montrose residents of all ages can audition at the Pavilion Event Center on Jan. 18 at 5:30 p.m.

Those who advance to the finals in the afternoon of Feb. 12 have the chance to win

some serious prize money: the

winner of the competition will receive \$1,000.

Although plenty of money will be disbursed to winners, the event is also a major fundraising opportunity for the sponsor, Montrose Education Foundation.

"The fundraising that we do is to put back into the school district, into our teachers and the programs that they do," Deann Balash, who is the vice president of the Montrose Education Foundation, said.

The funds raised will go toward the impact award, an

annual grant that teachers can apply for, as well as the teacher of the year awards.

Tickets for the finale on Feb. 12 will be \$10 for adults and \$5 for students. They will be available to purchase at the Montrose Economic Development Corporation offices, school district headquarters and at the door. An opportunity to livestream the event is also in the works.

Anna Lynn Winfrey is a staff writer for the Montrose Daily Press.

MCSO working on updating COVID guidelines

By ANNA LYNN WINFREY
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As students return to classrooms on Jan. 5, Montrose County School District is going through the lengthy process of planning how to implement new federal and state guidelines for quarantines and isolation periods.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention announced the new guidelines for isolating and quarantining on Dec. 27, 2021, as the omicron variant of the coronavirus is rapidly spreading around the country. More than one million cases were reported in the U.S. on Monday.

Montrose County reported 67 new cases on Monday, a sharp uptick from the 17 cases reported on the previous Monday, Dec. 27, 2021.

The omicron variant of the coronavirus is quickly becoming the predominant strain in Colorado and the rest of the country. Preliminary data suggests that the variant is more transmissible than other strains, but leads to less severe infections.

The state of Colorado also adopted the new guidelines that cut the isolation period for people who test positive in half to five

days. For the next five days, they should wear tight-fitting masks when interacting with others. Vaccinated and boosted individuals that test positive do not need to isolate as long as they wear a good mask.

Also, people who have been exposed to the virus should only stay in quarantine for five days if they remain asymptomatic. In both cases, people should wear well-fitting masks for the following five days after leaving isolation.

Montrose County School District is actively working on how to implement the guidelines, which is a lengthy process: multiple departments from human resources to school nurses will need to take time to coordinate and anticipate questions from staff and parents.

Matt Jenkins, MSCD public information officer, did not specify a time that the new guidelines would be implemented, but said that it will be sometime very soon.

"We are taking the revised guidance under consideration and are actively working to revise our COVID-19 school and district policies," Jenkins said.

Anna Lynn Winfrey is a staff writer for the Montrose Daily Press.



Gary Martinez, founder of Shepherd's Hand, announced on Jan. 6 the nonprofit has purchased 505 S. Second St., a building it has leased for about a year. (Montrose Daily Press/file photo)

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Montrose County Sheriff's Office Blotter

December 30

0801 Hours Deputy assisted Montrose PD with a stray dog at Uncompahgre Avenue and South Twelfth Street.
 0810 Hours Deputy was dispatched to a livestock problem at Marine and LaSalle Road.
 0838 Hours Deputy took a report of a lost license plate in the 15700 Block 6100 Road.
 0901 Hours Deputy responded to a criminal mischief in the 19200 Block Highway 550.
 1015 Hours William Kennedy, 49, was cited for disregarding a stop sign at West Oak Grove and Chipeta Road.
 1034 Hours Deputy made victim notification in the 21500 Block Uncompahgre Road.
 1352 Hours Deputy assisted the ambulance at Maple Grove and 6000 Road.
 1446 Hours Deputy was dispatched to a civil matter in the 57300 Block K57 Trail.
 1454 Hours Deputy took an informational report in the 67600 Block Landfill Road.
 1627 Hours Deputy took an informational report in the 13400 Block L Road.
 1650 Hours K9 deputy assisted Montrose PD with a drug sniff of a vehicle in the 1500 Block Ogden Road.
 1839 Hours Corey Bond, 34, was cited for speeding in the 61000 Block Jay Jay Road.
 1843 Hours Deputy took an informational report in the 14500 Block Mustang Lane.
 1913 Hours Jorge Corral, 35, was cited for speeding in the 61000 Block Jay Jay Road.
 1954 Hours Giovanni Perez,



20, was cited for speeding in the 61000 Block Jay Jay Road.
 2322 Hours Deputy responded to a livestock problem in the 63700 Block Ida Road.
 12/31/21
 0105 Hours A juvenile was cited for obstructed license plate and no valid driver's license at LaSalle Road and North Townsend Avenue.
 0151 Hours Deputy was dispatched to an alarm in the 7300 Block 6150 Road.
 0932 Hours Deputy responded to a civil matter in the 18900 Block Dave Wood Road.
 1118 Hours Deputy was dispatched to a livestock problem at Pearl and 6250 Road.
 1207 Hours Deputy performed a welfare check in the 69900 Block Highway 50.
 1509 Hours Deputy responded

to a 911 hang up in the 100 Block Lark Lane.
 1515 Hours Deputy was dispatched to a stray dog report in the 69100 Block Racine Road.
 1551 Hours Deputy responded to a harassment in the 62600 Block Jacob Road.
 1629 Hours Deputy assisted Montrose PD with a smoke report in the 700 Block 6530 Road.
 1634 Hours Craig Pentafalio, 49, was cited for speeding in the 16000 Block Chipeta Road.
 1811 Hours Deputy performed a welfare check in the 67600 Block Kinikin Road.
 2034 Hours Deputy assisted the ambulance in the 2100 Block Airport Road.
 2039 Hours Deputy was dispatched to a report of

fireworks in the 62700 Block Spring Creek Road.
 2228 Hours Deputy assisted state patrol with an accident in the 11900 Block 6450 Road.
 2341 Hours Deputy, while on patrol, observed fireworks in the 1200 Block North Townsend Avenue. The parties were advised to act in a safe manner.
 2354 Hours Deputies responded to a disturbance in the 500 Block Fruit Park Road.
 01/01/22
 0313 Hours Deputies were dispatched to a disturbance in the 8800 Block 6075 Road.
 1247 Hours Deputy assisted the ambulance in the 63500 Block Spring Creek Road.
 1306 Hours Deputy responded to a stray dog in the 14400 Block Marine Road.
 1331 Hours Deputy assisted

state patrol with an accident at mile marker 84 on Highway 50.
 1333 Hours Deputy was dispatched to a 911 hang up in the 4900 Block Highway 348.
 1427 Hours Deputy assisted a citizen in the 5400 Block Highway 348.
 1459 Hours Deputy responded to a livestock problem at LaSalle and 6175 Road.
 1601 Hours Deputy performed an animal welfare check at South River and Ida Road.
 1728 Hours Deputy assisted the fire department at Uncompahgre and 6840 Road.
 1915 Hours Deputy was dispatched to a civil matter in the 67600 Block Landfill Road.
 2025 Hours Deputies checked an unsecured building in the 63100 Block LaSalle Road.
 2040 Hours Deputy assisted state patrol with an accident in the 16900 Block Chipeta Road.
 2324 Hours Deputy took an informational report in the 21600 Block Government Springs Road.
 01/02/22
 0005 Hours Nicole Hensley, 39, was cited for disregarding a traffic control device and no valid driver's license at South Townsend Avenue and East Main Street.
 0428 Hours Deputy assisted Montrose PD with an alarm in the 200 Block North Townsend Avenue.
 0605 Hours Deputy responded to an abandoned vehicle at Dave Wood and Sanborn Park Road.

0804 Hours Deputy assisted a citizen in the 000 Block South Cascade Avenue.
 0910 Hours Deputy was dispatched to a stray dog in the 61000 Block Hillsdale Drive.
 1040 Hours Deputies assisted the ambulance in the 17200 Block T41 Road.
 1050 Hours Deputy performed an animal welfare check in the 8200 Block 6150 Road.
 1209 Hours Deputy assisted a citizen at mile marker 84 on Highway 50.
 1239 Hours Deputy took a theft report in the 61000 Block David Road.
 1423 Hours Deputy responded to a stray dog in the 15900 Block 6100 Road.
 1511 Hours Deputy assisted the ambulance in the 63500 Block Spring Creek Road.
 1521 Hours Deputy was dispatched to a stray dog in the 14400 Block Marine Road.
 1734 Hours Deputy responded to a vicious dog report in the 13500 Block 6950 Road.
 1748 Hours Deputy was dispatched to a livestock problem at LaSalle and Marine Road.
 2102 Hours Deputy took an informational report in the 21600 Block Government Springs Road.
 2229 Hours Deputy assisted state patrol with an accident in the 16100 Block Chipeta Road.
 2229 Hours Deputy assisted the fire department in the 6800 Block 5825 Road.
 Arrests and citations are based on allegations. They are not convictions.

HOME

FROM PAGE A1

Shepherd's Hand is getting the building, with a prime downtown location, at a discount.

"From a personal standpoint, I think we got a good deal. We got a fair price," Martinez said.

Owning the building also increases Martinez's grant-funding eligibility for operational costs and capital improvements. Shepherd's Hand continues to rely on community donations to fund all of its work. The charity has no paid staff.

While still leasing the building, Martinez relocated his commodities distribution site to it; 505 S. Second St. also become the new the pick-up/intake location for nightly rides to the Lighthouse shelter.

Upon moving into the building, Martinez gained a space outside to park his commercial-grade food trailer, from which volunteers serve breakfast and lunch five days a week. As well, Shepherd's Hand partnered with Region

10 to provide hot delivered meals to qualifying seniors.

Shepherd's Hand Center has laundry service, show-ers, phone and internet access, as well as storage lockers, for those who need them.

With space the South Second Street location affords, Martinez set up his food distribution along the lines of grocery store shelves, from which people can "shop" for what they need from available items.

One service Shepherd's Hand Center does not provide is overnight housing — that is still done at the Lighthouse shelter, which operates during winter months.

So far this season, there's been enough room at the 30-bed Lighthouse dormitory to house everyone seeking a bed and place out of the bitter cold.

That does not mean everyone who might do better with shelter for the night is seeking it: some people, for whatever reason, prefer not to come into the shelter, or have

been banned for refusing to abide by the rules.

Lighthouse still offers them sleeping bags, with body bags and cardboard for insulation, plus tents and food.

"This is why we made it a point to be able to give them whatever cold weather gear they need, whatever it takes to keep them warm in this environment that is actually a risk to their lives," Martinez said.

Lighthouse continues to operate despite COVID-19 constraints and it follows all protocols for sanitation and screening. Although local regulations don't require it, the shelter requires everyone to wear masks inside.

"God has been good to us. We haven't had anything even close to an issue come up with COVID, either at the shelter dorms or at the (Shepherd's Hand) Center," Martinez said. "We have a high-risk population we serve and a high risk population of (older) volunteers that serve them. ... Better overkill than having an issue come up."

Lighthouse and Shep-

herd's Hand are separate entities, but work closely together, as well as with other nonprofits, such as Haven House, and entities that serve the homeless and lower-income people.

"Shepherd's Hand and the Lighthouse are still a first responder, if you will. We're taking care of the immediate needs," Martinez said.

Those needs appear to be growing for Shepherd's Hand.

"Our numbers are going up. We've probably gone up a good 10 to 15% this fall on the number of meals that we serve," Martinez said.

In just five months, the number of meals delivered to seniors (or collected by them at the Shepherd's Hand) has gone up.

At the start of the Region 10 partnership last July, 45 to 50 meals were collected or delivered to eligible seniors.

"Today, we served 57. We're averaging between 55 and 60," Martinez said Wednesday. "We've gone up in just home deliveries."

Numbers also climbed for Shepherd's Hand's

regular hot breakfast and lunch, which are open to anyone.

"Hot meals per day are averaging between 100 and 135 meals a day," he said.

When Shepherd's Hand first opened the center's doors last year, it served about 350 clients overall. It now serves about 475 clients overall.

"Our client base has increased substantially, maybe because we're here in a permanent location. I get people calling — private citizens — saying 'I found somebody at the Walmart; can you help them?' They are finding us now through different sources. We're getting more people recognizing that we're here," Martinez said.

"We want people to know we're here and we have these services available and they're free."

Delivering all of these services depends on donations and volunteers, he

said, thanking the community for its "fantastic" support.

Although Shepherd's Hand only recently acquired its own location and only inked the sale agreement on Thursday, its work has continued for years — and its mission dates back to the founding of the now defunct Christ's Kitchen. (That nonprofit served hot lunches daily until a few years ago when the building it rented was sold and no affordable alternative site could be located.)

For Martinez, signing the dotted line to buy 505 S. Second St. brought welcome stability.

"This is the culmination of a 20-year vision that came about when I got involved in starting Christ's Kitchen," he said.

Katharhynn Heidelberg is the Montrose Daily Press assistant editor and senior writer. Follow her on Twitter, @kathMDP.

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