

**Letter to the Editor Chaffee County Guidelines**

Editors welcome opinions that contain fresh personal insight and expression. Do not send the same letter to different news outlets. Each letter you submit should be unique.

\*If not already specified below, please note that the following guidelines may change during political elections.

**Mountain Mail:**

*The Mountain Mail* welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should be typed, if possible.

The Mountain Mail endeavors to print all letters received, but it is easier for us to do so if they are legible and fewer than 500 words. Letters substantially longer than that may be pared at the editor’s discretion. In addition, letters will be edited for grammar, spelling, clarity and libel. Upon request, a letter writer may see the edited version of the letter before publication.

All letters must be signed with writer’s address and contact information provided.

Bring to 125 E. Second St. or mail to The Mountain Mail, P.O. Box 189, Salida, CO 81201 or e-mail [pgoetz@themountainmail.com](mailto:pgoetz@themountainmail.com).

**Chaffee County Times:**

Letters may be sent using the Chaffee County Times standard website form, which can be rather cumbersome, or sent directly to this address: [editor@chaffeecountytimes.com](mailto:editor@chaffeecountytimes.com)

***Chaffee County Times (CCT) letter to the editor guidelines:***

CCT standard policy is 500 words or less for Your View letters to the editor, CCT will limit election letters to 250 words or less beginning noon, 2 months (60 days) prior to the election date. CCT will also limit each individual to two letters per election cycle, which will allow clarification and/or rebuttal to follow-up comments. These restrictions also apply to groups and organizations. All letters received prior to that deadline will not be subject to the word limit or two letters restriction and will be published as submitted.

The reason for the word restriction is two-fold. First, this policy is to accommodate the greater numbers of letters that are typically generated during an election cycle. Secondly, the word limit will allow writers to clearly and succinctly state why they are or aren’t voting for a person or issue. In this case, shorter is better.

The Chaffee County Times will not accept letters from candidates on why they are running or appointments to their campaign staff. We will also not accept submitted photographs of candidates appearing with or presenting to civic/social groups during an election cycle.

No letters will be accepted from outside our newspaper coverage area, although we will consider letters from out-of-area subscribers or with local ties on matters of local interest. It would help if those writers would state they are a subscriber.

We will not knowingly print form letters, mass-mailed submissions or those written by another person.

CCT encourages letters about local candidates and issues, but will also consider statewide issues and candidates. We encourage writers to address issues raised locally and not in statewide or national television or radio ads.

We encourage polite, productive discourse and reserve the right to refuse name-calling or accusations which cannot be easily verified.

The Times will only publish letters of endorsement up to 2 weeks preceding the election. All letters will be subject to enforcement of our long-published 1 p.m. Monday deadline for each week and will be subject to space availability and verification.

The last day to submit election letters in person, by email or by mail will be 1 p.m., Monday, 2 weeks prior to election date, with no exceptions. The Times will not run election-related letters the week prior to the election.

Authors of letters on elections must include name and hometown, which will be published, and a phone number (not published) to verify authenticity.

***Thank you Letters***

Per published editorial policy, The Times does not print thank you notes that mention specific individuals or businesses as letters to the editor. Letters expressing appreciation for community support are accepted and encouraged. We also accept letters that acknowledge the work done or contributions an individual or business makes toward a project.

CCT offers a special rate for people wishing to thank individuals/businesses that cannot be part of a letter to the editor. The idea was to get thank you notes – some of which listed dozens of people and businesses – off what was then the opinion page and make it more for people to express their opinions on matters of local, social and political importance.

**Ark Valley Voice:**

1. While the Ark Valley Voice is not constrained by print limitations, the best letter to the editors (LTEs) are usually no more than 800 words; Any longer and people lose interest.

2. Any claims made in letter to the editors need to be substantiated with a source. While AVV has media liability insurance, we will not run letters that make unproven claims regarding people, entities or groups.

3. We screen all letters for libel and slander against individuals, organizations and groups. We will not run anything that includes hate speech or makes threats against persons, government entities, business organizations, or non-profit or for-profit groups representing social positions, human rights, or just causes of interest to the public.

4. LTEs need to be signed and include name and city of residence, as well as provide an email and phone contact info for the letter-writer in case we need to clarify something in the letter.

5. LTEs should be sent to [arkvalleyvoice@gmail.com](mailto:arkvalleyvoice@gmail.com)