

# Carroll County Times

Weather 33/27 Sun with clouds Page 3

MONDAY, JANUARY 22, 2024

www.carrollcountytimes.com Price \$3.50

## County renews part-time traffic engineer contract

By Sherry Greenfield

Carroll County will continue using a part-time traffic engineer consultant, which the government has been forced to do since March 2020 because it has been unable to find a full-time employee to fill the position. The board of Carroll County Commissioners unanimously approved Thursday a contract renewal for a part-time traffic engineer with Wallace Montgomery at a cost not to exceed \$52,000. The contract states that the traffic engineer will work up to two days per week for six months.

In the past, the county contracted for three days per week at a cost of \$70,000. "Since November of 2021 we've had a consultant on-site assisting us. That has worked well for us. It's not our preference, but we've not been successful in hiring anyone to fill the position," said Chris Letourneau, Carroll County chief of engineering. The full-time position became vacant in 2020. Carroll County has been competing with nearby counties to hire for the position, Letourneau said. Letourneau said he would prefer to hire

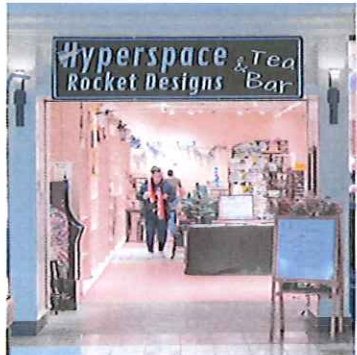
a full-time county employee. "Five days a week, 40 hours a week, would be great," he said. District 2 Commissioner Ken Kiler said that he has heard from residents questioning why the cost of a part-time engineering consultant is \$52,000 for two days of work per week. "There seems to be a misunderstanding with a lot of the people questioning it and comparing it to a [full-time] salary," Kiler said. "This [cost] includes overhead and a lot of other things, other than just salary. I think you all are working very hard to do this

as inexpensively as possible." The county continues to advertise a job posting for a full-time traffic engineer at a salary of \$66,604 to \$112,096. According to the job posting, the individual would be responsible for the operation of traffic control devices, traffic signal operations and maintenance, traffic barrier collections, traffic calming systems, and other traffic and transportation-related engineering functions in the county. A bachelor's degree in civil engineering or a related field is required, four years of experience is desired.



Debra Vroman and Four Men No Dog play traditional Celtic music at Hyperspace Rocket Designs & Tea Bar's Winter Fantasy Faire on Saturday at the Tour Mall of Westminster. THOMAS WALKER PHOTOS FOR CARROLL COUNTY TIMES

## Fantasy Faire takes flight at Hyperspace hobby shop



Customers wander through Hyperspace Rocket Designs & Tea Bar, which sells model rockets, model railroads, supplies, specialty teas and related items.



Evelyn Wise, right, has her face painted by Regina Crowley at the Winter Fantasy Faire, which featured vendors, live music, quarts and crafting classes.



A signpost serves as a guide to visitors at Hyperspace's Winter Fantasy Faire at the Tour Mall of Westminster.



Wife wants to get the face painted by Crowley at the Winter Fantasy Faire on Saturday.



Vroman and Four Men No Dog play traditional Celtic music Saturday during the Winter Fantasy Faire.

## DeSantis ends presidential bid

Haley, Trump in 2-person fight for NH race, GOP slot

By Steve Peoples, Thomas Reamont and Holly Ramer Associated Press

MANCHESTER, N.H. — Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis suspended his Republican presidential campaign Sunday, ending his 2024 White House bid just before the New Hampshire primary while endorsing his former rival Donald Trump. The decision leaves Trump and his former U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley as the last major candidates remaining in the race ahead of Tuesday's New Hampshire primary. This is the scenario Trump's foes in the GOP have long sought, raising the stakes for this week's contest as the party's last chance to top the former president, who has so far dominated the race.

But as some Trump critics cheered, DeSantis' move did not end Trump's primary dominance — as it struck Haley — in an exit video he posted on social media. "It's clear to me that a majority of Republican primary voters want to give Donald Trump a second chance," DeSantis said in the straight-to-camera video, delivered in a dispassionate tone.

He continued, "I signed a pledge to support the Republican nominee, and I will honor that pledge. He has my endorsement because we can't go back to the old Republican gridlock system, a repackaged form of a corrupt over-the-top operation that Nikki Haley represents."

Haley spoke at a campaigning stop in Southport, New Hampshire, just as DeSantis announced his decision.

"He ran a great race, he's been a good governor, and we wish him well," she told recent press with supporters and media. "Having said that, it's now one fell swoosh and one lady left."

DeSantis' decision, while perhaps not surprising given his long and blowout loss last week in Iowa, marks the end of an extraordinary decline for a high-profile governor once thought to be a legitimate threat to Trump's supremacy in the Republican Party. His record wasn't enough to overcome Trump.

He entered the 2024 presidential contest with major advantages in his quest to take on Trump and early primary polls suggested DeSantis was in a strong position to do just that. He and his allies raised a political fortune worth a total of \$130 million, and he boasted a significant legislative record on issues important to many voters: infrastructure and the teaching of race and gender issues in schools.

Such advantages did not survive the reality of presidential politics. From a high-profile announcement that was plagued by technical glitches to constant upsets to his staff and campaign strategy, DeSantis struggled to hold his footing in the primary. He lost the Iowa caucuses — which he had vowed to win — by 30 percentage points to Trump.

His departure was days before the ending. DeSantis' decision that private discussions began shortly after Iowa's loss to decide how to best exit the race gracefully. The Florida governor notified top donors and supporters of his decision through a series of phone conversations and text messages between senior campaign officials in top donors and supporters Sunday afternoon, according to two people who received such communications. They spoke on the condition of anonymity to disclose the private conversations.

DeSantis had returned to Florida by then after a roller-coaster weekend that included stops in South Carolina ahead of an event in New Hampshire on Sunday evening that was ultimately canceled. The campaign also canceled a series of national television appearances earlier in

## Fantasy Faire takes flight at Hyperspace hobby shop



Evelyn Wire, right, has her face painted by Regina Crosley at the Winter Fantasy Faire, which featured vendors, live music, quests and crafting classes.





Vervan and Four Men No Dog play traditional Celtic music Saturday during the Winter Fantasy Faire.



Drew Vervan and Four Men No Dog play traditional Celtic music at Hyperspace Rocket Designs & Tea Bar's Winter Fantasy Faire on Saturday at the TownMall of Westminster. Thomas Walker photos/for Carroll County Times





Wire waits to get her face painted by Crosley at the Winter Fantasy Faire on Saturday.



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A signpost serves as a guide to visitors at Hyperspace's Winter Fantasy Faire at the TownMall of Westminster.