

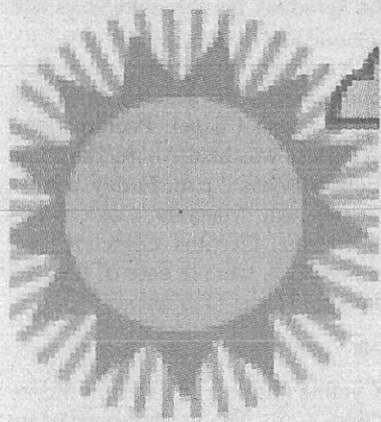


THE CONEJOS COUNTY CITIZEN

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Wednesday, June 27, 2012 50¢

Weather



Wednesday: Sunny, with a high near 89. West southwest wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Wednesday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 52. West southwest wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Thursday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 88. West wind around 5 mph.

Thursday night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 51. West southwest wind around 5 mph.

Friday: Sunny, with a high near 90.

Empowering the Latino voice

By TORI VIGIL

SAN LUIS VALLEY – The Colorado Latino Forum (CLF), a political, non partisan, non profit organization, started a chapter in the San Luis Valley, and residents are excited to add their voice to other Latinos throughout the state.

Founded in 2009, CLF is a 501(C)(4) organization. Their mission is a firm commitment to increasing Latino participation and awareness in the electoral process, educating on issues vital to the community; and increasing the number of Latino office holders in Colorado. CLF collaborates with Latino individuals and organizations across the state to achieve its mission.

The CLF claims that the number of Latino elected officials at the federal level is at a 25-year low and, "Currently, Colorado's political infrastructure lacks the type of state-wide organization needed to translate the rising number of Latinos across the state into meaningful political change for Latinos as a whole."

During a public meeting Saturday, June 23, at the Sacred Heart Church in Alamosa, a group of Latinos and Latinas from throughout

the Valley decided to start a San Luis Valley Chapter of the CLF. Julie Gomez, Conejos County, was elected chairperson; Dennis Lopez, Alamosa County, was elected the co-chair; and Leanne Duran, Rio Grande County, was elected secretary. A first official meeting of the SLV chapter will be held within the next 30 days and other board members will be elected at that time to represent the other counties in the Valley.

Guest speaker for the Alamosa meeting was Federico Peña. Born in Laredo, Texas, Peña earned his Bachelor of Arts (B.A. in 1969) and a Juris Doctorate J.D. in 1972 from the University of Texas at Austin and the University of Texas School of Law.

He eventually moved to Colorado, where he became a practicing attorney and was elected to the Colorado House of Representatives as a Democrat in 1979, rising to become Minority Leader.

In 1983, Peña defeated incumbent, William H. McNichols, Jr. to become the first Hispanic Mayor of Denver, a post to which he was re-elected to in 1987.

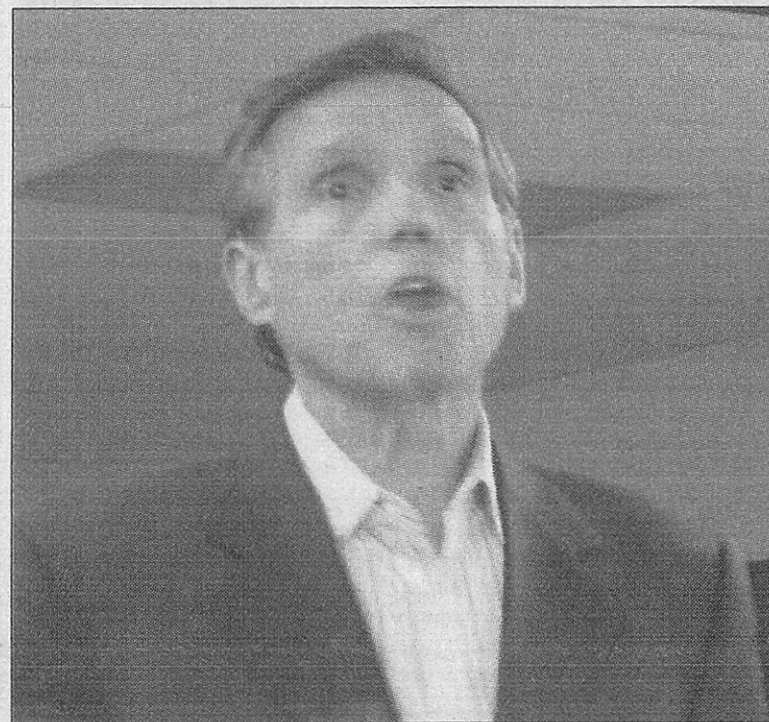
Peña spoke passionately about

issues many Latinos are facing throughout Colorado. "In the year 2050 the country will change," said Peña.

"Fifty percent of Americans will

be of Color, 30 percent will be Latinos. From a big perspective,

*Please see LATINOS
on Page 3A*



Courtesy photo

Federico Peña was guest speaker at a meeting of the Colorado Latino Forum.

News

LATINOS

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it's a matter of national security. We have both a problem and an opportunity," Peña went on to say.

He pointed out that, if the 30 percent of Latino Americans remain undereducated, without healthcare and underemployed, then America will be in danger and falling behind many other countries.

Peña quoted statistics that claim only 47 percent of eligible Latinos are actually registered to vote in Colorado.

In Alamosa County alone, the statistics claim that 2,551 Latinos

are registered to vote; however, 3,602 more eligible Latinos are not registered. These are powerful numbers that may predict a sad future for Latinos in the Valley and Colorado, if things don't change. Peña went on to state that elderly concerned about social security changes need to vote; college students concerned about the future of Pell Grants need to vote; and mothers concerned with the status of their children's Medicaid coverage need to vote.

Peña said a united Latino voice aimed politically can be a powerful force in Colorado, and the CLF could become, "the most powerful political organization in Colorado."

On May 19 and 20, the CLF held their third annual Public Policy Summit, which welcomed more than 150 attendees from throughout Colorado. This two day workshop was created to prepare the next generation of Latinos and Latinas who are interested in running for public office or serving on campaigns.

Among those in attendance at the Alamosa meeting were Crestina Martinez, candidate for Colorado Senate District 35; Armando Valdez, also candidate for Colorado Senate District 35; Frank Martinez, former Monte Vista police chief and many others.

Other chapters that the CLF has established are located throughout Colorado. These chapters serve as a support mechanism for local issues that have the potential of affecting Latinas and Latinos.

Colorado Hay Report

GREELEY (USDA) — Compared to last week: Hay prices are strengthening as a result of increased buyer demand, and decreased yields due to limited rains and dwindling irrigation supplies.

According to the US Drought Monitor, more than two-thirds of the topsoil was rated short to very short in Wyoming (71 percent), Colorado (79 percent) and New Mexico (95 percent). Half or more of the pasture and rangeland was rated poor or very poor in Nevada (55 percent), Colorado (58 percent), Wyoming (59 percent), California (60 percent), Arizona (67 percent) and New Mexico (85 percent). Deteriorating pasture

lands and loss of grazing lands as a result of fires has forced many producers to begin to heavily cull cow herds and in some cases early wean calves.

As a result, auction barns in Colorado and Wyoming are reporting increased receipts during their normally slow summer runs.

If you have hay for sale or need hay, use the services of the Colorado Department of Agriculture website: www.coloradoagriculture.com. Prices are from the most recent sales.

Northeast Colorado Areas

Alfalfa

Large Squares: Supreme 215.00-240.00; Good to Premium 195.00-210.00; Fair to Good 180.00-195.00.

Ground and Delivered: Premium to Supreme 220.00-250.00; Good to Premium 200.00-220.00; Good 180.00-200.00.

Grass

Small Squares: Premium 300.00-350.00 (10.00-12.00 per bale).

Straw

Large Squares: 85.00 del.
No reported quotes for other classes of hay.

Southeast

Colorado Areas

Alfalfa

Large Squares: Supreme 225.00-250.00; Good to Premium 220.00-225.00; Fair to Good 200.00-210.00.

Small Squares: Premium 300.00 (9.00 per bale); Good 250.00 (7.50 per bale).

No reported quotes for other classes of hay.

San Luis Valley Area

Alfalfa

Large Squares: Supreme 210.00-240.00; Good to Premium 190.00-210.00.