



Aces, Liberty top list of early 2026 title contenders

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The Pueblo Chieftain

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Mike Cafasso, chief executive officer for St. Mary-Corwin, stands outside the East Tower at the hospital in 2020. PHOTOS BY ZACHARY ALLEN/THE PUEBLO CHIEFTAIN

Local tavern chosen for best slopper in the area

Zach Hillstrom
Pueblo Chieftain
USA TODAY NETWORK

A new king of the Pueblo slopper has been crowned, albeit one that's already well known to foodies in Pueblo and beyond.

Gray's Coors Tavern, one of the top slopper hotspots in the Home of Heroes, was chosen by Puebloans as having the No. 1 slopper around through the Greater Pueblo Chamber of Commerce and Visit Pueblo's 2026 Slopper Tour.

The first-place finish marks a return to the top for Gray's, as the iconic Pueblo eatery last won the top honor in the chamber's competition in 2023. To reclaim the title, Gray's had to beat out perennial slopper powerhouse Cactus Flower, which took second this year after being named Pueblo's top slopper in 2024 and 2025.

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'Not going anywhere'

St. Mary-Corwin pushes back on report saying hospital faces cuts or closure

Justin Reutter
Pueblo Chieftain
USA TODAY NETWORK

Leaders of CommonSpirit St. Mary-Corwin Hospital are assuring the community the Pueblo hospital is "not going anywhere" after a new report by Public Citizen identified it as one of nine Colorado hospitals at risk of closing or reducing services as a result of the health care cuts enacted by Congress through the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act."

The massive 2025 tax and spending law cut \$1 trillion from Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act, putting 15 million Americans at risk of losing coverage, according to a news release on the Public Citizen report from Sen. John Hickenlooper.

Key cuts — including the implementation of work requirements, reduced federal funding for expansion, and stricter eligibility requirements — are slated to take effect on Jan. 1, 2027.

The Public Citizen report defined "high-risk" hospitals as those that had at least 20% of their payer mix, on average, coming from Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), or other government programs from 2022 through 2024, and also saw



CommonSpirit St. Mary-Corwin Medical Center in Pueblo.

negative net profit margins, on average, through that same period.

St. Mary-Corwin CEO says hospital 'not going anywhere'

In an emailed statement to the *Chieftain*, officials from CommonSpirit Health, which owns St. Mary-Corwin,

stated that "no Colorado CommonSpirit Health facilities mentioned in the recent report by Public Citizen are under threat of closure or service cuts."

"CommonSpirit Health is deeply committed to the health and well-being of every community where we

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Pueblo D60 honors top teachers and staff

Jessica Skropanic
USA TODAY NETWORK

Pueblo School District 60 honored teachers and staff members from each of its 29 schools at the Occhiato Student Center at Colorado State University in Pueblo on March 18.

Each school nominated one teacher and one staff member for the 2025-26 school year. From this group, district-wide Teachers and Staff Members of the Year were selected by a leadership committee, the district announced.

This year's Teachers of the Year are Terri Pacheco, an English teacher at East High School; Donna Gonzales, an art teacher at Goodnight School; and Arjun Sahdev, a fifth-grade teacher at Minnequa Elementary School.

The Staff Members of the Year are Pete Carrillo, an online advocate at Dutch Clark Digital High School; Stephanie New, a principal's secretary at Goodnight K-8; and Terry Jacques, a night custodian at Haaff Elementary School.

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