

Indians football team visits Grand Junction Central
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No bilingual ballot required for county

BY KATHARHYNN HEIDELBERG
DAILY PRESS SENIOR WRITER

Montrose County is "on the edge" no longer, after a determination this week that it is not required to print ballots in Spanish.

The county was one of 16 in the state waiting for such a determination by U.S. Census statistics. Federal voting law requires bilingual ballots and other assistance when, after a current Census count, 5 percent of the population does

not speak English fluently or when at least 10,000 citizens don't.

The criteria also include literacy rates, determined by the percentage of residents who have completed at least a fifth-grade education, said Fran Tipton Long, clerk and recorder.

Montrose County was not named among the 248 jurisdictions that are required to print ballots in a language other than English.

The determination doesn't change much, though it is a relief, Long said. Her practice is to make concessions for anyone who cannot read a ballot, for whatever reason, she said.

"We always make concessions for people," she said. "I don't see it as good or bad, just it's finally a relief to know which way we need to go."

Long said previously she was concerned about which way Montrose County would

be ordered to go, because her office had to certify ballots for the upcoming election by Sept. 6 and conduct logic and accuracy testing on its voting equipment Sept. 14.

But the feds warned the determination might not be made before the deadlines and indeed, it wasn't.

"When we were told it might not be until the end of September or mid-October, the state decided to move forward," Long said.

"If it was determined we are a 'covered' county, then we would follow through. We already make provisions for language barrier."

The county has an audio version of ballots available, and people who have difficulty can also ask that the ballot be read to them.

"We would kind of beef that up," Long explained. "We would print sample ballots in

SEE BALLOT, PAGE A3

Inspiring others

Daughter gives back to community after death of parents

BY KATI O'HARE
DAILY PRESS WRITER

One couple who gave so much to the community while they were Montrose residents are continuing to do so even in death.

Howard and Betty Bjelland cared deeply for the Montrose community, said their daughter, Linda Bjelland, who now lives in Centennial.

For that reason, Bjelland chose to disburse \$100,000 of her parents' assets to several organization in Montrose.

"It's really their money, and I think it's appropriate for it to go back to the community that was such an important part of their lives," Bjelland said.

To honor the passion of her parents, Bjelland chose to give \$25,000 to the Montrose Library's Permanent Book Fund, the Bosom Buddies Endowment Fund, the Magic Circle Players and the Montrose Community Foundation.

"All the time growing up, they were always giving money to things," Bjelland said. "My dad was active in politics ... they gave to the Girl Scouts, high school band, Magic Circle ... I grew up knowing that was something that you did. It was pretty natural."

Howard and Betty — who were married for 65 years — met while they were students at the University of Northern Colorado. The two moved to Montrose in 1949 after traveling extensively with the U.S. Army and after Howard got a degree in law from the University of Illinois Law School.

In Montrose, Howard worked for the C.J. Moynihan law firm and later for the Colorado Ute Electric Association, now named Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association. The family

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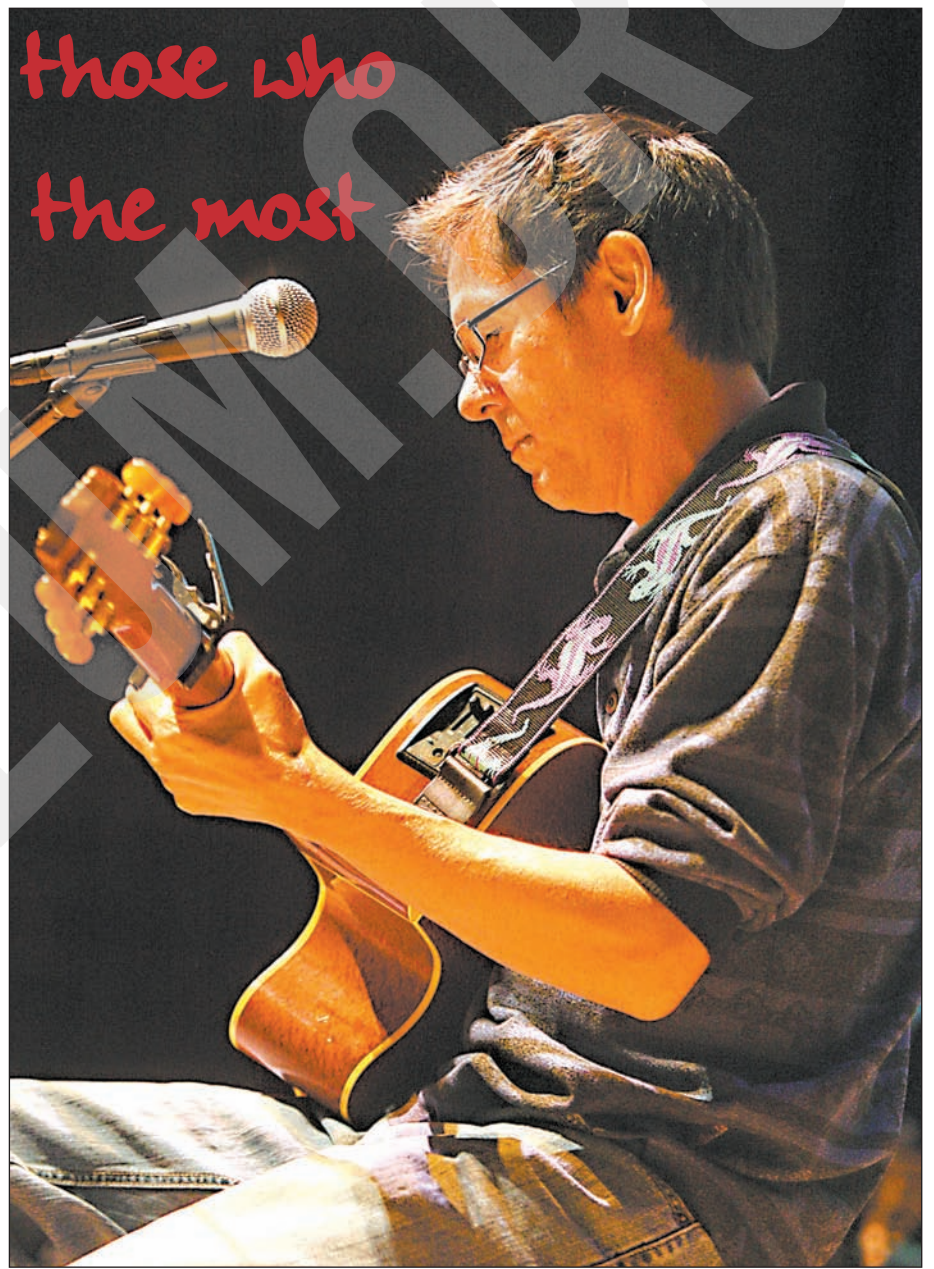


COURTESY PHOTO

The late Howard and Betty Bjelland of Montrose are pictured in the early 1970s. Their daughter Linda recently donated a total of \$100,000 to four local groups in their memory.

Helping those who need help the most

Alan Vigil, a local musician, performs his set in front of an attentive audience during the Welcome to Homelessness: "It Takes A Community" benefit concert held at the Montrose Pavilion Thursday evening. All proceeds from the event will be used to help local families this winter.



JOEL BLOCKER / DAILY PRESS

Sorting through economic development efforts

Area leaders discuss strategies to avoid duplication, inefficiencies

BY KATI O'HARE
DAILY PRESS WRITER

Area leaders came together Thursday to discuss their approach to economic development — and to find out if some of them are working the same territory.

"The agenda is very simple, but the importance of this meeting is a little more complex," said assistant city manager Scott Sellers, who helped organize the economic development summit held at the Montrose Pavilion.

Eight organizations were represented, from the Montrose County School District to the Montrose Economic Development Corp., as well as others interested in economic development.

"There are several organizations that focus on economic development

in some form or fashion here in Montrose," Sellers said. "We want you to tell us what you are doing. Look at existing incentives, goals and missions of each organization."

Each of those organizations fills a niche when it comes to economic development, City Manager Bill Bell said. The Downtown Development Authority helps smaller businesses, while Region 10 focuses on several counties and MEDC's niche is mostly larger corporations, he said.

Finding out about each organiza-

tion's mission, goals and incentives is important so that duplicate efforts, inefficiencies and gaps can be identified, Bell said.

Half of the three-hour summit was devoted to each organization sharing its role in the community, while the remaining time was spent on roundtable discussions in which the leaders discussed an array of ideas from efficiency to possible incentives.

This isn't the first local effort to align economic development efforts, Sellers said.

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Sellers



Bell

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Lady Pirates home against Rifle for senior night
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TODAY'S WEATHER

Sunny
High 70, Low 37
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