



# EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

January 2017

*“Organizational Excellence Through Team Work”*

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## Welcome New Employees!

### Finance

Anna Abdo

### Senior Services

Annie Satariano

Marcus Dunseth

Ashley Hill

Scott Sallee

## January Closure

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day  
Monday, January 16, 2015



## Drones an efficient, safe addition to county tool kit

By Joe Kerby, County Manager

If you are anything like me, the speed that technology develops is enough to produce a bad case of whiplash. Keeping up with the latest gadgets, let alone their capabilities, can be a full time job usually best-suited for a family's resident teenager. And after - sometimes long after - those natural experts discern the value of a new technology, we grown-ups come to see the value of these new-fangled devices and before long they become indispensable. Here at La Plata County, we are the proud owners of new unmanned aerial systems – known to most of us as drones – that will expand our ability to provide essential county services at significantly reduced costs and without risking safety.

The drones will be housed in the Office of Emergency Management, and their first use – if the Board of County Commissioners adopts a policy establishing the purposes for the drone program – will be to support critical emergency services. Using these machines, we will significantly enhance our ability to respond to search & rescue operations quickly and more effectively. We will also be able to expeditiously and safely assess significant emergency events: floods, fires, snow storms – circumstances that require rapid response and real-time data-gathering to protect life and property for La Plata County citizens.

These capabilities have the potential to dramatically improve a number of the county's functions including law enforcement, mapping, damage assessment – and that is just for starters! This is an exciting opportunity that will not only improve efficiency and effectiveness, it will minimize risk and cost to county staff and the public. This is because drones can fly into areas that would be either unsafe or impossible to reach in an airplane or helicopter – think of the Animas River gorge near Rockwood, where boaters can run into trouble during high water, or through densely wooded areas searching for a lost hiker – all while gathering much more detailed imagery than what could be captured in a plane or helicopter.

This program was conceived in 2015 and we budgeted funds to purchase equipment in 2016. We now have two machines, each with video capability, as well as a third on the way that is equipped with infrared and video imaging devices and a platform for carrying extra weight – such as an emergency survival kit, water, food, or other critical items that would

Continued on page 2

## January Banners

### EMPLOYEE BANNERS

#### Kathleen Dooley

\$20 Award

"Thanks for the extra help at the Christmas Dinner. Great job!"

#### Julie Pickett

\$20 Award

"You were everywhere at the holiday party - climbing ladders, labeling houses, taking photos...Thanks for making it special for all of us!"

#### Felecia Stradling

\$20 Award

"Thanks for your attention to detail and your warm welcome at the holiday party. It was a wonderful event!"

### WELLNESS BANNER

#### Colleen Murphy

\$20 Award

"Way to go on taking advantage of the new yoga class offered at DHS - taking the time to take care of yourself with yoga."

### GREEN BANNER

#### Courtney Hightower

\$20 Award

"Courtney is constantly turning lights off when they are not in use. She sets a great example for the rest of the department!"

**Awards will be included  
in the paycheck released  
01/13/2017**

#### LPC Banners

To give thanks to ANY LPC employee, give him or her a completed Employee Banner. They will surely welcome your words of appreciation. The employee may then enter it into the "Banner Box" in the HR Office for a chance to win a \$20 award.

Drones, continued from page 1

be impossible to deliver to an individual who was stranded in the high country, or otherwise separated from essential needs. For this total hardware investment of approximately \$30,000, we can now easily supplement the functions of departments countywide: Road & Bridge, Engineering, the Assessors' Office, and more. Given that hiring an aircraft costs \$1,200-\$2,400 an hour, plus pilot time, we believe the long-term savings these drones will yield will be significant.

For simple and complex tasks alike, drones require fewer staff resources for all sorts of field survey work. With picture and video capability, drones can capture the data needed and share it with staff throughout the county – to maximize efficiency as well as your time and safety!

The Board of County Commissioners will be considering the drone policy in January, and we will be holding an open house to present the program to the public from 6-8 p.m. on January 10. Please attend! This is an exciting opportunity for La Plata County and I'm excited to learn how it can benefit your department.

## ACA News: Federal government extends Individual 2016 reporting deadline

The federal government has extended the Affordable Care Act (ACA or health care reform law) reporting deadlines to give employers more time to meet the requirements. Previously, employers who provided self-funded coverage, such as La Plata County Government, had until January 31, 2017 to send **tax form 1095-C** to all employees eligible for coverage in 2016. With the extension, **employers now have until March 2 to get this information to their employees.**

#### Impact on individual taxpayers

La Plata County employees may not receive Form 1095-C by the time they are ready to file their 2016 tax returns. Under these circumstances the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) will accept other forms of documentation for proof of insurance coverage including:

- Insurance cards
- Explanation of benefits
- W-2 or payroll statements reflecting insurance deductions
- Records or advance payments of the premium tax credit and other statements indicating that the taxpayer or a member of his or her family, had health coverage

Individual taxpayers will not need to send the IRS proof of health coverage. However, any documentation should be kept with other tax records.

#### Why reporting is required

The purpose of health law reporting is to show the IRS that affordable coverage was offered to employees. It also shows which employees and dependents are covered, and for how many months out of the year. As you know, the ACA requires all Americans to have health care coverage or face a penalty. The IRS helps enforce this part of the law. To do so, it requires certain tax forms as proof of coverage.

The IRS can also use these forms to track who does or doesn't have coverage, what companies are or aren't offering coverage to workers, and levy penalties accordingly. These forms became mandatory with the 2015 tax year. And reporting is required in 2017 for the 2016 coverage year.

(Adapted from an article provided by Anthem)



### Exciting Delta Dental Changes!

The County has made some changes to our Delta Dental plan that means more savings at no extra cost to you!

Beginning January 1, 2017, employees and their dependents enrolled in the County's Delta Dental plan will no longer have to pay a portion of diagnostic and preventive services! **That's right - Delta Dental will cover oral exams, cleanings, sealants, x-rays and fluoride treatments at 100%! (See the [plan summary sheet](#) on the staff site for details and restrictions.)**

Additionally, the County has joined the Delta Dental PPO plus Premier plan. With this plan, you and your family members may visit any licensed dentist in the Premier or PPO network, but you will receive the greatest out-of-pocket savings if you see a Delta Dental PPO provider. Delta Dental PPO providers offer greater savings than Premier providers.

However, you may still choose to visit a Premier provider and will still save money because Premier providers also accept discounted fees (just not as great as if you see a PPO provider).

Check out this illustration of potential savings when switching to a PPO provider in this example of getting a porcelain crown.

To find a participating provider or to see if your current provider is in the PPO network, visit Delta Dental's website at [deltadentalco.com](http://deltadentalco.com) and click on the 'Find a Dentist' search tool. Or use our free mobile app for iPhone and Android.

You can also contact the customer relations department, Monday-Friday 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mountain Time, at 1-800-610-0201 (toll-free) or [customer\\_service@ddpco.com](mailto:customer_service@ddpco.com).

**Looking for a dentist? Concerned about costs? PPO providers offer you the greatest savings.**

**Service: Porcelain Crown (Benefit illustration only. Example assumes deductible has been met.)**

	← Greatest Savings		Least Savings →
	Protected from balance-billing		Not protected from balance-billing
Network	Delta Dental PPO Provider	Delta Dental Premier Provider	Out-of-Network Provider
Procedure Cost	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Maximum Provider Can Charge Patient	\$710	\$950	Unlimited
Maximum Provider Can Charge Insurance (MPA)*	\$710	\$950	\$660
Benefit Percentage	50%	50%	50%
Delta Dental Pays	\$355	\$475	\$330
You Pay	\$355	\$475	\$670

\*The maximum a provider can charge your insurance company is called the Maximum Plan Allowance (MPA). Delta Dental pays a portion of the MPA only, which exposes you to balance-billing from an out-of-network provider.

### Paycheck Info

2017 FSA, HSA, Voluntary Life and Aflac elections that you made during Open Enrollment will be reflected on the first paycheck in 2017 released 1/13/17.

As a reminder, because we prepay our premiums one month in advance, the **new 2017 medical, dental and vision insurance rates already went into effect in December.** You will also notice that your medical and dental premiums are no longer split into 2 separate deductions on your pay stub. Your medical premium is now labeled "Medical" and your dental premium is labeled "Dental."

If you have any questions, please contact HR or Sarah Rome in Finance.

*Thank you for helping our community this holiday season!*

Angela Fountain and Jan Mayer-Gawlik picked up all the food donation boxes and took them to the Durango Food Bank. We're happy to report that they conservatively estimated we donated a whopping 350 lbs. of food! Way to go, County! Thanks to all who gave so generously so others could have a bountiful Christmas.



*Nutritional Education & Coaching with Hana ~ **January 19th at Noon***

### IS GLUTEN FREE FOR ME?



A few years ago, most people didn't know what gluten was. Today, gluten-free items line super market shelves and dot restaurant menus. Health practitioners of various modalities regularly prescribe a gluten-free diet for a host of conditions. So, what's the deal? Is gluten-free a fad or a legitimate concern? Our functional nutritionist & health coach, Hana Renee, will help clear up any confusion.

Classes will be virtual (online) so you can join from the convenience of your office, home, or favorite park! *We will also be sending a link to the recorded version of the session afterwards in case you miss it!*

To join the session (NOTE: New call-in number)

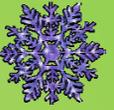
Go to the Meeting Wall: <https://www.freeconferencecall.com/wall/hanarenee>

Call-in: (515)739-1030 (Since this is a long distance call, when you get the beeps to enter a code, enter 2301)

Use Access code: 239-292-014



# Employee Appreciation Holiday Luncheon



Thank you, La Plata County employees, for your hard work and dedication throughout the year. We hope you enjoyed the food and fun at your Holiday Luncheon!





# Holiday House Contest!



Impressive creativity was displayed in the Holiday House contest!! Many thanks to all who participated!

The Department of Human Services won a pizza party with this incredible Santa's Workshop!



Above: Clerk & Recorder's Office

Below: Finance & Procurement

Both C&R and Finance had accompanying poems. See page 9.



Assessor's Office



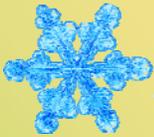


# Holiday House Contest!



Clockwise from upper left:

- \* IT
- \* Building Dept.
- \* Fairgrounds
- \* Sheriff's Office
- \* Administration
- \* Engineering





# Holiday House Contest!



- Clockwise from upper left:
- \* Sheriff's Office
  - \* Fleet
  - \* Coroner's Office
  - \* Human Resources
  - \* Planning Dept.





## *T'was a Day of the Clerk and Recorder*

T'was the day of the election, when all through the building  
All the creatures were stirring, from floor to ceiling.  
The ballots were stuffed in the 24 hour box with care,  
In hopes that Election Day soon would be there.

The judges are working through insane amounts,  
All fingers are crossed for no re-counts.  
When a problem arises Erin comes in,  
Tackling all challenges with a grin.

When out in the lobby there arose such a clatter,  
As the results rolled in that is all that mattered.  
Tiffany gathered the press and public around,  
As the results were read there wasn't a sound.

The parking lot was covered in new-fallen snow  
Motor vehicle was bustling even though.  
When to Tammie and Sheila's eyes should appear,  
The team of eight awesome employees come near.

In comes a little old driver, so lively and irate,  
Rhonda knew in a moment he needed a plate.  
More rapid than eagles she came to his aide,  
And he shouted out at the amount he just paid!

"Now, Beth! Now, Carolyn! Now, Denver and Cyndi!  
On, Shairlene! On, Donna! On, Sonia and Kristi!  
To the front counter! The patrons do call!  
Now process away! Batch away! Carry away all!"

As the phones continue ringing time does fly,  
Requests for renewals, titles and registrations are high.  
Out to the parking lot to perform a VIN,  
And then back inside where it is warm again.

Down in suite C, Maria is recording,  
Deeds are received which is rewarding.  
First you record, index, then proof,  
And you do not want to goof.



Mona is working as the project queen,  
From Elections to Recording and all in between.  
The plats of La Plata get stored in a box,  
Along with historical records all safe under lock.

When it comes to our history, have no fear!  
Our record keeper Ashli is here!  
Toiling away over leather bound ledger,  
She never knows where she'll find a treasure.

The couple enters holding hands,  
Another part to all wedding plans.  
People come from far and wide,  
Colorado is the place to take a bride!



They are ready with money and ID's too,  
Couples come to us to celebrate "I DO!"  
With their signatures and a sweet little kiss,  
These are the moments we love to assist.

Elections...well there just are no words,  
Motor Vehicle beautifully caters to the herds.  
Recording keeps our county history preserved,  
Marriage licenses are an honor to be served.

What a blessing to be a part of this crew,  
It's amazing all the things that we do.  
And as we like to say,

**"Happy Holidays, and thank you, have a nice day!"**



## *Finance*

T'was the week before Christmas and all through the CAB,  
Employees were stirring cause their budgets looked drab.  
PO's were stacked high on the desk with such care,  
Invoices organized meticulously to be entered into Munis software.

Employees all hustling to finish their work.  
But it will get done with our awesome teamwork.  
Someone scanning receipts lets out a moan,  
What is this purchase for, could it be a drone?

Alas, it's okay. It's budgeted for, not a miss.  
This makes Finance happy, it's budgeting bliss.



The cash was not reconciled, nor inventory counted,  
POs not closed out, nor production boards mounted.  
When what to my tiring eyes could appear  
But the Finance Director and her team full of cheer.

A wink of her eye and a twist of her head  
Soon gave them to know there was nothing to dread.  
Not a word was spoken but the team went straight to work,  
Fixing over budgets and issues, then she turned with a jerk.

After checking one last time the org and object code,  
She gave a nod, to do the budget upload,  
Then sprang to her 10-key and gave the green light  
And away all went home with such great delight.

But as they all left they heard her say with excite,  
**"Happy Accounting to All and to all a good night."**

## EMPLOYEES FOR EMPLOYEES IS BACK!

- Please submit your text and up to two photos by the 22nd of each month. Email to [julie.pickett@co.laplata.co.us](mailto:julie.pickett@co.laplata.co.us)
- Ads will only run in one issue unless a request is made by the 22nd of the month to run it one more time (two times max).
- Only non-commercial ads will be accepted.
- We reserve the right to edit text and photos.

### For Sale

This is a hand carved and painted southwest mission distressed style matching table, two chairs, and two stools made by Taos, NM artist K R Epperson. The set is sturdy and in good condition. The table dimension is 48 x 36. It can seat up to 4 people comfortably, but it only comes with two chairs. Asking \$350.00 OBO. Contact Tom Cowing at 970-759-6892.



## What is Your New Year's Resolution?

If your New Year always starts with you reeling off the same old dutiful commitments to join a gym, start a diet and give up all those bad habits, why not try something different to boost your happiness and revitalize your life, a new kind of New Year's resolution?



### Learn something you never learned as a child.

You may run a snow blower, pay your own bills and parallel park like a pro, but do you know how to do a handstand or ride a bike? For this New Year's resolution it's time to nurture your inner child and learn that thing that you never learned to do. Whether it's knowing the number of days in each month, how to spell 'necessary' correctly, or how to whistle, we all have something we never learned as a child that everyone else seems to know. Set this to rights and have some fun at the same time - your younger self would be proud!

### Make a new friend a month.

To expand your social circle, try to make one new friend a month by making a conscious effort to attend more social events, chat to strangers and get introductions to friends of friends. Making friends with people with different personalities and interests from you can be particularly beneficial in helping you to broaden your horizons, explore different sides of your personality and find new ways to get the most out of life.

### Try a new food each week.

Rather than cutting out foods from your diet as with so many New Year's resolutions, opt to add more foods *in* to

your diet next year instead (bonus points if they're green!). Many of us don't eat a varied enough diet, so ensure you are getting all the nutrients your body needs – as well as enhancing your enjoyment of food – by making a resolution to try a new food each week.

### Do something nice for others every day

Many of our resolutions (these included) are inwardly focused, concentrating on ways to become thinner, healthier, wealthier people. However, while there is nothing wrong with improving yourself, it's worth remembering there's a whole world out there too. Next year, why not make a resolution to focus outwards instead and help make the world a better place? Plan to do one nice thing a day for someone else; whether it's something small like giving a compliment, or something potentially life-saving like donating blood. By knowing you are making a difference, you will also boost your own happiness and sense of achievement.

Condensed from '10 Alternative New Year's Resolution Ideas' at iVillageUK.

LPC FITNESS CLASSES

"Eighty percent of success is showing up" ~Woody Allen

JANUARY 2017  
FITNESS CALENDAR



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2 	3 Yoga 12-12:45 pm	4 Interval 12-12:45pm	5	6 Tabata 11-11:45am Yoga 12-12:45 pm
9 Functional 12-12:45pm	10 Yoga 12-12:45 pm	11 Interval 12-12:45pm	12	13 Tabata 11-11:45am Yoga 12-12:45 pm
16 	17 Yoga 12-12:45 pm	18 Interval 12-12:45pm	19 Nutritional Education & Coaching @12 pm (Online, see pg. 7 of newsletter for instructions)	21 Tabata 11-11:45am Yoga 12-12:45 pm
23 Functional 12-12:45pm	24 Yoga 12-12:45 pm	25 Interval 12-12:45pm	26	27 Tabata 11-11:45am Yoga 12-12:45 pm
30 Functional 12-12:45pm	31 Yoga 12-12:45 pm	1 Interval 12-12:45pm	2	3 Tabata 11-11:45am Yoga 12-12:45 pm

**Tabata**

Short bursts of high intensity exercises followed by short rests. This training will raise your metabolism and heart rate immediately. Your metabolism will stay high for hours after the workout causing you to burn more fat.

\$5 a class or  
\$40 for a punch card (10 classes)

Purchase your punch card or individual class pass from HR. We accept checks (preferred), cash and credit card (\$2 fee).

Purchase individual passes or punch cards in the Human Resources Office.

For more information, email [felecia.stradling@co.laplata.co.us](mailto:felecia.stradling@co.laplata.co.us) Or call (970) 382-6361

**Functional Fitness**

Exercises to train your muscles to work together and prepare them for daily tasks by simulating common movements you might do at home, at work or in sports. While using various muscles in the upper and lower body at the same time. Also incorporates core stability.

**Yoga**

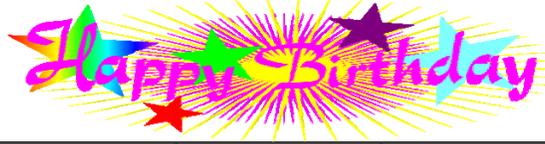
Enhance core strength and balance along side simple meditation. Offering modifications to make poses and stretches easier or harder depending on what your body needs.

**Interval Training**

A series of low to high intensity exercise workouts with rest or relief periods that allow you to burn more calories in a shorter amount of time. Each exercise will be modified to your personal needs.



# JANUARY 2017



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
1  Rhonda Johnson Michelle Funk 	2 Barrett Potthoff Yvonne Alves	3 Henrik Krog Patrick Mund	4 Franklin Holley	5 Jeff Blevans	6 Gary Beham	7
8	9	10 Mark McKibben	11	12   OFull moon	13 Finlay Reekie 	14 Judith Shows
15 Alanda Martin Chris Gabb	16  Leisa Torres  Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	17	18 Jennifer Boyer Taylor McNeely	19 Darlene Backer Bryan Meador	20	21
22 John Petrucka Courtney Cannon	23	24	25 Carol Melcher Denise Christiansen	26 Joseph LaVenture Colter Poma  	27 Charles Christensen 	28  ●New Moon
29 Beverly Walters	30 Glen Adams	31 Denver Hutchins				

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that."  
 - Martin Luther King Jr.



# FEBRUARY 2017

*Happy Birthday!*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
			1 Melissa Heath Kelli Ganevsky	2	3 Rod Cook Daniel Cornelius Carol Little	4
5 Marcia Tsosie Jason Minette Alix Whittaker	6 Sandra Loeven Lawrence Phelps	7 Caprice Fox	8 Richard Schleeter	9 Gwen Lachelt  <b>Toastmasters</b> 12pm ~ 1pm CAB Training Rm	10 David Small  O Full moon	11 James Coleman Jane Foy Dawn Crossley
12	13	14 Steven Baca Donna Crask  <b>Happy Valentines Day!</b>	15 Rodney Gantt Robert Winski	16 David Wylie	17	18 Colleen Ballo
19 Robert Little Selene Martinez	20  Angeline Blackwell Robin Kissell Brienne Black-ketter <b>President's Day</b>	21 Jacob Steinhage	22 Chad Mercer	23  <b>Toastmasters</b> 12pm ~ 1pm CAB Training Rm	24  	25
26  ● New Moon	27 Betsy Hamill Gary Boudreau Jessica Dalla-Cundiff	28 Chuck Stevens				

*"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader."*

*-John Quincy Adams*