

9/11 REMEMBERED

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Nation:
Officials chase unconfirmed al-Qaida threat
Page A5

MONTROSE Daily Press

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City Council cuts its budget to help capital improvements fund

BY KATI O'HARE
DAILY PRESS WRITER

There are still several opportunities for public comment into the 2012 municipal budget, which is now balanced after two days and 10 hours of meetings between city department heads and city councilors.

The team met for more than five hours Thursday to continue discussions on the city's \$17 million-plus budget, making some big changes.

The public can view the proposed budget at www.cityofmontrose.org/budget, and a budget open house is planned for 6 p.m. Sept. 19 at the city council chambers, 107 S. Cascade Ave. People will be able to view the budget and talk with department staff members regarding specific issues. Two public hearings will be held in October before the council.

SEE BUDGET, PAGE A3

Details

A public open house on the budget is planned at 6 p.m. Monday, Sept. 19 at the City Council chambers, 107 S. Cascade Ave.

A variety of budget information is online at www.cityofmontrose.org/budget.

County formalizes support of TABOR

BY KATHARHYNN HEIDELBERG
DAILY PRESS SENIOR WRITER

Montrose County commissioners support the Taxpayers Bill of Rights amendments of 1992, and they've inked the document to prove it.

On Sept. 6, Commissioners Gary Ellis, Ron Henderson and David White passed a resolution declaring their support of the tax-capping amendments known as TABOR.

Their resolution also declares opposition to a May lawsuit that seeks to have TABOR declared unconstitutional.

"We're just supportive of the application of the concept of TABOR on government," Ellis said Thursday.

TABOR, the brainchild of anti-tax crusader Doug Bruce, caps the amount of tax revenue governmental entities can retain (combined with statutory provisions, that's no more than 5.5 percent above the previous year's revenue, with some exceptions).

Foes say TABOR has crippled Colorado's ability to fund the services upon which citizens rely; supporters say that it forces the government to live within its means and ask voters to approve tax increases.

Governmental entities can ask voters to exempt them from TABOR, or to "de-Bruce."

In 2006, the voters said yes to having the county partially de-Bruce, so that the county could collect impact fees from developers to offset the costs of infrastructure new developments require.

The county didn't de-Bruce specifically for impact fees, because that's not allowed. Instead, the ballot measure asked residents to exempt the county for everything except property tax revenue, said impact-fee proponent Richard Harding.

Sales and use tax measures approved in 2007 contained separate TABOR exemptions.

"In theory, what we did was protect one icon of TABOR, which was that you cannot increase taxes without going to a vote of the public, beyond the provisions of the statutes and TABOR," Harding said.

He said he has not seen the commissioners' resolution, but that it's not a conflict for the county to have sought a partial TABOR exemption and then pass a resolution in support of TABOR.

"We went to voters and got permission to do that. That is keeping in line with the intent of TABOR," he said.

"I don't think we're being schizophrenic," Ellis said, noting the public in 2006 wanted a TABOR exemption that could be worked to allow the county to collect impact fees.

"That was a response to what the citizens were asking for. It wasn't

SEE TABOR, PAGE A3



Gregory Kibel, 9, looks through a set of binoculars in search of birds during Ridgway State Park's sixth annual bird banding event held Friday morning. The bird banding event continues today from 7:30 a.m. through 11 a.m. and is open to the public.

This one's for the birds

Students from Pomona Elementary School in Montrose were treated to a bird-banding demonstration Friday at Ridgway State Park, getting an up-close look at birds they might normally only see from afar.

Bird banding is a technique by which researchers attach a small tag to the wing or leg of a bird in order to help them study various aspects of the bird's behavior, including migration, longevity and feeding behavior.

Members of the public will have their chance to experience bird banding from 7:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. today at the park when another workshop is held at the Dallas Creek entrance to Ridgway State Park. Participants in today's event will get the chance to observe the work of skilled bird banders from the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory.

Visitors will need to purchase a day or annual pass from the park.



Educator Sheryl Radovich, left, teaches a group of fourth-graders from Pomona Elementary School, foreground from left, Jacob Padilla-Romo, Alex Herra, Bret Brasier and Aaron Aquino, about the proper techniques on banding birds while holding a gray catbird at Ridgway State Park Friday morning.



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INSIDE THE DAILY PRESS

LOCALA2-4
NATIONA5-6
WORLDA7
SPORTSA8
CLASSIFIEDSA9-11
COMICSA12

WEATHERA13
CALENDARA14

Sports:

Montrose football vs. Glennwood results
Page A8



TODAY'S WEATHER

It will be mostly sunny with a chance of an afternoon thunderstorm
High 70s, Low 45
See details, Page A13



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Celebrate National Grandparents Day! September 11, 2011

Let your Grandparents know how special they are!!! Bring them to Montrose Wendy's, 2340 S. Townsend, between 2-4 p.m. Buy a combo and get a FREE single!!!

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Be sure to visit our booth at BeaconFest Senior Fair - Wed., Sept. 14 at the Pavilion, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

