

Lawyer, M-CHS grad dies after fall at work site 12A

M-CHS soccer wins first league title 11A

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Japanese tea ceremony instructor Sochi Nomoto, right, demonstrates how to participate in a tea ceremony, as well as explains the history, before the opening of Sundog Gallery's new exhibition, "Ritual Vessels." The tea kettle pictured, left, was made by local artist and co-owner of Sundog, Jamille Cucci.

The art of tea ceremony

'Ritual Vessels' exhibit displays a mix of utility and spirituality

BY BAILEY DURAN
SPECIAL TO THE JOURNAL

The inside of Sundog Gallery was bathed in the sunlight streaming through the windows as patrons of various ages quietly walked around the gallery Saturday, viewing the many ceramics on display. The ceramics of all shapes and sizes sparked from their places on the shelves, gazing out at the people milling around the gallery.

At 3 p.m., a brightly smiling woman in a pink and blue kimono (traditional Japanese dress) addressed the crowd of about 30 people, inviting everyone to gather around for the presentation of the traditional Japanese tea ceremony, also known as Chanoyu.

Sochi Nomoto is a Chanoyu instructor and has been teaching for more than 20 years. She has been doing the ceremony



Participants gathered around to learn about a Japanese tea ceremony with Sochi Nomoto.

even longer, sharing that she started at 11 years old. The name "Sochi" was given to her when she obtained teacher status.

Nomoto teaches classes in-person and virtually, as she lives part time in California and part time in Durango. The class takes place over the

course of 10 weeks. A show of hands around the gallery demonstrated that

See TEA, 13A

Support mixed on solar project

Pros laud energy perks, cons worry about home prices

BY ANNA WATSON
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

A proposal for a utility-scale solar and battery storage project about 5 miles east of Cortez and south of U.S. Highway 160 has drawn opposition from some nearby residents and business owners, while others close by say they support the development.

Members of the group NoValleyRange say the project's location and scale could alter the scenery near Mesa Verde National Park and hurt property values, tourism and surrounding business operations. They also question the safety of the proposed battery energy storage system.

Supporters, including other homeowners, say the proposed Valley Range Energy Park would bring benefits to the community and that the developer, Acceleron Energy, has responded to their concerns.

Acceleron is applying for a high-impact and special-use permit from Montezuma County to build a 125-megawatt solar energy generation facility. The designs include 900 acres of panels and a 62.5-megawatt battery energy storage system on the project site's northwest corner.

The proposed site lies south of the Montezuma County Fairgrounds in a tract of high-desert terrain between U.S. 160

See SOLAR, 14A

MONTEZUMA COUNTY

Finalist for administrator outlines priorities if hired

Rime says he will listen, learn, show public transparency

BY ANNA WATSON
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

Montezuma County commissioners introduced Michael Rime as their choice for county administrator Oct. 6 during a

public meet-and-greet, where he outlined his professional background and priorities for the role.

At the meeting, commissioner Jim Candelaria said while the various administrative steps for his hiring are not completed, he expects Rime may begin work later this month.

Rime told attendees he seeks to listen, learn and understand the needs of commissioners, department directors and county

residents, and that he is pursuing the role to give back to the community that shaped his upbringing and experiences.

"This place, this county, has made a significant impact on my life," he said. "I am sure it will make the same impact on the lives of my children."

He said he aims to understand challenges already faced by leaders, learn the systems

See RIME, 14A



ANNA WATSON/The Journal

Michael Rime is seen during a public meet-and-greet Oct. 5 at 109 W. Main St., where he shared his background and key goals as Montezuma County's prospective administrator finalist.

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Today: Rain, possibly mixed with snow, in the morning. Partly cloudy in the evening. High 53 | Low 32. More weather | 2A

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