

GOT PLANS?

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BACK TO BACK

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THE Durango HERALD

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REMEMBERING BEN NIGHTHORSE CAMPBELL

Hundreds gather in Ignacio to honor former U.S. senator



JERRY MCBRIDE/Durango Herald photos

About 600 people attended a memorial celebration for Ben Nighthorse Campbell on Monday at the Sky Ute Casino.

DURANGO

City to forgo July 4 fireworks

Dry conditions across state are 'really bad news,' fire chief says

BY CHRISTIAN BURNLEY
HERALD STAFF WRITER

Independence Day fireworks shows have become something of a rarity in Durango over the past seven years, with just two shows being held by the city since 2019.

Durango Fire Protection District Chief Randy Black said the fire district strongly encourages the city to forgo contracting for a fireworks show this July 4 because of strong drought conditions across La Plata County and the state.

He said the city hasn't contacted DFPD to discuss whether fireworks are on the table for this summer - likely, he said, because the city arrived at the same conclusion on its own.

"The chances of that happening are pretty dang slim, that all of a sudden we would have enough rain between now and then," he said.

Ellen Babers, retiring city community events manager, said the city has decided against holding a fireworks show.

The city issued a news release announcing its decision on Tuesday after *The Durango Herald* make inquiries.

"We want to be proactive given the existing conditions and forecast and pivot to invest in a Fourth of July Celebration that's predictable, sustainable, and evolving with our community," Eric Bulrice, community events manager, said in the release.

He said other Colorado communities - Aspen, Denver, Boulder, Thornton, Longmont and Castle Rock, for example - are also considering alternatives to July 4 fireworks because of wild-fire risks.

Dirty Dozen Brass Band to headline July 4 festivities

The city announced Grammy Award-winning Dirty Dozen Brass Band will headline the city's annual Fourth of July Street Dance, the peak event of the city's Four Days of the Fourth scheduled for July 2-5.

"We are very excited about the ability to offer a nationally renowned band for a free community concert," said Mike French, prosperity officer for the city.

See LEGACY, 8A

See FIREWORKS, 8A

SAYING GOODBYE

BY ELIZABETH POND
AND JESSICA BOWMAN
HERALD STAFF WRITERS

SOUTHERN UTE INDIAN TRIBE - As about 600 people gathered Monday at the Sky Ute Casino Event Center in Ignacio for Ben Nighthorse Campbell's memorial service, one theme became abundantly clear: He impacted people from all walks of life.

The venue was packed with bikers decked out in leather; law enforcement and military members in uniform; dozens of voices in politics; several judo Olympians; artists who worked with Campbell; family and friends from far and wide; and a range of prominent Native American individuals, including from the



The Southern Ute Yellow Jacket Drum Group play as Hoop Dancers perform during the Ben Nighthorse Campbell Memorial Celebration on Monday at the Sky Ute Casino.

Northern Cheyenne and Southern Ute tribes.

The 2½-hour service - held on what would have been Campbell's 93rd birthday - included

a slideshow of photos from his life; a viewing of a documentary produced by Rocky Mountain

See CAMPBELL, 8A

Watch the service

The *Durango Herald* livestreamed the memorial celebration held Monday for former U.S. Sen. Ben Nighthorse Campbell. The livestream, which received more than 1,000 views, can be seen by scanning the QR code below.



Celebrating a legacy of bipartisan cooperation

Former U.S. Sen. Ben Nighthorse Campbell remembered as stalwart Colo. representative

BY JESSICA BOWMAN
HERALD STAFF WRITER

A fiscally conservative Democrat, a pro-choice Republican and, above all, an advocate for Colorado and tribal interests: Ben Nighthorse Campbell left

behind a political legacy that many say transcended party lines.

Campbell's midterm switch from the Democratic Party to the Republican Party was, at the time, a jolt to the political landscape. But for the many

who gathered at his memorial service on Monday, including former staff members, elected officials and constituents, party affiliation is not what defined him.

"We voted for him every time," said Elaine Moravan, speaking for her and her husband, Michael Moravan. Though the Durango couple remain registered Democrats,

they said Campbell consistently earned their support because, "he really cared what people's needs were in Colorado."

U.S. Rep. Jeff Hurd, who now holds the same seat Campbell once represented before his Senate tenure, pointed to the complexity of Campbell's legislative achievements.

See LEGACY, 8A

A&E Wednesday | **3B**
City, Region, State | **3A**
Food & Nutrition | **1B**

Obituaries | **2A**
Opinion | **4A**
Sports | **6A**

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