

Mountain Monthly

Your Guide to Cloudcroft and the Sacramento Mountains

FREE



Chef Richard Lepree (Center) and his team are reinvigorating the newly-named 1899 at the Lodge

A Kitchen Reborn:

One Chef’s Mission to Restore Fine Dining at The Lodge — and Train Who Comes Next

by DREW GAINES

Step inside the kitchen at **1899** at the Lodge at Cloudcroft, where **Executive Chef Richard Lepree** and his team are writing the next chapter for one of the Southwest’s most storied hotels.

In this short film, **DREW GAINES** takes you into the kitchen as the team prepares a tasting dinner for a group of Cloudcroft locals.

You’ll hear Lepree explain the difference between a cook and a chef using nothing but a tomato. You’ll watch Sous chef **Caelan Bickel**, who grew up on green chili and Texas food, describe the adventure of learning a whole new way to think about ingredients. And you’ll see a kitchen where everyone has a voice — where the newest menu is the first one the entire team helped create.

Lepree, a 34-year veteran of the culinary business who trained in Michelin kitchens leads a young brigade of Cloudcroft-grown chefs who share his passion for cooking from scratch. Chef de partie **Bentley McNab** sears

pineapple for the shrimp salad. Pastry chef **Jewlyn Palmer** keeps the line moving through what she cheerfully calls “a chaotic dance.”

Together, they’ve built seasonal menus: most recently featuring ahi ceviche, prime New York strips, elk backstrap and mussels over handmade pasta — all prepared fresh, locally sourced when the season allows, and made with care.

Lepree calls The Lodge his last kitchen, and he means it as a compliment. After decades of cooking across two countries, he found the place where he wants to be. Now he’s pouring that experience into a team he hopes will carry it forward long after he steps away from the line.

Pull up a chair and meet the crew. Scan the QR to the left to go to the video now.

Or open your browser and go to: <https://www.cloudcroftreader.com/p/video-a-kitchen-reborn-one-chefs>



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Lori Keller del Palacio and Joe Ziegenfuss are all smiles at New Village Hardware. MOUNTAIN LIFE, p 22.



Taking to the sky. (Photo by Dwight Raulerson)

Legacy of Liberty Air Show at Holloman AFB

West of Alamogordo, Holloman Air Force Base will host its free, two-day Legacy of Liberty Air Show on April 18–19, with gates opening at 8 a.m. and the event running until 5 p.m. both days.

The air show is open to the general public, with access through the base’s main gates and parking available directly on the airfield.

“People don’t need a special base pass. Entry and parking is free,” says base Public Affairs Media Chief Denise Ottaviano.

The 49th Wing — home to the Air Force’s largest F-16 Fighting Falcon pilot training unit and MQ-9 Reaper aircrew formal training unit — is hosting the show, with mission partners across Team Holloman also on hand to showcase their roles in national defense.

Headlining the flying program is the Patriots Jet Team. The largest civilian-owned aerobatic jet team in the western hemisphere, the Patriots are made up of highly experienced aviators — some of whom previously flew with the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds and U.S. Navy Blue Angels — and will perform in six Aero L-39 Albatros trainer jets.

They’ll be joined by a roster of performers from around the country and beyond, including Australian aerobatic pilot Aaron Deliu, Holloman’s own F-16s in a flight demonstration, and two parachute teams: the U.S. Air Force

Academy Wings of Blue and the U.S. Army Golden Knights.

On the ground, attendees can browse static displays spanning heritage warplanes through present-day F-35s, plus exotic cars. The 704th Test Group and 635th Materiel Maintenance Group will square off in a weapons loading competition, racing to load inert bombs onto aircraft in front of the crowd.

“That will give people some insight into what we do here at the 49th Wing to help defend our country,” Ottaviano said.

A STEM zone with hands-on activities and bouncy castles, a kid zone, food vendors, and live music round out the weekend’s offerings.

Either day, the flight line is fully exposed — April in southern New Mexico means sunshine. Patrons are encour-

aged to bring a folding chair, sunscreen, a hat, and a personal umbrella for shade.

Shade structures are not permitted. Water refill stations will be on the grounds; bring a refillable water bottle. Food, drinks, and concessions will be available for purchase.

Strollers and wagons are welcome. Security checkpoints will be in place — clear bags are strongly recommended to speed up entry, and no weapons of any kind, pocket knives, or drugs including cannabis are permitted.

“We just can’t wait to open our doors to the public so they can see the spectacular aerial display we have planned and come out and meet our airmen,” Ottaviano said.

For more information and updates, visit holloman.af.mil.

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One-man aerial display (Photo by Dwight Raulerson)

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Dear Readers,

This month’s issue reflects the work of our growing Monthly team. We’re grateful for every person in the staff box, our family, and friends who help us tell the stories on this mountain.

This month, we go behind the scenes at the Lodge, where **Chef Richard Lepree** and his kitchen brigade do the work that is turning one of Cloudcroft’s most well-known kitchens into a training ground for fine dining. The full story is at CloudcroftReader.com, told through a short film produced by Contributing Editor Drew Gaines.



Local mountain insurance agent **Ashley Dalton** joins us to break down changing policies and what homeowners in our area need to know about their rights. It’s practical information, and we’re glad to have her expertise in these pages.

Reporter **Jonny Coker** takes a close

er look at the Monthly’s “Scouting Around” columnist and astronomer **Greg Crinklaw** — a profile that shows another side of a familiar name. Triston Tompkins gives us a new recipe to try in the Flavor Lab.

And we’re pleased to introduce CHS Junior and Mountain Monthly intern **Paula Finch**, who debuts her sports column in this issue. Finch recently served as “Lieutenant Governor for a Day” at the state capitol — we’re looking forward to publishing her work.

Check out our look ahead to the Holloman AFB Legacy of Liberty Air Show to stay in the loop. Mountain News keeps you up to date on what’s happening in and around the village, including business, government, schools, and the forest.

Extra, off the Press

Last month, we addressed the rumors about Mad Jack’s closing — they’re not. Our feature of **Chris Shaw**, James Jackson’s manager at the Cloudcroft spot, set the record straight.

As Spring arrives in the mountains,

the Lincoln National Forest has moved its Fire Danger Rating to “High,” as of March 16. Visitors to our forest are urged to use common sense and caution. Please take it seriously.

We recently walked about with Sacramento Ranger District Suppression Fire Management Officer **Joe Kimble** to talk about what’s ahead this fire season — conditions, preparedness, and what residents and visitors should expect. We asked the questions; you get the answers. That conversation is in this issue.

In the Voices section, VFD volunteer **Hilary Kitzman** writes about the Wildland Firefighter Academy. It’s a good reminder of the people who volunteer to protect our lives, our homes, and our forests.

Finally, we’ve heard from a lot of kids who were overjoyed to see themselves in Mountain Life — and that never gets old. Keep sending us your snapshots of folks living their best mountain life: outdoors, at an event, a business, on a trail, at a game, and more.

Send them to hello@mountainmonthly.com.

Staff Box



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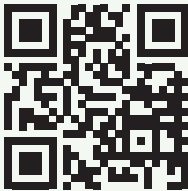
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Switchbacks by Rand Carlson



Public Meeting Notice for the Supplemental Watershed Plan-Environmental Assessment for the Upper Rio Penasco Sites 1, 2, & 3A Dam Rehabilitation Project in Otero County, New Mexico

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and the Otero Soil and Water Conservation District, as the project Sponsor, in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as Federal Cooperating Agencies, are preparing a Supplemental Watershed Plan-Environmental Assessment (Supplemental Plan-EA) for the Upper Rio Penasco Sites 1, 2, and 3A Dam Rehabilitation Project in the Lincoln National Forest in Otero County, New Mexico. The Supplemental Plan-EA is being prepared and funded in accordance with the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566), which provides for cooperation between the Federal Government and the States and their political subdivisions to address resource concerns due to erosion, floodwater, and sediment and provide for improved utilization of the land and water resources.

NRCS and the Otero Soil and Water Conservation District will hold a Public Alternatives Finalization Meeting on Tuesday, April 14th, 2026, at 6:30 PM at the Mayhill Community Center in Mayhill, New Mexico, to present the alternatives considered, the overall evaluation processes, the alternatives selected as the preferred, and to offer stakeholders an opportunity to provide feedback on any aspects of the project. Feedback will help guide the development of the Supplemental Plan-EA. There will also be an option to attend the meeting virtually. Details on how to attend the Public Alternatives Finalization Meeting can be found below:

In-Person Public Alternatives Finalization Meeting

Mayhill Community Center
15 Civic Center Drive
Mayhill, NM 88339

Virtual Public Alternatives Finalization Meeting

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4997576044?omn=86865446721>
Meeting ID: 499 757 6044
Phone #: 1-719-359-4580

Comments may be submitted in any one of the forms listed below. Comments can also be submitted even without attending the Public Alternatives Finalization Meeting. However, all comments must be postmarked by Thursday, May 14th, 2026.

- Submit written comments at the in-person Public Alternatives Finalization Meeting
- Mail written comments to:
USDA NRCS-New Mexico
Attn: Merceidez Fabok
100 Sun Avenue Northeast, Suite 602
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87109-3434

Email your comments to: Merceidez.Fabok@usda.gov



Additional information on the Supplemental Plan-EA can be found at the following link: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/watershed-and-flood-prevention-operations-wfpo-program/new-mexico/watershed> or by scanning the QR Code below. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.



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April 2026

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Lincoln National Forest employees Jorden Scott (L) and Joe Kimble (R) take the Monthly on tour through a recently managed campground

Fire Season 2026: What Cloudcroft Residents Need to Know

Joe Kimble, our District’s Suppression Fire Management Officer (FMO), covers fire season conditions, resources, alerts, fuel projects, and what residents can do.

Joe Kimble took over as Suppression FMO for the Sacramento Ranger District of the Lincoln National Forest earlier this year. He previously served as FMO on the Guadalupe Ranger District and has worked in wildland fire for more than two decades, starting on an engine crew on the Apache-Sitgreaves in Arizona.

Kimble and his family have lived in Cloudcroft for 13 years, where he coaches football as a volunteer with Cloudcroft Schools.

I met with Kimble at the district office outside Cloudcroft, where we toured the office campus and Slide Campground, site of a November prescribed pile burn, where he talked about fire, seasonal employees, and more.

Conditions and Risk

Kimble said conditions in the Sacramento Mountains are somewhat improved over 2025, but not enough to lower the district’s alert posture. “Last year was probably a little bit more droughty than what we are this year. Still a lot of fine, dead, dry fuels out there. But I would say we’re definitely not out of the woods,” he said.

“We haven’t been getting the snow packs that we’ve been normally getting, historically, for several years

now,” Kimble said. “I wouldn’t say it’s super scary, but we’re definitely paying attention with a really close eye.”

Kimble identified the main factors driving our fire risk: fuel moisture, dead fuel loads, weather, and human activity.

Prevention crews go out weekly to pull fuel samples — measuring moisture in grasses, brush, downed wood, and living trees — to track whether conditions are improving or deteriorating. Relative humidity, incoming wind events, and regional trends all feed into the district’s preparedness decisions.

“A good majority of our fires are human-caused — particularly in this area,” Kimble said. He noted that this is not the case forest-wide across Region 3, but around the Cloudcroft interface, people are the leading source of ignition.

When asked if forest closures were likely, Kimble said, “My answer is always, I’ll tell you next fall. A lot of those conditions may look like we could close right now, but then we could start getting a little moisture, or the conditions just aren’t there — and then there’s no need for closures.”

He said the district implements Stage 1 and Stage 2 fire restrictions before resorting to full closures. Full closure is a last resort.

On March 16, just days after the interview, the district moved to “high” fire danger.

Resources and Staffing

The Sacramento Ranger District fields two Type 6 and two Type 3 engines in Cloudcroft, plus two additional engines in Mayhill.

The full Lincoln National Forest fields eight engines and two hotshot crews, the Sac Hotshots and Smokey Bear Hotshots on the Smokey Bear Ranger District.

Kimble said seasonal firefighters

are currently onboarding, working through two weeks of required critical training before the season starts.”As Region 3 comes into fire season, we’ll bring in crews to augment what we already have.”

The decision to bring in additional resources is data-driven — fuel moisture indices, weather forecasts, and regional preparedness levels all factor in. Out-of-region engine crews that locals see stopping in town for gas are staging for preparedness, not necessarily responding to an active fire.

When asked if federal layoffs or funding freezes over the past two years affected the district, Kimble said fire staffing has been largely insulated. “I would say not necessarily with fire. The other entities — yes. But fire, we’ve been able to stay pretty whole.”

The district has one law enforcement officer for the Sacramento Ranger District, Kimble confirmed. Primary patrol responsibility during restrictions falls on prevention personnel, some of whom are Forest Protection Officers authorized to issue citations.

“A lot of our prevention folks do a lot of that heavy lifting,” Kimble said. “They’ll go out and do those patrols.” During holiday weekends, the district adds patrol capacity — more engines on the road, more prevention staff in campgrounds. Additional law enforcement can also be brought in during elevated fire danger periods.

Kimble said the approach is education first. “Some people just honestly don’t know. We really lean toward educating the public — this is why, here’s some material, this is why we’re in Stage 1 or Stage 2 restrictions — before we just start writing tickets. That’s not fair.”

Partnerships and Coordination

“Over the last several years, the relationship has really grown between all of (the area partnerships), and it’s

really gotten better. A lot of volunteer fire departments have really stepped up and gotten their wildland fire programs going. Having those cooperators to help us out, where we can help them out, has been huge,” Kimble said.

In the wildland-urban interface (WUI) surrounding Cloudcroft — where National Forest land meets private property and residential areas — volunteer departments are often first on scene.

“They beat us to the fires a lot of times, because they’re there in those areas,” Kimble said. “We definitely rely on them to get there and start engaging. But then once we get there, we take over and go into unified command — if we can use their help, we keep them; if we can’t, it’s completely on the forest.”

He said the broader experience of managing fires in populated mountain communities is part of the job across the forest system. “That’s what we do. Our number one priority for the Forest Service is public safety.”

Fuel Reduction Projects

There are several fuel-reduction and prescribed burn projects planned and/or in progress.

The largest project in the district covers up to 140,000 acres in the southern Sacramento Mountains. The Lincoln National Forest completed its final Environmental Impact Statement in December 2024, opening a 30-day public objection period. Kimble described the project as “coming online soon.”

It focuses on mixed conifer and ponderosa pine forests that have declined due to insect infestation, disease, and drought-driven tree mortality. Restoration tools include mechanical thinning and prescribed fire. Implementation is expected to span 10 to 20 years. The project was developed in coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and New Mexico De-

partment of Game and Fish.

A fuels treatment project covering approximately 3,000 acres around Cloudcroft’s south and western boundaries is in development. Per Forest Service project records, wildlife and botany surveys were completed in 2024, with heritage surveys and fuels work to follow. The project must undergo review under the National Environmental Policy Act.

“We have work lined up for all the crews and the hotshot crews throughout the summer — thinning, chainsaws, piling, different techniques,” Kimble said. “It’s not just springtime we get prepared. We’re preparing for fires year-round.”

He said, “From conception of a project to getting all the environmental clearances, it takes three to four years before we can actually implement.”

Terrain is the other compounding factor. Steep slopes are harder and more expensive to treat mechanically. Private land ownership is woven throughout the WUI, where crews can operate.

On the large wood chips left behind by mastication (mechanical chipping) projects — a frequent question from residents, he said: “The wood chips tend to decompose faster than a log does. That helps the breakdown process happen faster, maybe gives us a little more time to come back and do a broadcast burn in that area — because you don’t have all these 10-foot trees that could get up in the canopies and start burning.”

Both Kimble and District Information Officer Jorden Scott noted that re-entry is fundamental to the strategy: one treatment doesn’t finish a forest.

Alerts, Planning, and Public Information

Otero County and Lincoln County have implemented Genasys Protect (formerly Zonehaven), a zone-based emergency notification platform. When an evacuation order is issued for a designated zone, alerts go to any phone within that geofenced area — including visitors not registered with the county.

“It goes to any phone in that zone,” Kimble confirmed. “Absolutely.”

The app is free at protect.genasys.com.

For real-time fire information, Kimble pointed to three sources: the district’s Lincoln National Forest social media page; InciWeb (inciweb.nwcg.gov) for official incident data; and the National Weather Service El Paso (weather.gov/epz) for fire weather outlooks.

What Residents Need to Know:

“Erich Wuershing has done a lot of good work to get (the FireWise program) up and going for the village community of Cloudcroft. It’s free, it’s online, and it gives you a plethora of information about what a homeowner can do,” Kimble said.

He emphasized, “The biggest message I would like to see get out there is the public doing their part — from respecting Forest Service grounds and recreating responsibly, but also with their private property.”

“Because I, as a fire management officer, have a hard time with sending my guys in to do the work that should have already been done. They’re putting their lives on the line. People have to do their own home hardening and be prepared for themselves. That’s the biggest message. People have got to do their due diligence.”

Village Update:

Council Hires Familiar Face for Second Police Officer. Plus, Higher Trash Rates and a Fiscal Roadmap

The Cloudcroft Village Council met on Tuesday, March 17, to cover a lot of ground. Most of it was catching up.

The trustees unanimously voted to fill a police department vacancy, increase garbage billing rates that hadn’t been updated since 2023, and put a state-required financial compliance plan on the record.

Police Department: Testa Returns

The council unanimously approved hiring Mike Testa as a police officer at a starting salary of \$70,720 — bringing back one of Cloudcroft’s familiar faces in law enforcement.

Testa served as the village’s Chief of Police until May 2024, when he resigned alongside Deputy Chief David Sanchez and Officer Calib Bruce. The resignations came amid a dispute with the previous council over a proposed Panama schedule — 12-hour rotating day and night shifts — which Testa and his officers argued was unworkable with a four-person force. “I didn’t sign up for this,” Testa said at the time. He went to work as a logger with Ellinger Logging.

Chief Roger Schoolcraft, who himself resigned in December 2024 before returning under Mayor Wiley’s administration, made Testa his first and only pick.

“I looked at no less than 20 applicants since I’ve been back in the last few months, and Mike’s the only one that I’ve selected,” Schoolcraft told the council. He described Testa as someone who “brings a lot of character to the badge” and has family and businesses rooted in the village.”

The two plan to work a split schedule, providing coverage seven days a week. Testa can return to active duty after completing basic firearms **qualifications. Schoolcraft said he hopes to have him on board at the start of the next pay period.**

Testa told the Reader he’s “happy and proud and glad to come back and serve the community” and is “excited to return under the new **administration.**” His focus: “keep people safe.”

Schoolcraft noted the federal “safe schools grant,” which would fund half

the salary of a desired school resource officer, remains frozen. “Until that gets unfrozen, Mike and I are just going to man the helm,” he said.

Going Well: Water Report

Public Works Supervisor J.J. Carrizal reported the village is currently running at roughly 5% water loss for February, well below the national average of 16%. The village produced **approximately 4.3 million gallons and sold 4.1 million.**

The number is a meaningful improvement from earlier this year, when the village was dealing with what Carrizal called “the big one” — a massive leak on Columbine Blvd. that was losing an estimated 2.5 million gallons per month before it was found and repaired in early February.

approved by the council in both July 2024 and July 2025 — but were never entered into the billing software.

The village has been absorbing the gap ever since, paying additional haul rates from the general fund.

Trustee Matt Willett asked: will residents be billed retroactively? “No,” Turri confirmed. “They do not pay in arrears.” The unanimously approved 7% increase should take effect with the May billing cycle, once the software is updated.

Fiscal Compliance Resolution

The council unanimously approved Resolution 2026-11, formally addressing a corrective action plan required by the state Department of Finance and Administration (DFA).

The problems are not new. The FY2024



Mike Testa returns to the Cloudcroft PD

Garbage Collection Rates

The council unanimously approved two rate adjustments for waste collection services.

The first: a contractually allowed 2.4% increase, raising the collection haul rate from \$17.36 to \$17.88, effective July 1 through the Southwest Disposal contract.

The second was a correction years in the making. Village Clerk Jini Turri explained that Consumer Price Index (CPI)-based rate increases were

independent audit — presented to the council last November — found significant deficiencies in bank reconciliations, accounts payable, and segregation of duties, along with a missing capital asset list and material weakness in accounting records.

Turri was candid about the workload ahead. “These requirements fall on my shoulders right now,” she said. She and Finance Director Sylvia Hall are working through the backlog together, with support from contractors Karen





PD Chief Schoolcraft (L) and Testa (R) address the council

Gutierrez, Judi Starkovich, and DFA budgetanalyst Bryce Brock.

Turri said she would eventually request hiring a deputy clerk — but not yet. “With where we are in two budget cycles, there’s not enough time for me to train (them).” She said her priority is getting the books current so that fiscal year 2026-27 “looks a lot better.”

Fire

The Lincoln National Forest recently raised its fire danger rating to “High” across all three ranger districts, effective March 16.

The council authorized Mayor Dusty Wiley to implement or adjust fire restrictions throughout fire season with-

out requiring a council vote each time. During his meeting report, Fire Chief Erich Wuersching said he coordinates closely with the Forest Service, State Forestry, Otero County, and neighboring communities. “When it comes time to implement fire restriction, we try to do it about the same time,” he said.

Wiley later told the Reader he’ll defer to **Wuersching’s guidance on timing restrictions.**

Other Actions

Trustees Matt Willett, Keith Hamilton, Gail McCoy, and Danny Hardwick all unanimously voted to approve:

- * A preliminary engineering report contract with CDM Smith for a wastewater treatment plant master plan at \$92,680, funded by an existing grant.
- * An application for a Clean and Beautiful grant, submitted on the village’s behalf by local artist and Burro Avenue business owner **Samantha Odom.**
- * A special use permit for Andy Anderson to sell chainsaw carvings near Cloud 9000 Coffee and Fernando’s Burritos.

- * Authorizing the submission of an NMDOT Transportation Project Fund application for paving roads.
- * A variance for a property at 1521 Rainmaker, consistent with a 10-foot rear yard setback granted to the same property under a previous owner in 2015.

The council was scheduled to meet the following Tuesday, March 24, along with two public hearings on Planning and Zoning matters. .

PVT Hosts Annual Members’ Meeting at Cloudcroft

PVT has three members’ meetings locations: Artesia, Hondo, and Cloudcroft. At the CHS Gym on Saturday, April 25th, registration opens at 9:00 a.m., and the meeting starts at 10:00. More on the meeting, from PVT:

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Abram Chavez hones his skills

Taking Aim: Cloudcroft Schools Launch New Archery Program

In the mountains of southern New Mexico, Cloudcroft Middle School students are taking aim at something new.

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish Officer **Anthony Chavez** and Cloudcroft Police Chief **Roger Schoolcraft** recently led the school’s physical education (PE) students through their first lesson in the National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP).

Together, they walked students through safety rules, whistle commands, and the program’s eleven foundational steps of proper archery form.

“Not everybody plays basketball. Not everybody plays softball. This is definitely a sport, whether you are in sports or not,” Chavez told students. “It just gives you another opportunity and something to look forward to in the future.”

Target Curriculum

Leading the effort from inside the school is PE Coach **Tami Alexander** — a bow hunter herself — one of five Cloudcroft staff members now pursuing the eight-hour Basic Archery Instructor certification required by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish before a school can officially launch the program. Others interested in continuing the program are teachers Bryan Casinger, Terri Snoddy, Brent Jewell, and Alana Blaine.

Students who participate must have a parent or guardian waiver on file before taking part.

NASP is a nationally recognized non-profit curriculum active in more than a hundred New Mexico public schools and sponsored statewide by the Game and Fish Department.

Principal **Nolene Adams** says the school came to the program mid-cycle this year, which shaped how they’ve approached rollout.

“We plan to continue offering the program through our PE class and begin preparing students for competition next year, as we learned about the competition timeline too late this year,” Adams said. “We’ve started the process with students in the program and are laying the groundwork for competitive events in the upcoming school year.”

“The NASP Program is designed for 4th–12th grade,” Adams said, “but to get started, we are currently working with 7th graders to understand the program and how it fits with our school.”

Safety is foundational to how Chavez runs the program. “There have been no accidents to this day that have ever happened in the National Archery in the Schools program,” he said. “So let’s keep it that way.”

Peak Performance

Each month, this column will follow the sports seasons here at Cloudcroft, highlighting the athletes who represent our school with strength, grit, and pride—whether it’s inside the weight room or out on the field.

Sports are in full swing at Cloudcroft High School, and this spring two programs have consistently been putting in hard work: Powerlifting and Track and Field.

Powerlifting may be a newer sport for many fans, but for Cloudcroft athletes it has become a place to set goals, push themselves, and build confidence. On March 13th, Cloudcroft hosted its home powerlifting invitational, and the lifters didn’t disappoint. The girls team put together an impressive performance,



placing in four different weight classes and being led by

Gena Davis in the 114s with a 475-pound total that ranked among the best of the meet.

Teammates **McKenzie Ciulla** (123), **Callie Peterson** (132), and **Sophia Trejo** (181) all finished in the top three for their weight classes to stack up valuable points for the Bears. The boys team showed up, too: **Christopher Yousif** dominated the 132-pound class with a 755-pound total, and **Levi Edwards** added a 760-pound total and a runner-up finish at 198. Angelo Harrell and

Nathan Brokaw also medaled in their weight classes. With an outstanding 181-pound lift by **Colton Jazdzewski**, Cloudcroft walked away with a lineup of strong placers.

On the track, CHS athletes are shifting from cold winter sports to spring training,

trading snow and early mornings for practices with blocks, discus, mats, and much better weather. Sprinters, distance runners, jumpers, and throwers are all working to find their rhythm as weekly meets approach. Our track-athletes recently traveled to Carlsbad to start their season, performing well across their events as they work toward the district meet.

Sophomore Cassia Moore has already qualified in triple jump. and shining a spotlight on the stories you don’t always see from the stands. My goal is not just to report scores, but to showcase the dedication, teamwork, and resilience that make Cloudcroft sports worth following along all season long.

Consider this your invitation to keep an eye on these two programs this spring: Powerlifting and Track and Field. And—don’t miss the next home Powerlifting meet on March 27th.

—Paula Finch

Meet **Paula Finch**, new Mountain Monthly contributor:

A CHS Junior, Finch is an active member of the Technology Student Association (TSA), a national non-profit organization that encourages students to explore their creativity and technical skills through competition. She currently serves as Chapter Secretary and will serve as a New Mexico State Officer next school year.

After graduation, she plans to attend college to study Business Administration in Marketing and Journalism. Her ultimate goal is to build a career in professional sports as a Multimedia Marketing Manager.

“I’ve always been passionate about journalism and marketing, especially when it comes to telling meaningful stories and spotlighting people who deserve to be seen and heard,” Finch says.

Public Swim at Grand Cloudcroft Hotel

The Grand Cloudcroft Hotel recently announced through their Facebook page that every Sunday from 12-2 p.m. and 2-4 p.m., the public is invited to use the hotel pool, located along James Canyon Highway.

Fees are \$10 per person and \$5 for kids under 5. Ages 14 and under require adult supervision.

Chamber of Cloudcroft 2026 Update

Cloudcroft’s Chamber has a full 2026 lineup on the books, plus a new Labor Day weekend “Hoopla” built around food trucks and a car show. Manager Madison Garner shares what the group has in the works for 2026.

Year at a glance

- Mayfair Juried Artshow: Saturday–Sunday, May 23–24, at Zenith Park; Art, vendors, and food trucks.

- BeerFest runs Saturday–Sunday, June 13–14, at Zenith Park. Live music both days, family-friendly—watch coolcloudcroft.com/events for the official 2026 pricing and schedule.

- Christmas in July: Saturday–Sunday, July 11–12, at Zenith Park; a midsummer “Christmas Capital” celebration.

- Art & Wine in the Cool Pines: Friday–Sunday, August 7–9, at the Sacramento Mountains Museum and Pioneer Village; a wine-tasting and art event with a commemorative wine glass, local art, and live music.

- Labor Day Hoopla: Saturday–Sunday, September 5–6, at Zenith Park, with day one focused on food trucks and vendors and day two featuring a car show; this new chamber event replaces the former Lumberjack Day in the chamber’s lineup. (Lumberjack Day will now be hosted at Ski Cloudcroft.)

- Christmas Market: Friday–Saturday, November 27–28, at Cloudcroft High School gym, hours TBA.

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HOW'S THE MARKET?

FEBRUARY 2026

CLOUDCROFT MOUNTAIN AREA

HOMES SOLD	14
MEDIAN SALES PRICE	\$382,500
AVERAGE DAYS ON MARKET	93 Days
ACTIVE LISTINGS	247
CURRENT PRICE RANGES	
RESIDENTIAL:	\$75,000 - \$1,660,000
LAND:	\$4,900 - \$3,999,000
COMMERCIAL:	\$597,300 - \$2,900,000

RUIDOSO MOUNTAIN AREA

HOMES SOLD	18
MEDIAN SALES PRICE	\$322,500
AVERAGE DAYS ON MARKET	107 Days
ACTIVE LISTINGS	446
CURRENT PRICE RANGES	
RESIDENTIAL:	\$2,400 - \$3,500,000
LAND:	\$9,500 - \$3,200,000
COMMERCIAL:	\$210,000 - \$3,400,000

ALAMOGORDO & BASIN AREA

HOMES SOLD	27
MEDIAN SALES PRICE	\$244,000
AVERAGE DAYS ON MARKET	85 Days
ACTIVE LISTINGS	245
CURRENT PRICE RANGES	
RESIDENTIAL:	\$46,000 - \$1,175,000
LAND:	\$20,000 - \$5,000,000
COMMERCIAL:	\$135,000 - \$3,000,000

Statistics sourced from the Otero & Lincoln County Associations of Realtors MLS and provided by Future Real Estate

- Mountain Christmas Village: December 11–19, an immersive walk-through Christmas experience in Zenith Park.

Vendor sign-ups and outreach

The chamber has moved all vendor, food-truck, and artist applications to a new online system linked from cool-cloudcroft.com, where participants can add multiple events to a single cart and pay one time.

They're actively recruiting repeat vendors and new sellers by emailing past participants and working with chambers and groups in Ruidoso, Alamogor-

do, Arizona, Texas, Colorado, and neighboring regions to circulate calls for vendors.

Fourth of July plans

For this summer's 250th-anniversary Fourth of July celebration, the chamber will assist the Village of Cloudcroft, Trustee and library aid Gail McCoy, and other partners as they plan a parade, pie-baking contest, and village-wide activities.

Get involved: <https://forms.gle/4vgGBF-davvwzUTC49>

locals/seasonals/visitors

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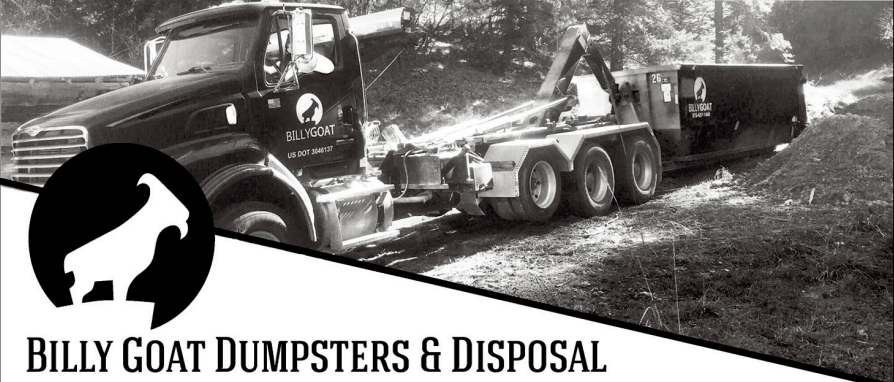


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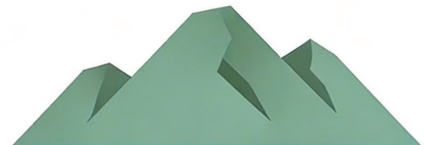
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Robin Faux, LMT, CMLDT
NM Lic #5600

Jim Swaagman, LMT, NMT, MMP
NM Lic #5294

Village of Cloudcroft

Wells & Springs Report



February High-Service Pump Production: 4,336,395 gallons

Water Sold: 4,119,262 gallons

Avg. Gallons per day: 132,879 gallons

Water loss: 217,133 gallons (5%)



	JANUARY	FEBRUARY
Raw Water	31,454 gal	54,115 gal ↑
500k	38,912 gal	391,718 gal ↑
East Pond	302 gal	380,130 gal ↑
West Pond	25 gal	608,400 gal ↑

Info: Cloudcroft Public Works Dept.



NEED HELP WITH VA BENEFITS OR PROOF OF SERVICE?

If you are a Veteran or a Veteran's family member requiring assistance

CONTACT
CDR John D. Rider VFW Post 11999
in Cloudcroft at (806) 763-3010
or VFW11999PSO@gmail.com

Our trained Service Officer will assist you confidentially and at no cost
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PVT ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS

STRONGER TOGETHER

SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 2026

Join us at any of these locations
REGISTRATION - 9:00 am
MEMBERSHIP MEETING - 10:00 am

Artesia Public Schools Admin Building
301 Bulldog Blvd | Artesia, NM

Cloudcroft High School
10 Swallow Place | Cloudcroft, NM

Hondo Schools
111 Don Pablo Lane | Hondo, NM

This is a non-smoking venue.
All activities are handicap accessible.

If you have special needs, please
call Tabitha Davis at 800-505-4844.

PVT Cooperative Members are invited to join us to learn about how your cooperative has served you over the past year, and to find out what is planned for the future of the cooperative.

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welcome to the village

Let us show you around

A

Off the Beaten Path
ICAT Trap & Release Program
Summit Christian Fellowship
Sacramento Mountain Senior Services
Black Bear Coffee Shop
King's Treasure
Bhair Necessities
The Fat Rabbit
The Little Gallery
Aspen and Ivy Boutique
Samantha Odom Art Gallery
Dave's Cafe
Higher Grounds
Instant Karma & Chai Bar
Base Camp 9k

B

Western Bar and Cafe
Western Package Store
Hotel Cloudcroft
Kennabelle's Kreations Bakery
Gary Mack Real Estate
The Bear Track
High Altitude
High Altitude Bike Shop
Scotty's Propane

C

Elevation Park and Disc Golf Course

D

Otero County Electric Cooperative
Cloudcroft Therapeutic Massage
Cloudcroft Archery
Crystal Tompkins Photography
Coco Blu
Green Mountain Real Estate & Construction, Skywater
Osha Trail Depot
Osha Trail Lodging
Cloudcroft Souvenirs
Laughing Leaf Dispensary
Eight the Cake
Mountain Magic
Poke the Bear

E

Burro St. Boarding House
Cloudcroft Brewing Company
The Distillery
Sparks and Rec

F

Ski Cloudcroft

G

Apsen Trails Realty
Big Daddy's Diner
Tularosa Communications
Cloudcroft Animal Hospital
Dusty Boots Cafe & Taco Cantina and Motel

H

The Lodge Resort
The Lodge Golf Course
1899 and Saint Andrew's Lounge
Seasons Boutique Gift Shop
SugarPines RV Park

I

Grand Cloudcroft Hotel
Cloudcroft Chamber of Commerce
Cabins at Cloudcroft

J

Zenith Park and Playground
Pickleball and Tennis Courts
Zenith Park Pavilion
Byron Ligon Disc Golf Course
James Sewell Ice Rink
Anglican Church of the Epiphany
Family Dollar
Brother-N-Law BBQ
Magnum's Guns II
Crofting Bed & Breakfast

K

Sacred Heart Catholic Church
Village Plaza
Homee
Be in the Mountains Yoga & Massage Therapy
Road Runner Cannabis
High Rollin' Coffee

L

Mad Jack's Mountaintop BBQ
Roots Flower Co.

M

New Village Hardware
Pre-School and Extended Care
Cloudcroft United Methodist Church
Summit Inn
The Lodge Pavilion

N

Presbyterian Medical Center
Rick Roger's Auto & Equip Repair
Cloudcroft Truck & Auto Parts
Cloud 9000 Coffee
Fernando's Burritos

O

United States Post Office
First National Bank
Village Office

P

Allsup's

Q

Future Real Estate
The Highland

R

Deer Park
Cloudcroft Sandwich Shop

S

Cloudcroft Schools

T

Burro Street Exchange
The Elk Shed
Atelier Art of Hair by Anna
Red Wall Jewelry
Burro Street Bakery
Tree Top Teez
Noisy Water Winery
Burro Street Trading Post
Tree-Riffic Toys and Candy
Old Barrel Tea Co.
Turquoise Shop
Cloudcroft Church of Christ

U

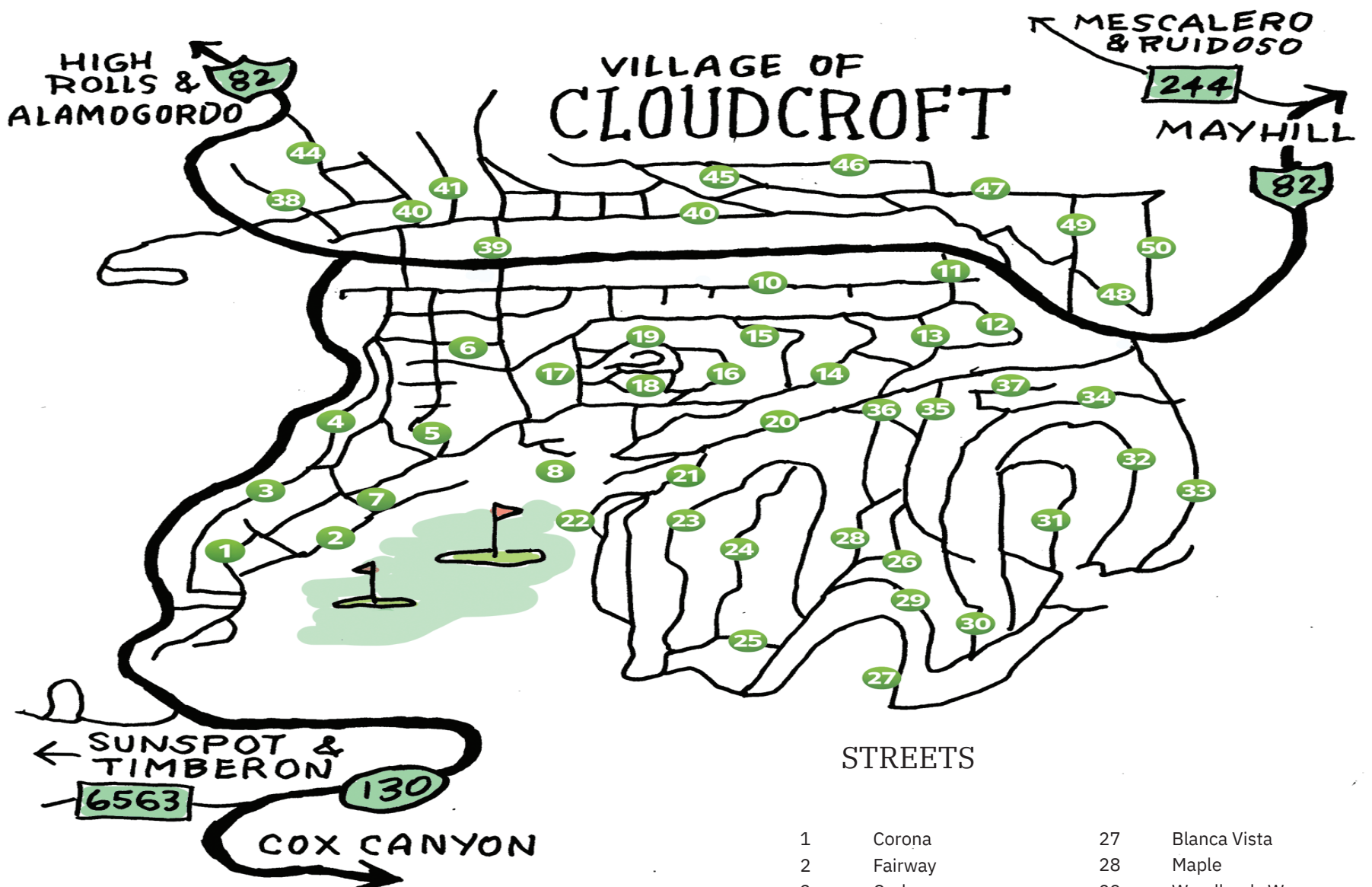
Old Red Brick Schoolhouse
Michael Nivison Public Library
High Valley Weaving School
Cloudcroft Fitness
Cloudcroft Art Society Co-op Gallery

V

Sacramento Mountains Historical Museum and Pioneer Village

W

Cloudcroft Fire and Rescue Station
Trestle Medical Services



STREETS

1	Corona	27	Blanca Vista
2	Fairway	28	Maple
3	Curlew	29	Woodlands Way
4	Sunset	30	Balsam
5	Wren	31	Julies
6	Coyote	32	Shells
7	Otter	33	Woodland Ways
8	The Lodge	34	Balsam
10	Burro	35	Columbia
15	Squirrel	36	Beaver
16	Fox	37	Balsam Circle
17	4th	38	Glorietta
18	Bear	39	Swallow
19	Coyote	40	Little Glorietta
20	Chautauqua Canyon	41	Mexican
21	Big Bear Ln	45	Nyuca
22	Sugar Bear Ln	46	Geronimo
23	Little Bear	47	Victoria
24	Sugar Pine	48	Paqua
25	Oak Alley	49	Skywater
26	Daisy Way	50	Rainmaker Loop



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Old Barrell Tea Co. on Burro has all the tea—and everything you need to steep it.

Local Guide

What to Know

Discover the best of Cloudcroft with our monthly local guide — a hand-picked selection of favorite places to shop, eat, and play in the mountains.

The Tea

Where to find the best cups in Cloudcroft.

Old Barrell Tea Co.: Fresh house-blend teas to order, plus provisions. Adorable tea sets, single steepers, honey, and all possible tea accoutrements. On the east end of the Burro boardwalk.

Instant Karma Chai Bar: Global spice blends, ayurvedic teas, soothing cacao, and more at their countertop. Some tea blends are grown, dried, and hand-crafted at local farms. Find it near the Pine Stump Mall and stay awhile.

Black Bear Coffee: Seasonal lattes, teas, and more on the west end of Burro. Head upstairs for conversation nooks, and enjoy the downstairs gallery wall with rotating exhibitions.

Saint Andrew’s Lounge and 1899 at the Lodge: Tasty teas served up in a

historic setting—spike it, if you like. Gear up for golf, too. Arnold Palmer season is just around the corner.

High Rollin’ Coffee: Gourmet, fresh, and organic plant-based meals on a rotating weekly menu. Soothing favorite: Taj Majal Chai with coconut milk. Located at the Village Plaza on Highway 82.

Cloud 9000 Coffee: Quick classics, right off the highway. Outdoor seating only.

Daily Bread

Fresh bakes on the mountain.

Burro Street Bakery: Sit awhile at this centrally-located joint in Cloudcroft. Pies, danishes, breakfast burritos, coffee, and more.

Eight the Cake Bakery: Lovely custom cakes. Cupcakes, cinnamon rolls, and local art on the east end of Burro.

KennaBelle’s Kreations Bakery: Follow your nose to this pink patisserie

on Burro. Custom cakes and orders. Gluten-free options.

Levain It Up Sourdough Bakery: In the site of the old Tunnel Stop Shop in High Rolls Mountain Park, this sourdough-only bakery serves flaky pastry, wholesome loaves, and adventurous flavors on Fridays through Sundays.

Day Trip: Alameda Park Zoo

A living piece of Southwest history, just down the mountain

Founded in 1898 as a deer park to entertain railroad passengers waiting for their trains to refuel, the Alameda Park Zoo in Alamogordo claims the title of oldest zoo in the Southwestern United States — and at just 35 minutes from Cloudcroft, it makes for an easy and rewarding afternoon escape.

The 12-acre zoo is home to nearly 200 animals representing 90 species, and recent additions have given regulars and first-timers alike fresh reasons to visit. Two Linnaeus’s two-toed sloths have joined the collection, and they’re drawing plenty of admirers. Here’s a tip: the zoo Facebook page announced new Wednesday hours: open until 9:00 p.m., making a mid-week evening visit the ideal time to catch the sloths



during their most active hours.

The zoo is also a Species Survival Plan Captive Facility for the Mexican gray wolf — a genuine conservation effort tucked inside what feels like a leisurely neighborhood stroll.

The campus holds an education center, picnic area, playground, and gift shop. Summer camps are available for young animal enthusiasts, and the Eco-Ranger Junior Zookeeper program gives children hands-on experience.

The zoo is undergoing maintenance and construction, so several habitats and buildings may be closed.

Don’t let that stop you from catching a glimpse of a reclining sloth, serious Mandrill, or sleepy kangaroo. Admission is affordable, parking is free, and the zoo is open Wednesday through Monday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Check their website for seasonal hours.

Located at 1021 N. White Sands Blvd., Alamogordo | (575) 439-4290

ci.alamogordo.nm.us/816/Alameda-Park-Zoo



Local artists at the Cloudcroft Art Society sell their wares—like this classic blue mug by Laurie Baker.

Welcome to Cloudcroft, New Mexico — a mountain village with timeless charm and plenty to do.

Whether you’re looking for a cozy cabin, a good meal, or ideas for a scenic day trip, this list is here to help you make the most of your visit.

Here you’ll find local restaurants, lodging, shops, and services — everything you need to explore, relax, and enjoy your time in our beautiful mountain community.

Eat/Drink

Big Daddy’s Diner (1705 James Canyon Hwy, (575) 682-1224, bigdaddysdinernm.com) Comfort food and desserts. Try the fried chicken basket. Open daily 7:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.

Black Bear Coffee (200 Burro Ave., (575) 682-1239, mybbcoffee.com) Locally-roasted beans on the west end of Burro. Head upstairs for conversation nooks, enjoy the downstairs gallery wall with rotating exhibition. Wednesday-Saturday 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Sunday 8:00-3:00.

Brother-N-Law BBQ (209 James Canyon Hwy, (215) 858-0400) Delicious smoked meats, baked potatoes, sandwiches, and fried okra. Don’t skip the sauce. Open 11:00. a.m.-6:00 p.m. every day but Thursday.

Burro Street Bakery (505 Burro Ave., (575) 682-2777) Sit awhile at this centrally-located joint. Pies, danishes, breakfast burritos, coffee, and more. Open 7:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. daily.

Cloud 9000 Coffee (96 James Canyon Hwy) Quick breakfast—smoothies and handhelds. Coffee, tea, and lemonade, too. Outdoor seating only. 7:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Tuesday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, closed Mondays.

Cloudcroft Brewing Company (1301 Burro Ave., (575) 682-2337, cloudcroft-brewing.com) In-house and regional brews, live music, and fantastic atmosphere. Gnosh on wood-fired pizza, soup du jour, salad, chips & guacamole. Closed Tuesdays. Open 11:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m. the rest of the week—til 10:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

Cloudcroft Sandwich Shop (505 Burro Ave., (575) 551-0065, cloudcroftsandwich.shop) Traditional deli in the Burro Street Exchange. Mural photo op in the outdoor patio. Get any sandwich as a salad, then a monster-sized cookie—#balance. Open 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. every day, closed Wednesdays.

Dave’s Cafe (300 Burro Ave., (575) 682-2127) Classic burgers, fries, and more at a casual setting in the heart of Burro. Open 11:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. Monday-Thursday, and 11:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m. Friday-Sunday.

Dusty Boots Cafe & Taco Cantina (1317 James Canyon Hwy, 575) 601-2009) Laid back home cooking—burgers, tacos, salads, and more. For breakfast, try the veggie-loaded Hiker’s Boot omelette and western potatoes. Open 7:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 7:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday, closes at 5:00 Sunday.

Eight the Cake Bakery (506 Burro Ave., (575) 682-3088, eightthecakellc.com) Lovely custom cakes. Cupcakes, cinnamon rolls, and local art. Open Thursday-Monday from 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.



The Listings

Find What You Are Looking For.

We’ll Get You Started

Family Dollar (309 James Canyon Hwy, (505) 532-2697, familydollar.com) Get the essentials. Discount chain with groceries, toiletries, and home goods. Open 8:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m. daily.

Fernando’s Burritos (96 James Canyon Hwy) Best burrito, barbacoa, and burger in the village. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Outdoor seating only. Open 7:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. daily, closed Mondays.

High Rollin’ Coffee (109 James Canyon Hwy) Gourmet freshies galore on a rotating weekly menu. Open Monday and Tuesday 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., and Friday-Sunday 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Higher Grounds (300 Burro Ave., 575) 682-2127) Ice cream and milkshake counter next to Dave’s Cafe. Hours vary.

Instant Karma Chai Bar (302 Burro Ave.) Global spice blends, ayurvedic teas, soothing cacao, and more at their countertop. Stay awhile. Open daily from 1:00-5:00 p.m.

KennaBelle’s Kreations Bakery (308 Burro Ave., (575) 682-2712) Follow your nose to this pink patisserie. Custom cakes and orders. Gluten-free options. Open 7:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m. Monday-Saturday. Closed Sunday.

Mad Jack’s Mountaintop Barbeque (105 James Canyon Hwy, (575) 682-7577) Legendary barbeque in the old mercantile building. Don’t let the line deter you—it’s worth the wait. Open 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Thursday-Sunday, or until sold out.

Noisy Water Winery (505 Burro Ave., (575) 682-6610) Local wine, cheese, charcuterie, and gifts. Upscale offerings, casual boardwalk venue. Open 10:00 a.m.-6:30 p.m. daily, open until 7:00 on Friday, and until 7:30 on Saturday.

Old Barrel Tea Co. (505 Burro Ave., (575) 682-7474) Fresh house-blend teas to order, plus provisions. Open 11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday. Open 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Saturday, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Sunday.

Saint Andrew’s Lounge and 1899 at the Lodge (601 Corona Pl., (575) 682-2566, 223collectionhotels.com/the-lodge) Chef Richard Lepree brings global flair and locally-sourced flavors to the plate. Reservations required on the 1899 side, open Wednesday-Saturday from 5:00-8:00 p.m. Saint Andrew’s Lounge open Wednesday-Saturday from 12:00-8:00 p.m.

The Distillery (1303 Burro Ave., (575) 682-2337) Craft cocktails with New Mexico and in-house spirits for date night—adults only.

Cloudcroft Brewing Company pizza by the slice. Open M, W, TH 4:00-9:00 p.m., Friday 4:00-10:00 p.m., Saturday 11:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m., and Sunday

11:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.

Western Bar and Cafe and Package Store (304 Burro Ave., (575) 682-2445, westernbarandcafe.net) Dark and cozy dive bar with tasty food for lunch and dinner. Beer on tap, full bar. Play pool while you wait. Closed Wednesdays, open 11:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m. the rest of the week.

Lodging

Burro St. Boarding House (608 Burro Ave., (575) 682-3601) Rustic and artful digs near downtown. burrostreetboardinghouse.com

Cabins at Cloudcroft (1006 Coyote Ave., 575-682-2396) Retro casitas by the park. cabinsatcloudcroft.com

Crofting Inn (300 Swallow Pl.) Comfy B-and-B. Book on Expedia or Hotels.com

Dusty Boots Motel (1315 James Canyon Hwy, (575) 682-7736) Themed rooms with a restaurant next door. the-dustyboots.com

Grand Cloudcroft Hotel (1207 James Canyon Hwy, (575) 601-2202) Relax in the indoor pool and spa. All king-sized beds. grandcloudcroft.com

Osha Trail Lodging (102 Mexican Ave., (575) 937-3767) Modern, conveniently-located suites. Book on AirBnB or oshatraillodging@gmail.com

SugarPines RV Park (601 Columbine Blvd., (575) 682-3375) Easy access in the heart of the village. sugarpines-rvpark.com

Summit Inn (103 Chipmunk Ave., (575) 295-3235) Chic interiors, classic mountain exterior. summitinnnm.com

The Lodge (601 Corona Pl., (575) 682-2566) Historic beauty. Stay, eat, play. thelodgeresort.com

Shopping

Aspen and Ivy Boutique (206 Burro Ave.) Bespoke goods, candles, plants, and local art. Open Thursday-Sunday 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Base Camp 9K (302 Burro Ave.) Teeny space with quality shirts, hats, and more. Open Friday and Saturday 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Sunday 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Burro Street Trading Post (505 Burro Ave., (225) 253-2606) Rocks, gems, and original Southwest art and wear. Open 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. daily. burrostreettradingpost.com

Cloudcroft Archery (100 Little Glorieta Ave., (575) 439-7918) Indoor range and bow services. 11:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Tuesday-Friday, Saturday 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

Cloudcroft Souvenirs (502 Burro Ave.) Southwestern tchotchkes and take-home memorabilia. Open Monday-Saturday 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Sunday 1:00-5:00 p.m.

Cloudcroft Truck & Auto Parts (94 James Canyon Hwy, (575) 682-6002) Requisite auto supplies. Open 7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday, Saturday 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Closed Sunday.

Coco Blu (94 Little Glorieta Ave., (575) 682-3039) Ladies’ boutique with head-to-toe stylish selections and name brands. Open 10:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Sunday-Thursday, and until 5:30 p.m. on Friday and 6:00 p.m. on Saturday.

The Elk Shed (505 Burro Ave.) South-



AN ECLECTIC MARKETPLACE

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“AN ECLECTIC MARKETPLACE... SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE”

510 BURRO AVE, CLOUDCROFT, NM 88317
575-682-1341 · PTBEAR510@YAHOO.COM

DOWNTOWN CLOUDCROFT AT THE EAST END OF THE BOARDWALK

Under Contract



\$335,000

CLOUDCROFT

11 Deadwood Drive
Tucked away on just over a half an acre across two lots, this charming 2 bed/2 bath cabin offers the perfect blend of privacy, nature and comfort
Megan Corvin - (575) 551-1999



\$425,000

CLOUDCROFT

801 Panther Avenue
Updated mountain duplex surrounded by pines with two private living spaces, vaulted ceilings, pellet stove, and great live/rent flexibility..
Blake Bingham - (830) 496-1836



\$589,999

CLOUDCROFT

690 Karr Canyon
Perfectly sized for a vacation retreat. Sitting on just over 5 acres this log home includes 2 bed/2 bath plus a bonus loft. Log cabin styling at its finest!
Debbie Tate - (575) 430-9511



\$715,000

HIGH ROLLS

36 Old Railroad Drive
Pristine 3BR/2BA home with multiple living areas, pellet + wood stoves, remodeled kitchen/baths, landscaped yard, greenhouse, workshop, and barn.
Cori Abel - (816) 896-2674
Emily Kellam - (575) 214-9479



\$130,000

CLOUDCROFT

13 Hollywood Boulevard
As-is mountain home with 3 bedrooms, 1 bath, and kitchen area. Needs TLC but offers plenty of potential; bring your ideas and make it your own.
Debbie Loper - (575) 430-7044



\$640,000

CLOUDCROFT

1084 Woodlands Way
One-year-new luxury home with open living, soaring ceilings, designer finishes, chef's kitchen, spa-like primary suite, and an oversized deck.
Cori Abel - (816) 896-2674



\$395,000

MAYHILL

9 Serenity Street
4 Bed/2 Bath on 2 acres in the New Mexico Skies Astronomy Enclave, backing national forest; a true stargazer's paradise.
Debbie Loper - (575) 430-7044



SOLD

\$199,500

MAYHILL

1846 Rio Penasco
Unrestricted 7.5 acres with Rio Peñasco running through, mountain views, wildlife, and highway frontage. Ideal for a home, business, or RV getaway.
Megan Corvin - (575) 551-1999



(575) 415-4039
FUTUREREALESTATE.COM



Office locations in Alamogordo,
Cloudcroft, and Ruidoso



\$205,000

TIMBERON

20 White River Lane
3 Bed/2 Bath Cavco home on 1.5+ quiet acres, providing privacy, mountain views, and relaxed living in the Sacramento Mountains.
Debbie Loper - (575) 430-7044



\$1,350,000

CLOUDCROFT

102 Mexican Avenue
Osha Trail Lodging. Unique multi-family investment opportunity. Includes 6 nightly rental units, a retail space, 6 storage units, and a large finished and heated garage.
Megan Corvin - (575) 551-1999



\$179,000

CLOUDCROFT

29 Mystery Path
1Bed/1 Bath cabin with rustic charm, fenced yard, covered deck, wood stove, and a bonus bunkhouse plus a spa-like soaking tub room with loft bed.
Rebekah Graham - (575) 921-5517



\$320,000

CLOUDCROFT

1012 Maple Drive
Updated cabin with new roof, plumbing, flooring, paint, and tankless water heater. Expanded deck and fully furnished with an acceptable offer.
Blake Bingham - (830) 496-1836



\$200,000

HIGH ROLLS

59 Mountain Estates Road
Over 4 acres with a mix of trees and open meadow. Year-round access and a well in place make it ideal for building your mountain home.
Annie Daniels - (575) 442-3444



SOLD

\$675,000

TIMBERON

1855 Sacramento Drive
3 Bed/2 Bath modern retreat on 20 unrestricted acres with a large metal building, RV parking, horse-friendly setup, and a serene pond.
Debbie Loper - (575) 430-7044



\$759,000

MAYHILL

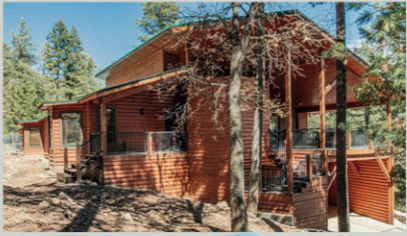
2979 US Highway 82
Rustic log-sided home on 6 acres backing forest with vaulted living, loft, primary suite, basement space, horse corrals, and a large workshop.
Debbie Loper - (575) 430-7044



\$259,000

MAYHILL

6 Will Scarlet
3 Bedroom, 2 bathroom home nestled on over 1 acre backing the Lincoln National Forest. Located in quiet Robin Hood neighborhood. Carport and RV hookups!
Debbie Loper - (575) 430-7044



\$675,000

CLOUDCROFT

11 Maple Crest
Spacious 3,000+ sq ft log-sided home with 4 bedrooms, 2 baths, 2 living areas, and drive-through garage on 1.3 acres by national forest.

Debbie Loper - (575) 430-7044



\$798,000

HIGH ROLLS

96 Red Rock Road

Architectural 2BR/2BA mountain estate with panoramic 360° views, reinforced concrete construction, multiple view decks, generator, private well, and adjoining 1.94 acre parcel included.

Tabitha Foster - (325) 450-6309



\$265,000

CLOUDCROFT

10 Oak Trail
Cozy 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom A-Frame cabin with 2 decks, just 10 minutes south of Cloudcroft in the Silver Cloud area.

Debbie Loper - (575) 430-7044



\$299,000

CLOUDCROFT

12 Little John Lane
2 Bedroom, 1 bathroom with lots of updates. Enjoy working on projects in the workshop with electric.

Blake Bingham - (830) 496-1836



\$499,000

HIGH ROLLS

73 Cider Mill Farm Road
Fully fenced and gated 2.5 acres offering privacy, nature, and space for hobbies. Updated home with new flooring and a charming rustic-modern kitchen.

Annie Daniels - (575) 442-3444



\$199,000

TIMBERON

94 Pawhuska Drive
Bright 2BR/1BA home on 0.5+ acres with open living, covered decks, RV carport with power, 2-car garage/workshop with stove, and Airbnb income potential.

Debbie Loper - (575) 430-7044



SOLD!

\$749,000

MAYHILL

64 Silver Fox Trail
This incredibly well kept home is the perfect place to call your own. Sitting on just under one acre you'll have plenty of privacy on these two lots.

Megan Corvin - (575) 551-1999



\$600,000

CLOUDCROFT

63 Sullivan Canyon Road
Log home on 5 private acres bordering national forest with vaulted living, loft, wood stove, hardwood floors, generator, hot tub, and stunning canyon views.

Annie Daniels - (575) 442-3444



SOLD!

\$749,000

MAYHILL

67 Silver Fox Trail
Stunning mountain retreat on 2 acres in a gated community, offering luxury, comfort, modern amenities, and beautiful mountain views.

Debbie Loper - (575) 430-7044



\$275,000

CLOUDCROFT

29 Trading Post Road
Cozy cabin on three lots with main-level living, two upstairs bedrooms with private decks, and multiple outdoor spaces to enjoy year-round mountain views.

Annie Daniels - (575) 442-3444



\$829,000

MAYHILL

48 Milky Way
Architectural mountain retreat with sweeping views, wildlife, and an integrated roll-off-roof observatory for exceptional stargazing.

Megan Corvin - (575) 551-1999



Under Contract

\$204,000

CLOUDCROFT

11 Center Road
Charming single-wide on 0.31 acres featuring open living, a primary suite, two guest rooms, and a covered deck among the tall pines.

Debbie Loper - (575) 430-7044

Scan Here!



**for more listings
& property
details**



SOLD

\$610,000

CLOUDCROFT

1091 Woodlands Way
Beautiful mountain retreat on nearly half an acre. Highend finishes throughout, including a designer kitchen, expansive covered deck and refined outdoor living.

Cori Abel - (816) 896-2674
Emily Kellam - (575) 214-9479

western goods, clothes, gourmet pantry staples, and more. Open 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily. theelkshed.com

The Fat Rabbit (206 Burro Ave.) Silver and turquoise, plus. Open 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Tuesday-Sunday.

The Highland (206 James Canyon Hwy, (575) 682-1041) Nambe, gifts, hunting supplies, licenses, and beyond. Open 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. daily.

High Altitude (310 Burro Ave. (575) 682-1229) Your favorite little outdoors store, boutique, and bike shop. 10:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday, until 6:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday, until 5:00 p.m. Sunday. highaltitudenm.com

Homee (109 James Canyon Hwy) Everything for sale. Home rental services. Hours vary. inhomee.com

Instant Karma (302 Burro Ave., (575) 682-2651) Ayurvedic goods, yogi-friendly clothes, books, and yoga. Open 11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. daily. getinstantkarma.com

King’s Treasure (202 Burro Ave. (575) 682-5524) Thrift to your heart’s delight without breaking the bank. Open 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. every day except Sunday.

Magnum’s Guns II (207 James Canyon Hwy (575) 682-6677) Guns and ammo on James Canyon Highway. 1:00-4:00 p.m. Monday, Wednesday to Friday from 12:00-5:00 p.m., Saturday 11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. magnumsguns.com

Mountain Magic (506 Burro Ave. (575) 682-2348) Cloudcroft shirts, woodland toys, baby gifts, natural goods, and more. Open 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. daily.

New Village Hardware (61 Curlew Pl. (575) 682-2849) Everything you need for your latest project. Open 7:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday-Saturday, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Sunday.

Osha Trail Depot (102 Mexican Ave. 575-551-2099) Local art, woodworking, and New-Mexican goods. Interested artists inquire: oshatraildepot@gmail.com. Open 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. every day.

Poke The Bear (510 Burro Ave. 575-682-1341) Find the music playing on Burro boardwalk for fun and unique finds—lamps, upcycled furniture, outdoor goods, t-shirts, and humor gifts. Open 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. daily.

Red Wall Jewelry (505 Burro Ave. 575-682-4414) Delicate and artisanal wares—great for gifts. Open 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. daily.

Roots Flower Co. (62 Curlew Pl. (575) 295-1644) High-end flowers and affordable prices. Bouquets of all sizes, event orders. Open 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday.

Seasons Boutique Gift Shop (601 Corona Pl. (575) 682-2566) Shop at the historic Lodge.

The Bear Track (308 Burro Ave.) Bubbles, figurines, woodland critter decor, and more. Hours vary.

Tree-Riffic Toys and Candy (505 Burro Ave. (575) 682-2566) Goodies for all ages. Open M, Th, Fri, Sat 10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., W 10:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Sun 12:00-5:00 p.m.

Tree Top Teez (505 Burro Ave. (575) 430-5154) Custom silk-screen and embroidery shop. Open 7:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday.

Turquoise Shop (507 Burro Ave. (575) 682-3327) Fine jewelry at every price point. Open 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each day, closed Sunday. cloudcroft-turquoise.com

Art

Cloudcroft Art Society Co-op Gallery (90 Swallow Pl.) Artist-run rotating gallery. Open seasonal Saturdays

10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. and for holiday sales. ccartsociety@gmail.com

Off the Beaten Path (100 Glorietta Ave. (575) 682-7284) Regional handmade art selection of all media. Open 10:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Sunday. offthebeatenpathstuff.com

Samantha Odom Art Gallery (300 Burro Ave. (575) 649-9951) Original paintings and affordable prints by Samantha Odom. Open 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

The Little Gallery (206 Burro Ave.) Fine arts and paintings by local artists, and funky souvenirs. Open Wednesday-Sunday 11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. or by appointment.

Healing

Be in the Mountains Yoga & Massage Therapy (109 James Canyon Hwy (575) 415-4573) Cozy space and comfortable pace in the Village Plaza. Open by appointment at yogaincloudcroft.com

Cloudcroft Animal Hospital (1403 James Canyon Hwy (575) 682-2645) Critter care and adoptions. Open 8:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and 1:30-5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday.

Cloudcroft Therapeutic Massage (404 Burro Ave.) Relax and recover upstairs at the OCEC building. Open by appointment at cloudcrofttherapeuticmassage.com

Laughing Leaf Dispensary (504 Burro Ave. (575) 682-1354) Locally-owned bud tender. Open 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 9:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Sunday.

Presbyterian Medical Center (76 James Canyon Hwy (575) 682-2542) Clinic by appointment or walk-in. Open 7:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Monday-Friday.

Southwest Naturals CBD (506 Burro Ave. (575) 682-6022) Range of CBD products, vitamins, and supplements in store. Open Monday 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. and Friday-Sunday 10:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Trestle Medical Services (1200 James Canyon Hwy) Local family practitioner. Open Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 9:30-11:30 a.m. and 12:30-4:00 p.m. trestlemedical.com

Services

Atelier Art of Hair by Anna (505 Burro Ave. (415) 230-9506) Pamper your hair, style your photoshoot. Available by appointment vagaro.com/lacnb9/services

Bhair Neccessities (202 Burro Ave. (575) 518-9011) Classic color, cuts, and products. Available by appointment.

Cloudcroft Fitness (90 Swallow Pl.)

Get moving with a range of class offerings and instructors. cloudcroftcycling.punchpass.com

Cloudcroft Village Office (201 Burro Ave.) Pay your water bill, attend village meetings, and more.cloudcroftvillage.com

Cloudsoft Laundry To Go (520-330-2613) Delivery service.

Crystal Tompkins Photography Family photos, headshots, business branding, soul sessions, and more. By appointment: crystaltompkinsphotography.com

First National Bank (301 Burro Ave. (575) 682-2531) Money on the mountain, outdoor ATM. Open 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Friday.

Green Mountain Construction (500 Burro Ave. (575) 551-2811) Local development. Open 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday. greenmountainconstr.com

High Valley Weaving School (90 Swallow Pl. 575-921-1020) Modern courses in ancient fiber techniques. Class schedules: highvalleyweaving-school.com

Pre-School and Extended Care (50 Chipmunk (575) 682-1264) Local childcare.

Rick Roger’s Auto & Equipment Repair (72 James Canyon Hwy (575) 682-3352) Gas and diesel mechanic services. Open Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and 1:00-5:00 p.m.

Sacramento Mountain Senior Services (212 Glorietta Ave. 575-682-3022) Cafeteria and social hub. mtnseniors.org

U.S. Post Office (20 Curlew Pl. (800) 275-8777) Mail and passport services. Open 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Monday-Friday, Saturday 9:30-11:30 a.m.

1CAT Trap & Release Program (100 Glorietta Ave. 575-682-7284) Non-profit feline care. Available by appointment.

Play

Cosmic Adventures (cosmicadventuresnm.com) Snow-mobile tours and more

Deer Park Playground (30 Swallow Pl.) Behind the Burro St. Exchange. Picnic tables, easy downtown access.

Elevation Park (230 Mescalero Ave.) Disc golf, trailheads, and stargazing.

James Sewell Ice Rink (751 James Canyon Hwy) On the west end of Zenith Park. Seasonal skate rentals, snack bar, fireplace.

Pickleball Addicts of Cloudcroft (pickleballaddictsofcloudcroft.com) Join them! Regular seasonal play at Zenith Park.

Ski Cloudcroft (1920 1/2 Hwy 82) Southernmost ski area in NM—skiing, tubing, wood-fired pizza, and more.

The Lodge Golf Course (703 Corona Ave.) Scottish 9 in the clouds. Visit the pro shop for gear, snacks, and drinks.

Zenith Park (1001 James Canyon Hwy) Meadow in the middle of the village with playgrounds, ice rink, disc golf, walking, path, pickleball courts, and more.

Visit Cloudcroft

Sacramento Mountains Historical Museum and Pioneer Village (1000 Hwy 82) Study the Sacramentos

Sacramento Ranger District Forest Service Ranger Station (4 Lost Lodge Rd.) Visit for maps and forest facts

The Cloudcroft Chamber of Commerce (1001 James Canyon Hwy)





Main Store
107 Hwy 70
Ruidoso, NM 88345
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Mountain Monthly

Stop in to learn about local businesses and events

Michael Nivison
Public Library

(90 Swallow Pl.)
Community hub for all ages

Fill Up/EV Charge

Allsups (10 Curlew Pl) Gas, groceries, beer cave in the middle of Cloudcroft.

High Rolls General Store (845 U.S. 82)
A little bit of everything.

Mayhill Country Store (3497 U.S. 82)
Travel stop with souvenirs, food, and gas next door.

Otero County Electric Co-op (404 Burro Ave.) Shop Cloudcroft’s down-town while your car charges.

Day Trip

Alameda Park Zoo (35 minutes)
Observe critters in the Southwest’s oldest zoo. Educational programs, a playground, and summer camps available. ci.alamogordo.nm.us/816/Alameda-Park-Zoo

American Armed Forces Museum (23 minutes) Archives, memorabilia, and memorial garden. Volunteers welcome. americanarmedforcesmuseum.com

Cadwallader Mountain Farms (14 minutes) High-elevation orchards with scenic views and “u-pick” seasons. Find them on Facebook for updates.

La Luz, NM (24 minutes) Tularosa Basin settlement at the base of the Sacramento Mountains.

Lincoln National Forest Scenic Byway (Varies) Winding drives past basin views, mountain meadows, wildlife, and beyond. fs.usda.gov/r03/lincoln/recreation/opportunities/scenic-drives

Mayhill, NM (23 minutes) Neighbors to the east.

Museum of Space History (30 minutes): Exhibits, education, memorials, playground, and theater. nmspacesmuseum.org

Nichols Ranch and Orchards (35 minutes) Seasonal harvests and events. nicholsranchandorchards.com

Oliver Lee Memorial State Park (47 minutes) Desert camping, historic site, and hiking. emnrd.nm.gov/spd/find-a-park/oliver-lee-memorial-state-park/

Sacramento, NM (48 minutes) Mountain hamlet nestled in the Sacramentos.

Silver Lake (17 minutes) RV and tent camping, fishing, and more on the Mescalero Apache Reservation. mescaleroapachetribe.com/parks-rec/silver-lake-official/

Three Rivers Petroglyph Site (59 minutes) One of the largest and most interesting rock art sites in the Southwest. blm.gov/visit/three-rivers-petroglyph-site

Timberon, NM (55 minutes) Mountain community surrounded by gorgeous forest—gas up on your way, no station for miles. timberon.org

Tularosa Basin Museum of History (31 minutes) area history with a full research library, gift shop, and bookstore.

Valley of Fires (80 minutes) Lava park featuring trails, visitor center, picnic areas, and campsite hookups. blm.gov/visit/valley-fires-recreation-area

Weed, NM (41 minutes) Mountain community, home of the Weed Bluegrass Festival. weednm.org

White Sands National Park (45 minutes) Otherworldly chalky dunes—pack sunscreen and water. nps.gov/whsa/index.htm Railroad Dr.)



THE BHAIR *Necessities*

SALON : DEN : CURIOSITIES

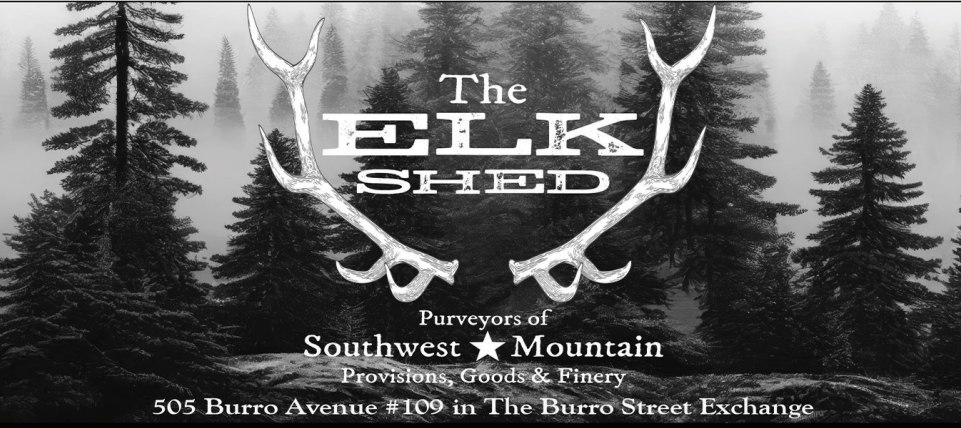
*Thank you for supporting
Bhair Necessities in our first 4 years!*

~~MICHAEL ~STYLIST~~

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508 Burro Ave

Sacramento Mt. Senior Services

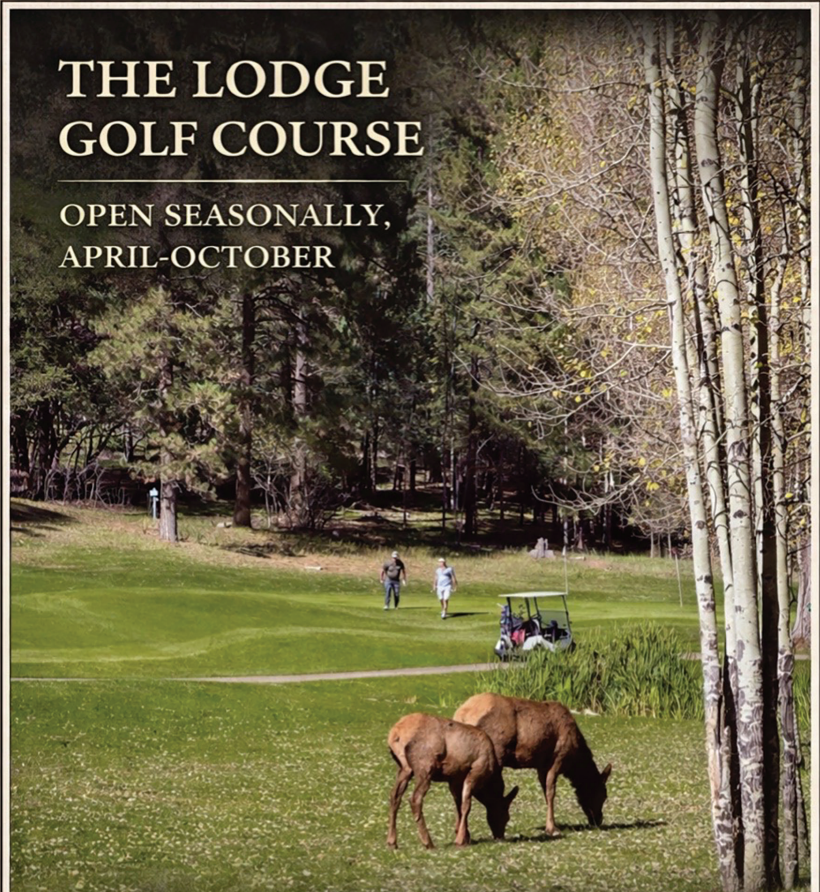
SENIOR CENTER BULLETIN

April 2026 mtnseniors.com

1% milk available with lunch	www.mtnseniors.com	WEDNESDAY 1 BBQ Pork Riblet Sandwich Herbed Carrot Coins Beet & Onion Salad Tropical Fruit Salad	THURSDAY 2 Shepherd's Pie w/Mashed Potatoes Steamed Brussel Sprouts Wheat Roll Pineapple Chunks	FRIDAY 3 Green Chile Chicken Enchiladas Pinto Beans Zucchini & Onions Chopped Honeydew Melon	
MONDAY 6 Sloppy Joes Parsley Potatoes Carrots Sherbet	TUESDAY 7 Sweet & Sour Pork Brown Rice Stir Fry Veggies Vegetable Egg Roll Mandarin Oranges	WEDNESDAY 8 BBQ Chicken Collard Greens w/ garlic Stewed Tomatoes Cornbread Peach Cobbler	THURSDAY 9 Pork Tenderloin Lemon Herb Orzo California Blend Vegetables Apple Slices	FRIDAY 10 Chicken Taco Capri Vegetables Pinto Beans Banana	
MONDAY 13 Catfish /Tartar Sauce Asparagus Three Bean Salad Wheat Roll Strawberries w/ Angel Food Cake	TUESDAY 14 Polish Sausage Diced Potatoes Red Cabbage and Onions Wheat Roll Nonfat Vanilla Yogurt	WEDNESDAY 15 Chicken Fajitas Flour Tortilla Tomato and Onion Salad Pinto Beans Apricots	THURSDAY 16 Salisbury Steak /Gravy Penne Pasta w/Spinach Beets Wheat Roll Fresh Pear	FRIDAY 17 Chicken Strips Country Gravy Okra w /Tomatoes& Onions Roasted Herb Potatoes Wheat Roll Fresh Fruit Salad	
MONDAY 20 Meatloaf Sweet Potatoes Chateau Blend Veggies Wheat Roll Gelatin Cantaloupe	TUESDAY 21 Chicken Sandwich w/Cheese and GC Cauliflower Broccoli Salad Sun Chips Plums	WEDNESDAY 22 Frito Pie Pinto Beans Yellow Squash Tropical Fruit Salad ROADRUNNER DAY	THURSDAY 23 Orange Chicken Brown Rice Asian Vegetables Vegetable Egg Roll Spiced Peaches	FRIDAY 24 Beef Macaroni Roasted Brussel Sprouts French Style Green Beans Wheat Roll Strawberries and Banana	
MONDAY 27 Country Fried Steak Country Gravy Mashed Potatoes Green Beans Wheat Roll Cherry Cobbler	TUESDAY 28 Pork Tamale RC sauce Pinto Beans Zucchini and Diced Tomatoes Spanish Rice Diced Mango	WEDNESDAY 29 Spaghetti Italian Blend Vegetables Garlic Bread Sliced Peaches	THURSDAY 30 Herbed Baked Fish Tartar Sauce Wild Rice Coleslaw Broccoli Nonfat Vanilla Yogurt Berries		
EVENTS 		Wednesday, April Fool's Day Canasta 12:30 pm CC	Thursday, April 2 Dominoes – 12:30 pm-2:30 pm CC		Friday, April 3 Bridge 12:30 CC Dusty Boots Meet there 5:00 pm
Monday, April 6 Canasta 12:30 pm CC	Tuesday, April 7 Vital Signs 11:00 CC Farkle 12:30	Wednesday, April 8 Canasta 12:30 pm CC	Thursday, April 9 Dominoes – 12:30 pm-2:30 pm CC		Friday, April 10 Bridge 12:30 CC Cree Meadows Ruidoso Meet there 5:00 pm We may take the van
Monday, April 13 Canasta 12:30 pm CC	Tuesday, April 14 Music Talent Performances 1030-11:15 am CC Vital Signs 11:00 CC Farkle 12:30	Wednesday, April 15 Canasta 12:30 pm CC	Thursday, April 16 Farewell for Alana / HR 11:30-12:00 March Birthday Celebration - CC & HR Rowdy Seniors Bingo – CC & HR12:30-1:30pm		Friday, April 17 Bridge 12:30 pm CC Dave's Meet there 5:00 pm
Monday, April 20 Canasta 12:30 pm CC Board Meeting 5:00pm	Tuesday, April 21 Vital Signs 11:00 CC Farkle 12:30	Wednesday, April 22 Canasta 12:30 pm CC ROADRUNNER DAY	Thursday, April 23 TV Bingo – CC & HR 12:00 pm		Friday, April 24 Bridge 12:30 CC LesCombes Alamogordo Meet there 5:00 pm We may take the van
Monday, April 27 Canasta 12:30 pm CC	Tuesday, April 28 Music Talent Performances 1030-11:15 am CC Vital Signs 11:00 CC Farkle 12:30	Wednesday, April 29 Canasta 12:30 pm CC	Thursday, April 30 Dominoes – 12:30 pm-2:30 pm CC		

THE LODGE GOLF COURSE

OPEN SEASONALLY,
APRIL-OCTOBER



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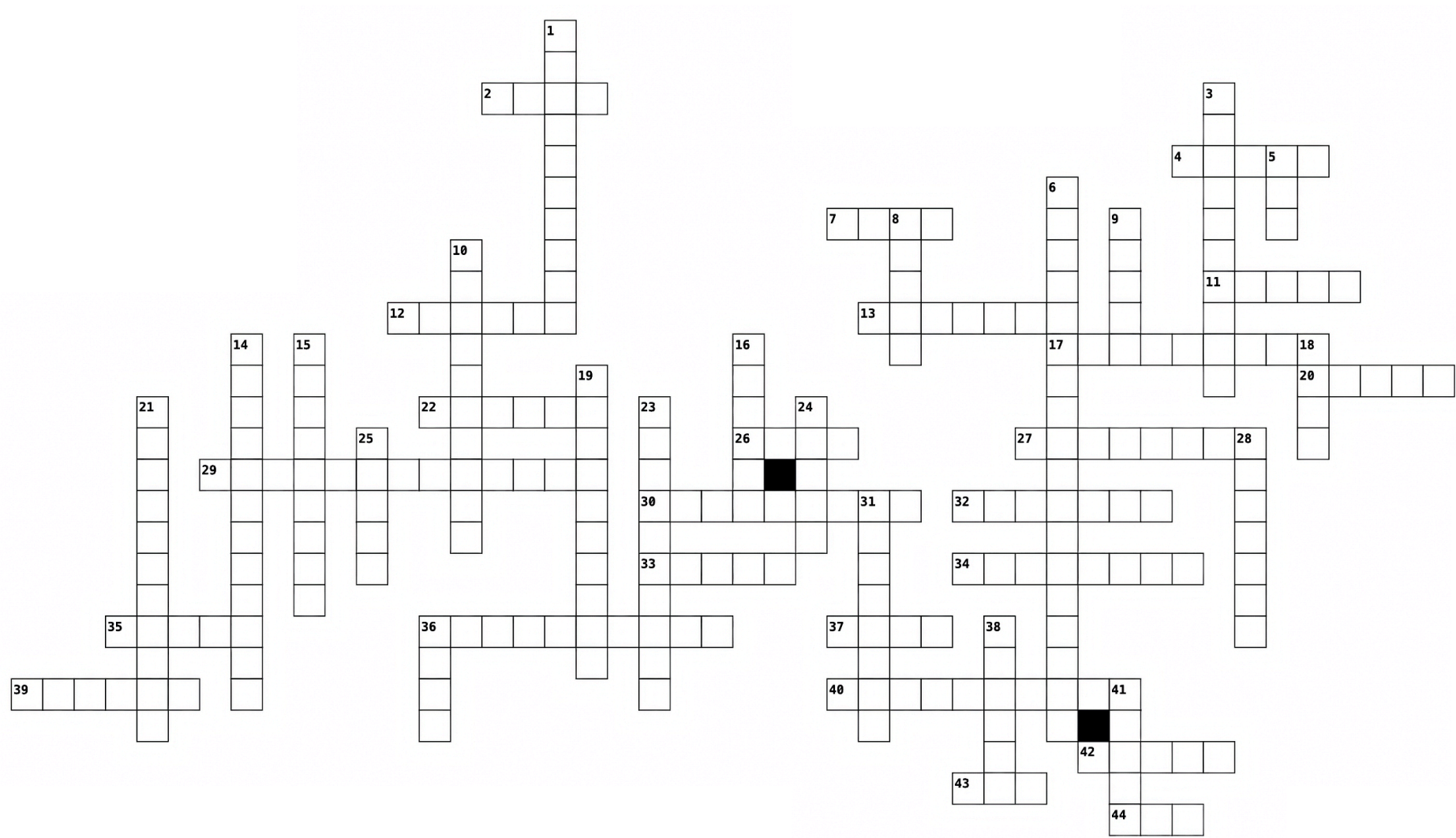
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(575) 682-2098



PuzzleCloud

Theme: Playtime



Across

- 2. Soft, controlled shot
- 4. Hydration
- 7. Zero points, in tennis
- 11. Path a planet follows around its star
- 12. Desert plant
- 13. Two-on-two format commonly played
- 17. Sudden downhill slide of snow
- 20. Murder (a group)
- 22. Large cloud of gas and dust where stars form
- 26. Another common ungulate
- 27. Ball that just clears the net
- 29. Group of stars forming an apparent pattern in the sky
- 30. Simple backyard tool for stargazing
- 32. No-step zone for slamming the ball
- 33. Popular hiking shoe brand
- 34. Pattern like the Big Dipper that is not a full constellation
- 35. Large bird of prey
- 36. Plastic ball with holes
- 37. What to do in a park
- 39. Pickleball is typically played to this score
- 40. Proper pickleball footwear
- 42. Extended back-and-forth exchange of shots
- 43. Frequent flyovers
- 44. Center of the solar system

Down

- 1. Polarized shades
- 3. Structure with slides and swings
- 5. Common ungulate
- 6. Outdoors village advisory board
- 8. Sun-shielding brim
- 9. Dark, round shadow cast by Earth on the Moon during an eclipse
- 10. New courts at Zenith
- 14. Sure-footed desert mountain dweller
- 15. Water feature where kids run to cool off
- 16. Lightweight tool for hitting
- 18. Volley taken near the sideline by jumping the kitchen
- 19. Waterproof shell
- 21. Lightweight breeze blocker
- 23. Narrow dirt path winding up a ridge
- 24. Park seating
- 25. Underhand motion that starts a rally
- 28. Sleeveless
- 31. Covered shelter in a park
- 36. Saunter, stroll
- 38. Brawn
- 41. Visible in dark skies

THE CABINS AT CLOUDCROFT

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within the Village



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www.cloudcroftnm.com





Free to the Public: Legacy of Liberty Airshow at Holloman (Photo: Dwight Raulerson)

Events: April 2026

Get Out Your Calendar and Mark Dates. Cloudcroft is Happening

Each month, the Sacramento Mountains come alive with art, culture, and community. Here are a few highlights to help you experience the creativity and connection that make life in our mountain region so special.

Air Show at Holloman Air Force Base

Legacy of Liberty Air Show April 18-19th. Outdoor, free event featuring air acts, maintenance competitions, and more. Water refill stations will be available on the grounds; bring a refillable water bottle. Food, drinks, and concessions will be available for purchase. For more information and updates, visit holloman.af.mil

Community

Easter Egg Hunt at Zenith Park: Summit Christian Fellowship hosts the annual Easter egg hunt for babies through 5th grade at Zenith Park. Golden eggs with prizes, activities, and hot dogs this year. The fun starts at 10 a.m. on Saturday, April 4th.

Take a breather and gather at the Mountain Moms program at Summit Christian Fellowship on Wednesdays from 9:00-11:00 a.m.

Cloudcroft Schools

Good Friday: No School on Friday, April 3rd

Board of Education Meeting: Tuesday, April 21st at 6:00 p.m. in the District Boardroom, 10 Swallow Place.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) Meeting, April 1st, 4:00 p.m. in the Middle School Commons.

Find the full Calendar of Events for Cloudcroft Schools at CMSBears.org

Get Moving

Have a Nice Dazed 4.20 Mile & Confused 1 Mile: Lace up for this 4/20-themed fun run on Saturday, April 18 (4:20 p.m.) at Enchanted Vine by Noisy Water Winery in Alto, NM, featuring a scenic out-and-back course with Sierra Blanca views, post-race food and drink specials,

and a 6 p.m. screening of the cult classic Dazed and Confused. Not a runner? Grab a movie-only ticket and still snag a free event poster.

Oliver Lee Memorial State Park: Birds of the Southwest. Join Oliver Lee on Saturday, April 4 (1–2 p.m.) for a guided introduction to local avian species and how these birds benefit our ecosystem. Meet at the visitors' center; regular entrance fee applies.

Oliver Lee Ranch House Tour: Sat., April 4th, 11th, 18th, and 25th, 10-11:30 a.m., Walking tour of Dog Canyon Ranch Headquarters (built 1893, under renovation). Meet at visitor center, follow staff 1.5 miles to ranch house. Bring water. Regular entrance fee (\$10/vehicle for non-NM residents). Info: Kate German, 505-660-7381.

Moonlight Hike at White Sands National Park: Experience the magic of White Sands after dark on this guided 2-hour moonlight hike on Wednesday, April 1 at 7:00 p.m., exploring the dunes by the glow of the full moon. Advance tickets are required via Recreation.gov (\$8/adults, \$4/ages 15 & under, plus park entrance fees).

Navajo Rug Show at White Sands National Park: Hubbell Trading Post, the oldest continuously operating trading post in the American Southwest, brings hundreds of authentic hand-woven Navajo rugs and jewelry to the White Sands visitor center courtyard on Saturday, April 25 (and Sunday, April 26), 10 AM–4 PM, with free rug talks and weaving demonstrations throughout the day. No registration required; free and open to all ages.

Dark Skies

April 2 Full Moon (Pink Moon): The month opens with a full moon, so early April nights will be brighter. Plan deep-sky observing for the weeks around the new moon instead.

April 17 New Moon: The new moon creates the darkest skies of the month — prime time for deep-sky observing, galaxies, and nebulae under New Mexico's exceptional dark

skies.

The Lyrid Meteor Shower peaks the night of April 21–22, offering 10–15 meteors per hour (with rare surges up to 100) under ideal conditions — best viewed after midnight from a dark location.

Chamber of Commerce

Vendor sign ups are open online at coolcloudcroft.com. Read about the Chambers upcoming year of events in MOUNTAIN NEWS.

Michael Nivison Public Library

Storytime and Crafts with Gail McCoy continue Friday mornings at 10:30 a.m.

Friday Coffee Time from 1:00-3:00 p.m. in the foyer—free coffee and cocoa, courtesy of the library.

Community Egg Hunt at Zenith

Summit Christian Fellowship announced on Facebook that their annual Community Easter Egg Hunt will take place on Saturday, April 4th, at 10 a.m. at Zenith Park in Cloudcroft.

Egg hunts for babies and toddlers, PreK and Kindergarten, 1st through 3rd grade, and 4th through 5th grade will include golden eggs with prizes. Plus: activities and hot dogs. The first egg hunt starts at 10 a.m.

The Lodge

Live Music at The Pavilion: Catch an evening of live music on Saturday, April 4, with performances by Emily Dequina, Rescoe and the Boozebounds, and Rhiannon Lace. Doors open at 7 PM; \$15 admission, cash bar and food available.

Breakfast Buffet and omelette bar on Saturday and Sunday mornings starting at 8:00 a.m. \$18 per person.

Thirsty Thursdays: 50% of drinks

from 12:00-8:00 p.m. at Saint Andrews Lounge.

Cloucroft Brewing Co. and The Distillery

Karaoke night every Monday from 6:00-9:00 p.m. at the brewery side, now hosted by K-Cloud's Kris Parks.

Live Music:
4/5 (1-4 p.m.) Tyler Jones of the Doso Dirtbags.
4/10 (6-9 p.m.) Those 2 Guys at the Brewery
4/11 (1-4 p.m.) Chris Escarcega at the Distillery
4/11 (6-9 p.m.) Dynamic Duo at the Brewery

The Western Bar

Enjoy \$1.50 tacos—only served on Tuesdays. Recently debuted seasonal drink menus.

Noisy Water Winery

Easter Egg Hunt: Celebrate Easter Sunday, April 5 at all Noisy Water Winery tasting room locations starting at 11 a.m. with a 21+ Easter egg hunt featuring hidden eggs throughout the stores, each containing a special surprise coupon to redeem during your visit. While you hunt, sip on the festive Bunny Mimosa — a bubbly cocktail topped with a cotton candy bunny tail.

Art

Blackbear Coffee Shop hosts an “artist of the month” on their gallery wall. This month you can catch the work of local artist Ari Hanna. Open during regular business hours.

Student Art Show at Otero Arts: April 1st and 15th Otero Arts in Alamogordo hosts two rotating exhibitions of student work, with new pieces on display at each opening — a great opportunity to see the region's emerging artists.

Reading Series at Otero Arts: April 17th, 6 p.m. Otero Arts' Reading Series returns for an evening program featuring local and regional authors; details announced on oteroarts.org.



The Cloudcroft TSA Middle School Chapter tests their medals at the State Conference

Mountain Life

Folks Caught on Camera Living Their Best Mountain Life



Storm players Riley Brown, Kai Kelsey, and Parker Sullivan relax after their basketball team's final and victorious game in Alamogordo



Blake, Macchiato, Deanna, and Caramel Latte stroll Burro Avenue in celebration of Deanna's birthday



Age and Emma clean up Burro Avenue as part of the Senior Give Back Day



The Olveras celebrate a new member of the family at their baby shower



HS Student athlete Rylee Pahl is chosen for the March 20th Rio Rancho Event Center NM Boys All-Star game



Chief of Police Roger Schoolcraft hits the mark during the National Archery in Schools Program with Cloudcroft Middle School P.E. students



(L-R) Mike, Christy, and Linda start of the Cloudcroft pickleball season at the Zenith Park courts



Yoga in the Clouds' Beth Merrel knows her poses



Click, Clack, Moo: Cloudcroft Elementary students put on a show for the PTO



Meet the artist at Osha Trail Depot, Keith Hamilton, pictured with raffle winner Patti Benthul



Emery Raulerson enjoys Whitesands (photo: Dwight Raulerson photography)



Reporter Drew Gaines gets an up-close and personal view of Chef Lepree in the kitchen

Got a picture to share?
Send to us at hello@mountainmonthly.com



Wildlife of the Month: Elk

They’re the biggest around the mountain... elk!

Elk – also known as wapiti, from the Cree meaning “white rump” – are the biggest animals on the mountain and are some of the largest in the country. After the elk shed their antlers, they regrow at about one square inch per day – that’s pretty fast!

This time of year elk are dropping or “shedding” their antlers. However you may recreate on the Forest, keep in mind while it’s totally okay to pick them up around the forest, it’s not okay to pick them up in National Parks or Reserves. Shed hunting remains completely free of charge for New Mexico residents — no license or permit required.

For non-residents, a \$200 shed hunting license is now required for non-residents, following a bill passed in the 2025 legislative session that took effect this year. However, the license only applies to those collecting more than two shed antlers — folks who stumble upon one or two sheds and want to take them home are exempt.

Elk Fact Sheet:

Females are called cows and do not have antlers, whereas males do have antlers and are called bulls

Antlers can weigh over 30 pounds – that’s pretty heavy!

Bulls can weigh anywhere from 700-1,100 pounds, and cows weigh anywhere from 450-650 pounds – that’s about 300-1,000 hamburgers per animal

Elk can grow up to nine feet tall (including the antlers) and live 10+ years in the wild

These beautiful creatures help restore ecosystems and are an iconic symbol of the great outdoors – next time you’re outside and you hear a high-pitched whistle, you may be hearing an elk bugle.

—Christina Olvera



The Lodge Burning in June 1909. (photo courtesy of the Sacramento Mountain Historical Society)

When The Lodge Burned

June 13, 1909. Cloudcroft, like any other mountain town, has always been in danger of fire. As a matter of fact, all the original businesses on the North side of Burro Ave have had their buildings replaced two or three times. At one point some of the business owners got smart and rebuilt their business-

es using stone. The Cloudcroft Hotel, High Altitude, and Mountain Magic are the latest three original stone buildings.”

“I once asked an old timer why the hillside on the North side of Highway 82 by the pedestrian bridge and the hillside south of 82 by the first truck escape ramp was all scrub oak. He said that when the train went up and down the hill, the embers from the train would catch the hillside on fire. I don’t know how true that story is, but it makes sense.”

“After the poor winter we have had this year, we all need to be careful this Spring and Summer and keep our little slice of heaven safe.”

—By Damon Marez, Sacramento Mountains Historical Museum & Pioneer Village

a hugely abnormal heat wave, driven by a giant heat dome from California to beyond Missouri (itself caused by aberrant jet stream undulations), and this overheated air is also dry. It could carry into April.

“April showers (do not) bring May flowers” here in the Mountain West – it’s a dry, windy time – and hopefully not the kind of hot like we were having in late March 2026.

Many favorite birds return in March and April. Flocks of beloved robins become more visible in March. Several types of flycatchers, like Cordilleran and Says Phoebe, are back around our orchard and our house. By late March, the turkey vultures have returned

later times. However, I know from this issue’s submission date that our first 2026 hummingbird was a female black-chinned on Saturday, March 21st.

Even before we see our big Gambel oaks and aspen trees form leaf buds and start to leaf out in the last third of April, many of our fruit trees blossom. These are of the prunus genus, all “stone fruit” trees, which flower before they leaf out: peaches, apricots, nectarines, plums, and cherries.

At our location, this is a little after April 1st – so, much later than lower altitudes back east. Our cherry trees produce fruit – supposedly – and thus have white flowers. Many cherries are ornamental and have pink or pink-tinged blossoms. Our plum trees flower white, and our peach, apricot, and nectarine trees have pink flowers. However, this year, our stone fruit trees have all started blooming about a month early, most likely due to the early and persistent heat.

To delightfully adorn the Sacramento Mountain spring experience, I have included a pastel painting I have painted on location in our gardens, of our blossoming fruit trees “Jonagold Apple Blossoms.” More can be seen on my website (www.lyncanham.com). Happy, cooler spring, everybody.

—Lyn Canham



Apple blossoms in bloom

from their winter deep in Mexico.

Of course, everyone’s favorite mountain birds, the Black-Chinned and the Broad-Tailed Hummingbirds, and sometimes the Calliope Hummingbird and more tropical hummingbirds, will come to your sugar-water feeder by late March or early April – the last few years, they have arrived at these

Scouting Around

While the troop has already started preparing for summer camp, March also brought two fun events: the Pinewood Derby and a campout.

The Pinewood Derby remains one of the most recognizable parts of Cub Scouting, and Pack 958 had a strong



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Scouts explore Three Rivers site

showing this year. Starting with simple kits, scouts shaped and decorated their cars into a wide variety of designs. Some focused on speed, others on creativity, and race day gave everyone a chance to see how their ideas performed on the track. A few adults and members of the troop entered their own unofficial cars, adding an extra layer of friendly competition to the event.

In mid-March, Pack and Troop 958 held a combined campout at Three Rivers Campground in the Tularosa Basin, near the base of Sierra Blanca. While joint campouts are not unusual, this trip stood out for having a smaller, younger group. Many of the troop's older scouts had other commitments, although our most senior scout, Con-

nor Smith, arrived from New Mexico Tech for the weekend to join in. Connor used the time to work on his camping related Eagle requirements.

The weather cooperated, making for a comfortable weekend. Scouts worked together to prepare meals, including a spaghetti dinner and pancakes the next morning. With a younger group, the focus was on everyone pitching in and learning by doing.

The creek running through the campground was high from snowmelt and quickly became a favorite spot to explore.

The group also hiked the Three Rivers Petroglyph Site, which follows a ridge overlooking the basin. Along the trail are thousands of petroglyphs created by the Jornada Mogollon people between about 1000 and 1400 AD. The images are formed by removing the dark surface of the rock to reveal the lighter stone beneath, and they appear steadily along the path as you walk.

As we head further into spring, we look forward to more time outdoors and more chances for our scouts to stay active and involved.

If you have a child who might benefit from scouting, where building character goes hand in hand with having fun, we would be glad to have you join us.

— Greg Crinklaw

Superintendent Letter

Read this month's Letter from the Superintendent — including updates from district leadership — at cmsbears.org/superintendents-message

Flavor Lab

This month's recipe is brought to us by **CHS Junior Triston Tompkins**.

Brazilian Cheese Bread:



- 2 cups tapioca flour (also called tapioca starch)
- 1 cup shredded Parmesan cheese.
- 1/2 cup mozzarella cheese.
- 1 cup whole milk.
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil.
- 1 teaspoon salt.
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder.

Recipe:

Preheat the oven to 350°F and spray a muffin tin with cooking spray. Add 1 cup of whole milk into a blender, along with a 1/4 cup of vegetable oil. Then add the 2 cups of tapioca flour, 1 cup of mozzarella cheese, a teaspoon of salt, and a 1/2 teaspoon of garlic powder. Blend ingredients. After the mix is a pancake-like consistency, pour the mix into a muffin tin about halfway up. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes until golden. Enjoy fresh and hot!



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Ari Hanna: Blackbear Coffee Shop Artist of the Month

Throughout the month of April, catch local artist and Blackbear barista **Ari Hanna’s** drawings and paintings on the coffee shop’s gallery walls. Located on the west end of Burro Avenue. Open during regular business hours.

Statements from Hanna on her work:

“Art has been my passion since I was able to hold a pencil (quite literally! I’m not just saying that!) and it’s been my main outlet of expression. I love creating it and consuming it; it’s always a treat seeing how people can express their love for something.”

“That’s part of what inspires my art. And, my love for what I enjoy. Most of my work is fanart for the shows, games, series—whatever I’m into—I draw! It inspires me to push out of my comfort zones as well, especially if the characters I happen to fall in love with fall out of normal niches of design.”

“Most of my artworks are inspired by music and the way some songs make me feel; as if giving visual to the perception. I find that I can’t go a day without listening to music, it inspires me and soothes my nerves, adding a much welcomed

rhythm to my everyday life.”

“These drawings will be for sale— with the exception of two very special pieces, made with love for my family, the feeling of which I would love to share with the world.”



PASSINGS

Stephen (Steve) Daniel Carter

Stephen (Steve) Daniel Carter, 64, of Cloudcroft, New Mexico, passed away unexpectedly on March 21, 2026, at his home. Steve was born on March 19, 1962, to Daniel Carter and Marilyn Brown (formerly Carter), and leaves behind a legacy of faith, love, and unwavering devotion to his family and friends.

Steve shared a beautiful love story with his wife, Carol, whom he had known since kindergarten. They were married on August 23, 1980, and were inseparable for 45 years. They were best friends, adventure partners, and travel companions, as well as each other’s greatest love. Together, they built a beautiful life full of memories and laughter.

Steve’s greatest joy in life was his daughter, Stephanie, his son-in-law, Curtis, and his three beautiful grandchildren, whom he lovingly called “Poppy’s Pals,” Zoe, Ashleigh (May 4, 2010), and Grayson. He loved them deeply and proudly shared stories about them every chance he had. To his grandchildren, he was proudly known as “Poppy,” a name that meant more to him than any other. Time spent with them brought him immeasurable joy.

Steve was a man who lived life to the fullest. He was always active, full of energy, and gave 110 percent to everything he did. He loved playing sports, whether on the basketball court, playing softball, or, in later years, discovering a passion for pickleball, which he enjoyed nearly every day during his retirement. He cherished time with friends, shared laughter, and never passed up the opportunity to make memories.

For over 40 years, Steve dedicated his career to American Airlines, where he was known as an incredible leader who led with integrity, wisdom, and genuine care for others. After retiring in June 2024, he stepped into a new chapter, excited to live out the dreams he and Carol had worked so hard to achieve.

Beyond his career, Steve faithfully served as Pastor of Eden Blessing Tabernacle for 13 years. He had a special gift for making the Bible understandable and meaningful to everyone he reached. He loved Jesus deeply and was passionate about teaching others to know Him, often encouraging others to seek faith and reminding them that no one is promised tomorrow.

Steve leaves behind a legacy of faith, leadership, kindness, and love. He will be remembered as a man who stood strong in his beliefs, honored God in all circumstances, and lived with gratitude for the life he was given.

To the world, he was Steve. To his family, he was Honey, Dad, and Poppy. He will be deeply missed, but his family finds comfort in knowing he lived fully, loved deeply, and now rests in the presence of the Lord.

Steve is survived by his mother and stepfather, Marilyn and Ken Brown; his wife, Carol; his daughter, Stephanie Whitlock and son-in-law, Curtis Whitlock; his grandchildren, Zoe Whitlock and Grayson Whitlock; his sisters, Becky Shimmel and her husband, Claire Shimmel, and Beth Jackson and her husband, Jeff Jackson; countless uncles, aunts, nieces, nephews, and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his father, Daniel Carter; his grandmother, Bernice Hotchkiss; and his granddaughter, Ashleigh Whitlock.

Visitation will be held from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm on Thursday, March 26, 2026, at Alamogordo Funeral Home, 2301 First Street, Alamogordo, New Mexico.

A graveside Celebration of Life service will be held at 3:00 pm on Friday, March 27, 2026, at James Canyon Cemetery in Mayhill, New Mexico, off of US Highway 82.

The Carter family has entrusted their loved one to the care of Alamogordo Funeral Home to direct the funeral services.





April 11th Clean-Up

Cloudcroft's Zenith
Park – Pavilion

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Faces & Places



Greg Crinklaw stands next to his DIY Dobsonian telescope, “Big Dob,” that he built in 2003.

An Astronomer’s Journey from Mars to the Mountains

by Jonny Coker

When Greg Crinklaw and his wife moved to Cloudcroft nearly three decades ago, they didn’t arrive with a detailed plan.

“We moved here not having a lot of money with a kid on the way,” Crinklaw said. “And we made a life here and we don’t regret it.”

Today, Crinklaw is a familiar face in the mountain village. Over the years he has worked in computer software and astronomy, volunteered in youth programs and helped raise his family in the close-knit community.

“I grew up in Spokane and we were living in San Diego. There’s no seasons, we’d lived there a long time, and we were getting tired of it. We realized we couldn’t raise kids there because we couldn’t afford a house.”

For Crinklaw, the appeal of Cloudcroft was simple. His wife had been through the area before, and it was an ideal location for an observational astronomer due to the dark sky conditions on the mountain, property was affordable, and beyond that, it was a good place to raise kids.

“I saw a picture taken down James Canyon in a magazine called Sky & Telescope, and it was a picture of the snow on the trees across the way from where this guy had this little observatory of his own where he discovered comets,” he said. “I saw that picture and I thought, I want to move there. And I said that to my wife, who was pregnant

at the time, and she said sure, let’s go.”

Career in Astronomy and Computer Science

Looking back, Crinklaw says his career didn’t unfold around one defining moment. Instead, it grew from a series of opportunities that built on each other.

“I do all these different things,” he said. “It’s not like there’s one thing that stands out.”

Crinklaw’s astronomical journey began when he was in high school. He learned computer programming, and eventually decided on the pursuit of studying the skies. He pursued his passion at San Diego State University, where he obtained a master’s degree in astronomy, then to the University of Toledo for a master’s in astrophysics.

After returning to San Diego, Crinklaw landed a job working on a camera that was included in NASA’s Mars Observer. He worked on the project for about two years as a computer engineer.

“We built our camera, we went to the cape, we strapped it on top of a rocket. We watched it go up ... It went off to Mars, fired its rocket engine to stop and go into orbit, and blew up. So then I didn’t have a job anymore,” Crinklaw said, laughing.

To help make ends meet after the ordeal, Crinklaw worked as an astronomy professor in the San Diego area. But he had something else brewing, something that would expand his career

both as an observational astronomer and computer programmer.

“Part of what I do is plan to make observations. What if I wrote software that people could use to plan what can be seen tonight,” he pondered. “And so I wrote software all these years ago, and it’s just grown and grown ever since then.”

It’s at this point in his career that Crinklaw developed and refined Sky Tools, software that does planning for amateur astronomers.

“[Taking] images to do astrophotography is really technical and complicated. And so I help [amateur astronomers] plan so that they can get the best experience,” he said. “I sort of made my own subversion of a hobby, I’ve been doing that for 20 years, helping people find comets in their telescopes.”

This approach to life, the spirit of trying new things and seeing where they lead, is something he encourages young people to embrace.

“One of the things I tell kids when they’re teenagers is just do something,” Crinklaw said. “Go out and do something, it’ll turn into something else, and that’ll turn into something else.”

Scouting Career

Beyond his career as an astronomer and computer engineer, much of Crinklaw’s community involvement in Cloudcroft has come through scouting. About 20 years ago, when his children joined Cub Scouts, he began volunteering with the program. Eventually he became scout-

master of the local troop.

The troop slowed during the COVID-19 pandemic, but Crinklaw helped revive the program and today serves as the troop’s committee chair.

“That just means I’m Grandpa,” he

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joked. “I show up and say, ‘Back in my day...’”

Over the years he has also seen the program evolve, including the inclusion of girls in scouting.

“At first there were questions about how that would work,” he said. “But when

you look at it, there were always sisters there doing the same things the boys were doing. They just weren’t recognized.”

Today, he says, the local troop actually has more girls than boys. Crinklaw believes the purpose of scouting remains the same.

“It’s about character and leadership,” he said. “It makes kids better adults.”

Keeping Light Pollution Down

One of the things that makes Cloudcroft unique, Crinklaw says, is something residents might sometimes take for granted – the night sky.

High in the mountains with less atmosphere, far from major cities, the area still offers relatively dark conditions compared to many parts of the country. Even with the recent closure and imminent demolition of Sunspot Observatory, Crinklaw thinks there are still plenty of reasons for hobbyist astronomers to bring their business to the village.

“There’s a real opportunity here,” he said. “If we had a place where people could bring their motor homes, pull out their telescopes on a cement pad ... Then people will come, and they will show up. We just need the place.”

That’s part of why conversations about reducing light pollution have come up in recent years. Communities around the country have adopted lighting rules designed to preserve dark skies by requiring fixtures that direct light downward and limit unnecessary glare.

Crinklaw was part of the committee to rewrite Cloudcroft’s ordinance under Mayor Dave Venable over 20 years ago.

However, over the years, Cloudcroft’s light footprint has grown, raising questions as to whether the lighting across the town’s public spaces and businesses comply with the current ordinance.

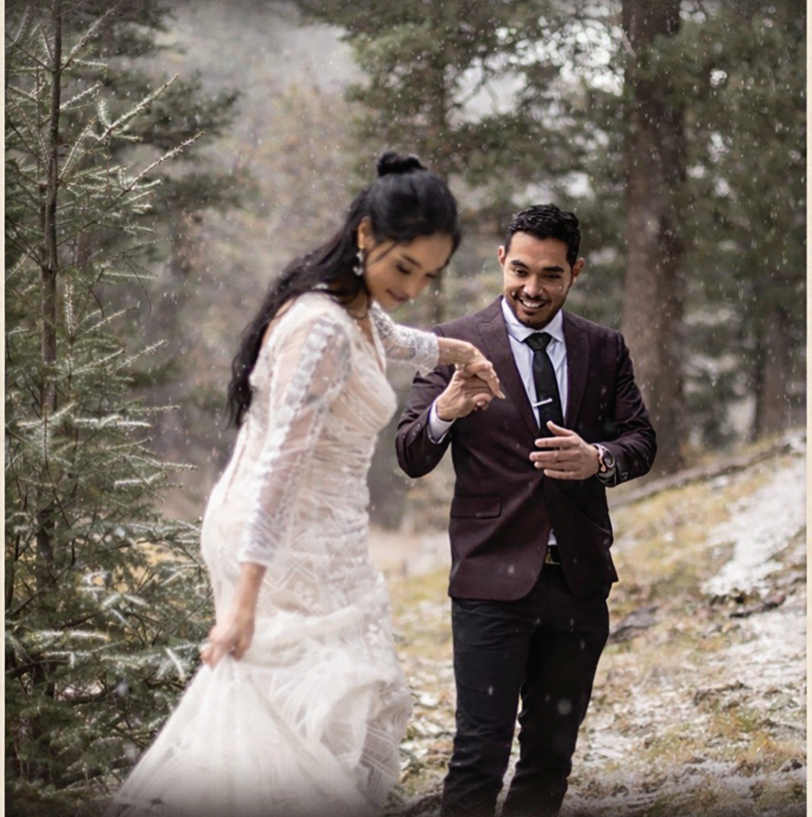
At the recent February council meeting, Trustee Matt Willett said dark skies ordinance compliance would be a focus of his during his tenure.

“The solution is really simple. You just turn them off at night. In fact, that’s what the ordinance says,” he said. “And the most important thing is glare. We don’t want the light shining in people’s eyes. Nothing to do with astronomy. It’s about being outdoors, reclaiming feeling comfortable when you’re outside.”

Crinklaw believes Cloudcroft could benefit from thinking about that future, of keeping the stars and astronomical objects above visible. Not just from a tourism standpoint, but for the quality of life of residents as well.

“When you step outside here at night and look up,” he said, “that’s something special.”

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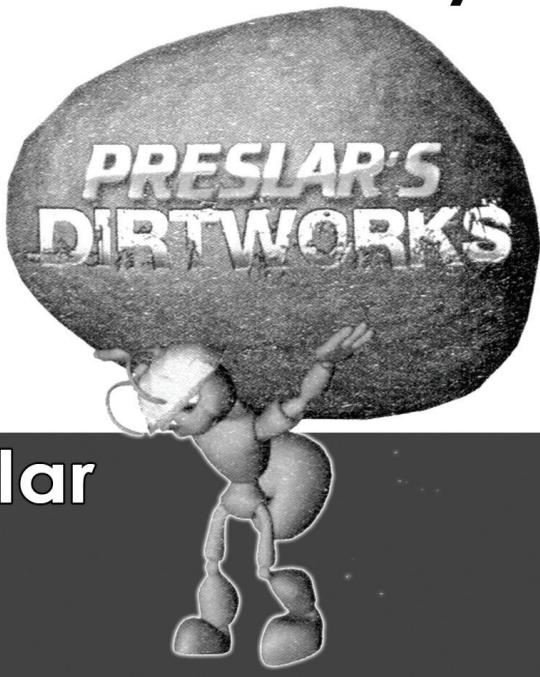
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Former homes in the wake of the 2024 South Fork and Salt Fires

Fire Risk and Insurance: What Cloudcroft Homeowners Should Know

Ashley Dalton Agency Owner speaks to changing insurance norms in high risk wildfire zones. *by Ashley Dalton*

Living in Cloudcroft and the Sacramento Mountains comes with undeniable beauty — tall pines, cool mountain summers and stunning views.

But the same forests that make our community special also bring a reality we can't ignore: wildfire risk.

In recent years, wildfire exposure has become more than just a safety concern. It has also become a major factor in the insurance market. Many homeowners across New Mexico are seeing higher premiums, stricter policy requirements, and in some cases non-renewal notices.

Understanding why this is happening can help homeowners navigate the changes.

Why Insurance Is Changing

Across New Mexico, insurance companies are reassessing wildfire exposure in ways we haven't seen before. Several factors are driving the shift. Large and destructive wildfires have occurred across the state in recent years. Drought conditions have increased fire danger, and rebuilding costs have risen dramatically since 2020 due to higher prices for materials and labor.

At the same time, insurers now use sophisticated wildfire modeling to evaluate individual properties. These models analyze factors such as vegetation density, terrain, proximity to fire stations, roofing materials, and historical fire behavior in the surrounding area.

When those models identify areas of elevated wildfire risk, insurers typically respond in a few predictable ways: premiums increase, underwriting guidelines tighten, and in some cases companies reduce their exposure in high-risk areas by limiting new policies or choosing not to renew existing ones.

While these decisions are based on risk management, they can have real consequences for homeowners.

Why Cloudcroft Scores High

Wildfire hazard assessments from the New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural

Resources Department consistently place parts of Otero County — including Cloudcroft — among the highest wildfire-risk areas in the state.

There are several reasons for this rating. Cloudcroft sits in dense, continuous forest fuels.

The terrain is steep in many places, which can accelerate fire spread. Some

neighborhoods have limited access roads, and the region experiences seasonal dry lightning.

In addition, many homes are located close to heavy timber.

On statewide wildfire planning maps, the Cloudcroft area often falls into "very high" or "extreme" wildfire hazard categories. Those classifications directly

influence how insurance companies evaluate properties here.

What Homeowners Are Seeing

Because of these factors, some homeowners are already experiencing changes in their insurance coverage.

These changes may include higher premiums, roof-age requirements, inspections before policy renewal, or requests for defensible-space improvements. In some cases,

companies may issue non-renewal notices based on wildfire exposure.

It is important to understand that most wildfire-related actions involve non-renewals, not cancellations.

A cancellation occurs during the active policy term. A non-renewal happens when the policy period ends and the insurer decides not to continue coverage.

Your Rights

New Mexico law requires insurance companies to follow specific notice rules. Typically, insurers must provide at least 10 days' notice for a cancellation and at least 30 days' notice for a non-renewal.

If you receive a notice, you have the right to request a written explanation and you can contact the New Mexico Office of Superintendent of Insurance for consumer assistance. It is also important to remember that different companies evaluate risk differently, so shopping the market can still be worthwhile.

A Safety Net

For homeowners who cannot obtain insurance through traditional companies, New Mexico operates the FAIR Plan, which serves as the state's insurer of last resort.

Coverage limits have increased in recent years, and more homeowners in high-risk wildfire areas are relying on it. While the coverage may be more ba-



Ashley Dalton is known as the 'Fire Queen' of insurance issues in New Mexico and is a highly sought-after speaker. She lives in Ruidoso and has Cloudcroft roots in her family



Hundreds of total loss homes after 2024 Ruidoso fire

sic than standard policies, it ensures that homeowners can still maintain insurance if private carriers withdraw.

What You Can Do

There is some encouraging news. Insurance companies are increasingly paying attention to wildfire-mitigation efforts.

Steps such as maintaining defensible space around the home, thinning vegetation, using fire-resistant roofing, cleaning gutters, and ensuring emergency vehicle access can make a difference. These improvements not only reduce wildfire risk but may also help

during insurance underwriting reviews.

Final Thought

Cloudcroft's wildfire-risk rating does not mean homes here are uninsurable. But it does mean the insurance market is tightening, and pricing increasingly reflects wildfire exposure.

Living in the mountains always involves trade-offs. With preparation, good information and community efforts to reduce wildfire risk, homeowners can better protect both their properties and their ability to stay insured.

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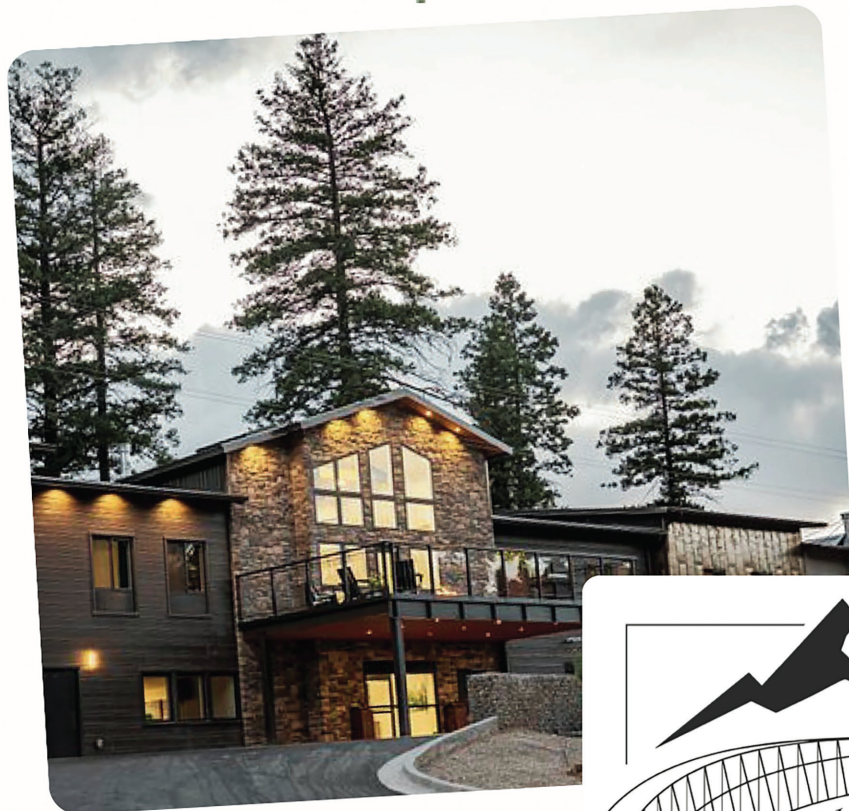
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