



The I-70 Scout

Searching for news in Watkins, Bennett, Strasburg, Byers, Deer Trail, and Agate

Volume 29, Number 7

Tuesday, January 3, 2023

Spring-like wet snow blankets E. Colo.

by Steven Vetter
Managing Editor

A spring-like storm Dec. 28-29 blanketed most of the I-70 Corridor with at least a half-foot of snow and almost doubled the total amount of white stuff so far for the month; in some instances, snow totals closed in on the 1-foot-mark.

According to the National Weather Service, the official reporting station at Denver International Airport showed 7.1 inches of snow overnight Wednesday into Thursday morning, but neighboring areas to the east ranged from 6-11 inches, with the high mark set at Cabin Creek on East U.S. Highway 36. In terms of resulting moisture, estimates ranged between 0.6 and 0.9 inches of precipitation.

"Most of the Denver area received their average monthly total for December in that one night," according to the National Weather Service office out of Boulder. "In addition, this was a storm more like what you'd see in March or April instead of December. A lot more moisture in the snow, probably three times wetter than normal. We even had some reports of lightning

and some 'thunder snow,' so not your typical holiday season storm."

The monthly average for December snowfall in the Denver area is just over 6 inches, but after Dec. 28, this year's total for the month had eclipsed a foot. The DIA total for the month was at 13.1 inches.

The heavily saturated snow also brought the area's precipitation total for the month to almost 1.2 inches, about four times the monthly average of 0.33 inches.

"Definitely not something we're used to seeing at this time of year, but certainly good to see the extra moisture," the NWS said. "Should help with drought improvement to start the spring, but will need more than this to provide long-term progress."

The ability for area soils to receive the moisture has been questioned, especially after the sub-zero temperatures that inflicted the area the week of Dec. 20.

"Just don't know how long it will be until the moisture will sink in because of the ground be-

**SEE STORM
PAGE 2**



STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout

Miles Nelson, 12, finds out firsthand how wet and heavy the snow was from the Dec. 28-29 storm as he shovels the sidewalk in front of his family's home in the Coyote Ridge subdivision in Strasburg.



Bags of Gala apples spill out of a semi trailer that melted in half on the eastbound I-70 offramp at the Peoria interchange midday Dec. 29.

Semi drivers uninjured in pair of wrecks

by Steven Vetter
Managing Editor

A pair of semi drivers miraculously escaped mostly unscathed after their rigs were involved in accidents Dec. 29.

The most impactful of the incidents for commuters occurred about 4:15 p.m. when an eastbound semi and trailer overturned on a bridge near eastbound I-70 mile marker 297 a couple miles east of Watkins.

The tractor rolled onto the

driver side with its front axles separated from the chassis and the trailer ripped in two with the second half colliding with the inside guard rail. The wreckage covered all lanes of eastbound I-70, forcing about a 1½-mile traffic backup before the thoroughfare was closed at the Watkins exit.

Particulars of events leading to the incident were mostly unavailable at press time, but a Colorado State Patrol spokesman said that a few eyewitness accounts

indicated the roadway was wet with melting snow from the previous night's snowstorm.

"We don't know really what happened yet, but weather and other things are part of the investigation," the State Patrol spokesman said. "It did require extrication of the 61-year-old male driver, but he wasn't seriously injured and was transported to a hospital for precautionary

**SEE CRASHES
PAGE 12**

Bennett team fares well at BEST robotics contest

by Steven Vetter
Managing Editor

BENNETT — A team of Bennett sixth- through ninth-graders made the school district proud after its first robotics competition this past semester.

Alongside teachers Bri-

an Baker from the high school and Jim Clark from the middle school, eight of 11 robotics team members presented their experience from their first ever BEST Robotics tournament in Denver in mid-November.

**SEE BENNETT BOE
PAGE 24**



SEAN MARTIN/For The Scout
A Bennett robotics team member remotely controls their entry during a competition in the metro area in mid-November.



PHOTOS BY STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout

Clockwise from left photo, in addition to its holiday lights, the Christmas tree in Strasburg's Lyons Park was adorned with snow on its branches following the Dec. 28-29 snow storm that hit the I-70 Corrido; between 6-7 inches of snow blankets the holiday display in front of Strasburg Auto Parts Thursday morning; Neoma Murrow makes a dust cloud of snow while shoveling out in Strasburg's Black Stone Ranch subdivision Dec. 29; and Xavier Karim, 11, and Bilal Karim, 13, team up in a snowball fight against Brian Estrada, 12, also in the Black Stone Ranch subdivision Thursday afternoon.

STORM

ing frozen solid," one Deer Trail farmer said. "Hopefully, it sticks around on the fields and grasslands and doesn't run off into the ditches or side of the roads where it would benefit the weeds most likely."

The original blast of snow, cold and wind about 7 p.m. Wednesday resulted in the closing of I-70 in both directions between E-470 and Burlington about 10:45 that night. The highway wasn't reopened until about 7:30 a.m. Thursday.

Other roadway closures included Highway 36 east of Byers and Highway 71 between Limon and Brush.

According to local law enforcement, a combination of the road closure and extensive forewarning of the storm's path and significance minimized the number of serious accidents or other impacts from the storm.

"Kind of the usual storm stuff, a few slide-offs with mostly property damage. No serious inju-

ries or stranded motorists to speak of," said Cmdr. Karl Smalley with the Adams County Sheriff's Office. "Looks like the weather guys were spot on this time and people heeded their warnings for the most part."

While Adams and Arapahoe counties delayed openings of their government buildings and local businesses modified their hours, schools were again not affected because of Christmas vacation.

FROM PAGE 1

Tumbleweed Tax and Accounting Services
Welcomes you to 2023!

It's tax season and we're ready to help you with your personal, business, farm, estate taxes, etc.
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Strasburg seniors' FBLA project focuses on mental health

by Kathy Smiley

Staff Writer

STRASBURG — Three Strasburg High School seniors are making a difference through their community service project focused on mental health.

Trinity Burch, Kierra Milner and Hayden Turner, members of the school's chapter of Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), chose to fundraise for a new counseling center — Hope Renewed Counseling in Strasburg.

Hope Renewed Counseling's mission, according to its website is, "to create a place of hope for those who want secular-based counseling and a place of healing for those who are hurting and desire faith-based counseling in Eastern Colorado."

The center is affiliated with Mountain View Fellowship in Strasburg.

FBLA holds competitions in numerous events; the community service category is one of a few limited to one entry per chapter. Trinity told *The I-70 Scout* Dec. 28 that advisor Kim Harris offers the project to seniors first, and she, Kierra and Hayden eagerly took it on.

Trinity added that, when the group was considering project ideas, she thought of the counseling center at the church.

"They want provide something that isn't too costly to the community," she said. "I wanted to work with them so people could have counseling but also not pay full price if they can't afford it — so we decided to fundraise for their schol-



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Left photo, Trinity Burch speaks to the congregation at Mountain View Fellowship in Strasburg about the FBLA project that she is working on with fellow seniors Kierra Milner and Hayden Turner. Right photo, Strasburg FBLA members Milner, Conner Harris and Josh Anderson examine silent auction items at the church last fall.

arship fund."

The project will be the students' submission to the FBLA competition at the state leadership conference held at the Gaylord Rockies Convention Center in Aurora in April.

"We have a pre-submitted and pre-graded report and we also have

a presentation at the competition," Trinity said.

The group has raised \$2,100 so far — some from direct donations, much off of a silent auction last fall.

"It was held at Mountain View during the Strasburg K-12 talent show," noted Emily Burch, Trinity's mother and No. 1 project supporter,

adding that her daughter and the center's director Alana Cook visited Strasburg businesses before the event requesting silent auction donations.

The group is planning another fundraising event at the church on

**SEE FBLA
PAGE 4**

Online Toy Tractor Auction #2

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COMMUNITY CORRAL

Adopt-A-Pole assistance sought for 2023 holidays

STRASBURG — With 2020 concluding, the Strasburg Lighting Crew is seeking donations for the 2022 Adopt-A-Pole program.

Anyone can adopt as many poles as they like at \$20 each, with contributions to fund the decorations for Christmas 2023.

Each year, volunteers donate time, talents and equipment to repair, rebuild and create new lighting and ground scenes to be placed on the first Saturday of December. The improvements include replacement of old lights with LED bulbs.

Checks can be mailed to P.O. Box 14, Strasburg, Colo. 80136 or dropped off at Western Hardware.

Health, medical readiness the focus of Bennett class

BENNETT — The town of Bennett and Adams County Office of Emergency Management will host a free health and medical preparedness course from 6-7:30 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 19, at Town Hall, 207 Muegge Way.

Participants will learn to prepare their household for disaster, develop backup resources for its health care needs, and provide instructions on improving its recovery.

Seating is on a first-come, first-served basis and is limited to 40 people. Children under age 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Courses will be delivered in English. For interpretation or translation services or other accommodations, e-mail requests to klopez@adco.gov no later than five business days prior to the course.

Bennett wants applicants for Adams youth awards

BENNETT — The town of Bennett is seeking nominations for this year's Adams County Mayors & Commissioners Youth Awards.

The program recognizes youth in the sixth through 12th grades, up to 20 years old, who have overcome personal adversity to create positive

change in their lives.

To nominate a student, contact Denise Taylor at dtaylor@bennett.co.us for more details and a nomination form.

Bennett Arts Council seeks sponsors for 2023 season

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This year the council has updated sponsorship levels and benefits for residents and businesses alike, including a ticketed VIP event for all sponsorship levels and inclusion on a new donor wall.

The Bennett Arts Council supports free arts and cultural events in the Town of Bennett and on the I-70 Corridor.

For more information, visit townofbennett.colorado.gov.

Strasburg seniors group plans Jan. lunch meeting

STRASBURG — The Strasburg Seniors Comanche VIP Association will host a potluck starting at 11:45 a.m., Tuesday, Jan. 17, at the Strasburg American Legion Hall, 56423 Westview Ave.

This month, Christina Pastori with the Prairie Creek Independent Living Center will speak.

For more information, contact Mary Humphrey at (303)622-4695.

The group regularly meets at 11:45 a.m. the third Tuesday of each month.

Corridor biz group slates Jan. members' luncheon

BYERS — The I-70 Corridor Chamber of Commerce will host its January Lunch & Learn at 11:30 a.m., Wednesday, Jan. 18, at May Farms, Byers.

Speakers and lunch sponsors are Elizabeth Carlson of Lighthouse Bookkeeping and Christina Pastori of the Real Estate Connection.

Participants are asked to RSVP by Friday, Jan. 13, by calling (303)644-3332 or e-mailing to officeI70C-COC@gmail.com.

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SPORTS



Byers girls get off the hardwood schneid

by Steven Vetter
Managing Editor

ELBERT — It took a fourth quarter flurry, but the Byers Lady Bulldogs entered the Christmas break with their first hardwood victory of the season, 37-26, at Elbert Dec. 15.

After a pair of 12-point quarters put the green-and-white up 24-15 at halftime, the troops of head coach Chris Cary struggled in the third period, outscored 9-2 by the host Bulldogs. The last quarter break of the evening proved beneficial to Byers, which ratcheted up the defense to hold Elbert to 2 points while adding 11 of its own over the final eight minutes.

"We made an adjustment

on our defense going into the final quarter and it paid off," Cary said. "I thought our girls handled the tight situation pretty well. We hit a couple of deep shots to extend our lead and were able to sink a few free throws late. One girl would make a play and that confidence seemed to rub off the other girls."

The green-and-white's anemic shooting kept them from recording a bigger margin of victory. The visitors shot 28% from the field, including only 2-of-15 from the three-point arc, and were 9-of-20 (45%) from the free-throw line. Byers also committed 20 turnovers.

But, the visitors' defense was stingy, allowing Elbert only one double-digit quar-

ter. No Lady Bulldog reached double-digit points but a quartet scored between 7 and 9 points — junior Sophie Linnebur and senior Heidi Price with 9 each sophomores Anna Vetter and Averie Eymann with 8 and 7, respectively.

Price also had a team-high nine rebounds.

Defensively, Price and Linnebur tied for the team high in steals with two.

"It was an overall team victory and the girls are pretty positive coming off that win," Cary said.

@ DENVER CHRISTIAN

Despite a 50-34 loss at Denver Christian Dec. 9, Cary said his squad's improved play over the final three

quarters was the precursor to success at Elbert.

"In the first quarter, we just got hit by a buzz saw — they outscored us by what the final margin of victory ended up being. Pretty out of sync and out of focus," Cary said. "We bounced back and played much better, getting within 9 with two minutes to go, but just couldn't get any closer."

Linnebur and sophomore Allie Pelton led the offensive attack with 9 points each followed by Vetter with 8 and Price with 5.

In addition to sub-30% shooting from the field and a 7-of-14 effort from the free-throw line, the Bulldogs turned the ball over 32 times.

"We have to play with

discipline and not turn the ball over to have a chance against most of the teams on our schedule," Cary said. "If we allow ourselves to get rushed, that usually is when we turn the ball over and have a pretty difficult time."

Byers recorded 34 rebounds, led by sophomore Hope Linnebur with 13.

The Lady Bulldogs will follow up Friday's home game against No. 3-ranked Wiggins with a Jan. 10 matchup against visiting Simla, which is among teams receiving votes (14) in the CHSAANow.com poll.

"A tough couple of games with a young squad to start the new year, but if we play to our potential, we have a fighting chance," Cary concluded.

2023 sked ramps up this week

by Steven Vetter
Managing Editor

The 2023 portion of the high school winter sports schedule gets started in earnest along the I-70 Corridor this opening week of the new year.

EAGLE MAKEUP GAME

The first of the local schools to return to the court or mat is Deer Trail, which hosts Arickaree in makeup basketball action tonight (Jan. 3).

The two 1A programs were originally scheduled to play on Dec. 14 but the blizzard that hit the region the previous day forced eastern Colorado roadways, including Highway 36, to remain closed a second day. As a result, Arickaree had to cancel classes for a second consecutive day and was unable to make the trek to Deer Trail.

The Lady Eagles, under head coach Phil Donovan, are undefeated over their first three games, including a 50-5 whipping of visiting Cripple Creek/Victor to conclude the pre-Christmas portion of the schedule. The visiting Lady Bison have won their only game of the season, 45-27, over visiting Genoa-Hugo/Karval Dec. 9.

The Deer Trail boys, under first-year head coach Kyle Dasenbrock, have already doubled last season's win total, going 2-1 over their first three games. Arickaree was 0-1 before Christmas after a 35-32 loss to Genoa-Hugo/Karval.

Both Deer Trail teams travel to Hanover on Saturday, Jan. 7.

LOCAL WRESTLING CORNUCOPIA

A bevy of Corridor grappling action commences with a boys triangular hosted by Strasburg on Thursday, Jan. 5. In addition to the host Indians, Byers and Thornton will also compete.

Both the Indians and Bulldogs are slated to be a part of the second day of Bennett's annual wrestling weekend to start January. On Friday, Jan. 6, the Tigers will host a series of open duals with the annual Tiger Invitational tournament, with both boys and girls brackets, scheduled on Saturday. The first-year Strasburg girls program is slated to be a part of Saturday's action.

LATE WEEK HOOPS ACTION

Both Byers girls and boys basketball teams resume the season on Friday, Jan. 6, when they host Wiggins. The Bulldog boys enter the weekend 3-1 and on a three-game winning streak while the green-and-white girls won their final game of 2022 to enter Christmas break 1-3. Both Wiggins teams concluded the pre-Christmas schedule 4-2.

Strasburg boys and girls both host Rocky Ford on Saturday, Jan. 7. The Lady Indians enter the weekend 2-2 while the visiting Lady Meloneers enter the new year 2-4 but have a tune-up game against Center on Thursday. Both Strasburg and Rocky Ford boys went winless in the 2022 portion of the schedule.

Both Bennett squads won't resume the season until Tuesday, Jan. 10, when they host The Pinnacle. The Lady Tigers enter the new year 4-1 while the boys are 0-5.

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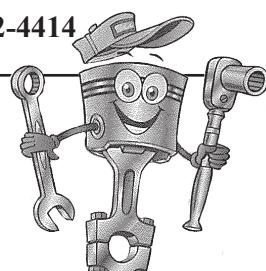
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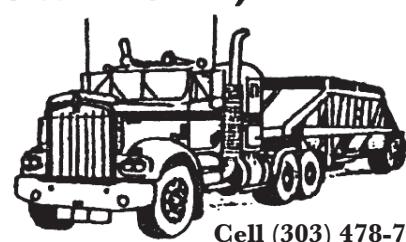
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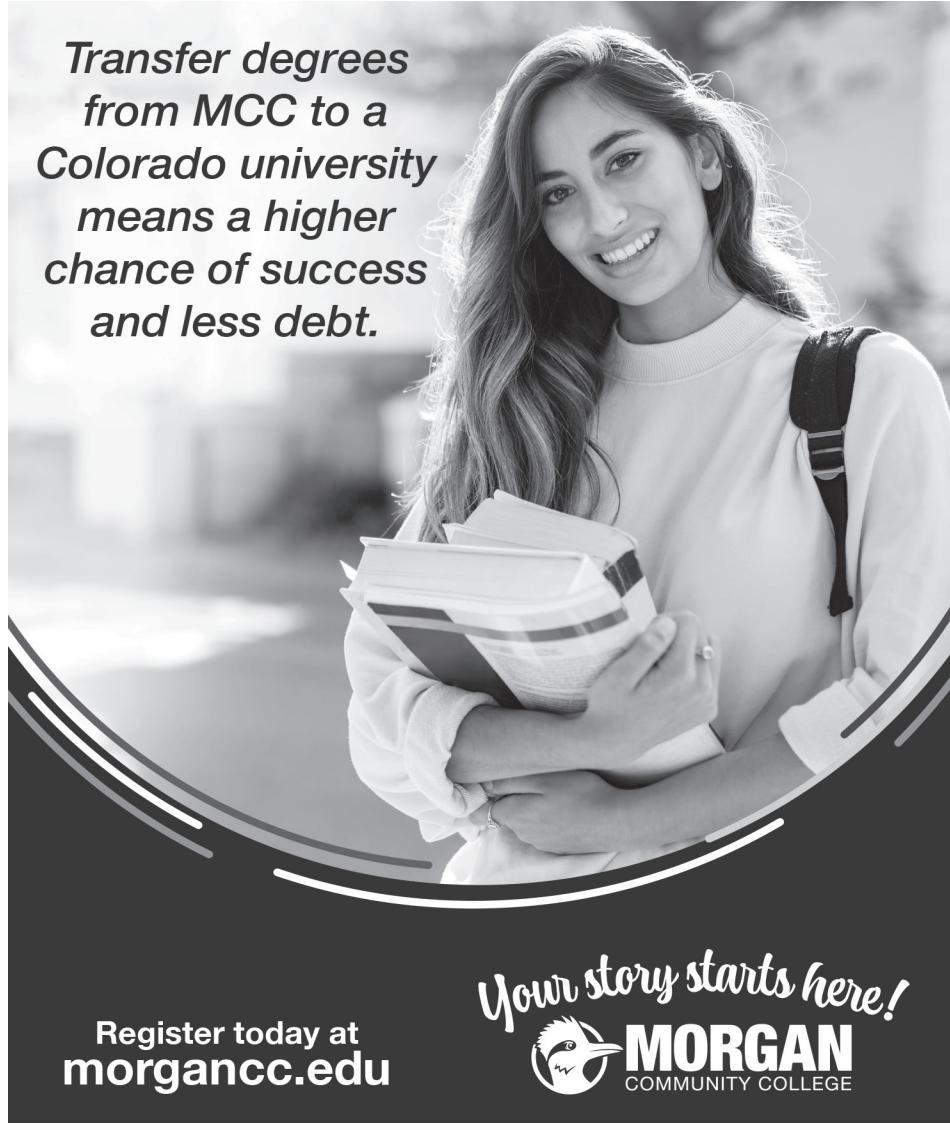
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Report: Big oil kept gas prices high after crude costs plunged

by Eric Galatas
Public News Service

After the price of crude oil plummeted to \$75 a barrel, which marked the lowest price since December of last year, big oil companies kept consumer gas prices artificially high in Colorado and around the nation, according to new analysis by Accountable.US.

Chris Marshall, research manager for the group, said instead of passing cost savings down to consumers, big oil has continued to line the pockets of its wealthy shareholders and executives.

"While prices at the pump have been hurting American families, oil and gas companies are making record-shattering profits," Marshall said. "Just in the first three quarters, 24 companies made \$343 billion."

Marshall noted it represents a 126% increase in profits over the same time period last year. In testimony before Congress, oil and gas executives said they are increasing energy output, which should ease demand. Some CEOs blame the sluggish pace of lowering prices at the pump on local retailers the oil

companies do not own or control.

After the price of spot crude dropped by 38% compared with the peak price set in June, the average price of gasoline actually rose 8%, from \$3.28 to \$3.54 per gallon.

Marshall hopes to see political leaders make consumers whole by following Great Britain's lead. It recently imposed a windfall profits tax on oil and gas companies.

"An important piece of that is accountability for the oil and gas industry," Marshall argued. "I think a windfall profits tax would be badly needed if we hope to stop the blatant price gouging of American consumers from the biggest oil and gas companies."

Marshall also noted that his group monitors SEC-mandated earnings calls of top oil and gas companies. He added across the board, CEOs have been boasting about record profits linked to high gas prices, and investors continue to push for distributions.

In the first nine months of 2022, 21 oil and gas companies gave more than \$107 billion to shareholders through dividend payouts and stock buybacks.

24 people granted clemency

by Colleen Slevin
Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — Colorado Gov. Jared Polis has granted clemency to 24 people, including the co-defendant of a Cuban immigrant who was pardoned in 2017 to prevent his deportation as well as a state trooper hailed for stopping a gunman who entered the office of a previous governor over a decade ago but was accused of pointing a gun at a driver last year.

In one of a series of executive orders Dec. 22, Polis ordered Michael Clifton, who was convicted of committing an armed robbery with Rene Lima-Marin in 1998, be released on parole at the end of January.

Lima-Marin was mistakenly released from prison early. He married and started a family before he was sent back to prison nearly six years later in 2018. A judge later ordered Lima-Marin to be released again, but he was picked up by immigration authorities on a deportation order based on his conviction before he could return home, prompting then Gov. John Hickenlooper to pardon Lima-Marin.

In a letter to Clifton, Polis, a Democrat, said that Lima-Marin's pardon was among the reasons he decided to issue a limited commutation of his 98-year sentence. Polis also noted Clifton's punishment was well beyond the usual range for such a crime and the work he has done in prison to help other offenders recognize the effect of their crimes on victims to justify the clemency order.

"You have taken accountability for your actions and recognize the mistakes you made in the past. You are remorseful and ready to advance to a new phase of life. I believe you will be successful upon your release," Polis said.

Jason Kasperek, the assistant manager of one of two video stores robbed by Clifton and Lima-Marin, said Dec. 23 that he visited Clifton in prison with the help of a restorative justice councilor about six months ago after Polis's office informed him they were considering clemency.

Five years after Kasperek opposed Lima-Marin's pardon, he said he was impressed by Clifton and questioned his part in his conviction.

At the time, Kasperek remembers being told to focus on what Clifton did, which instilled "anger and hate" and made him "base (Clifton's) entire existence off those few minutes of what he did in that store."

"I never had a chance to sit there and think. They never told me that he had children. They just said remember what he did," said Kasperek, a photographer who ended up

joining Clifton's mother in campaigning for clemency for him. "He made a sporadic decision and robbed a store. I made a sporadic decision and put him in prison."

When he got the call the night of Dec. 22 from the governor's office, said Kasperek, "I just came undone."

Polis also issued a pardon to and commuted the one-year probationary sentence of Jay Hemphill, who pled guilty to misdemeanor menacing this year. He was arrested after allegedly yelling and pointing a gun at a driver as he was crossing the street near the state Capitol in 2021.

Polis noted that Hemphill was a member of the state patrol unit that provided security at the Capitol and five governors and had protected Gov. Bill Ritter from a gunman who walked into the governor's office in 2007.

"You made a mistake in a brief instant when you thought you were under threat, and no one was physically harmed. You properly reported the incident to your chain of command within the Colorado State Patrol," Polis wrote. "This mistake should not define your career or detract from your act of heroism in protecting Gov. Bill Ritter from a gunman."

In 2007, Hemphill shot and killed Aaron Snyder after he walked into the reception area of the office dressed in a tuxedo and declared that he was the emperor of the state and there to take over.

Hemphill talked to him and got him to step out of the office but shot him after Snyder drew back his jacket to show a large gun in his pocket, according to a summary of the shooting investigation.

Polis also ordered that Robin Farris, who was convicted of first-degree murder in 1991 in Arapahoe County, be paroled next month after serving 31 years in prison. He noted that, had Farris been convicted under current law, the crime would have been classified as a class 2 felony, which would have made her eligible for parole more than 10 years ago.

The other 19 people who were pardoned in addition to Hemphill committed non-violent crimes like theft and drug possession mostly when they were young adults and have already served their sentences.

A pardon, a public forgiveness for a crime, restores the rights of people to things like serving on a jury, holding public office and possessing firearms.

Bedayn is a corps member for The Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a non-profit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercovered issues.

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LIBRARY NEWS

DAVIES LIBRARY

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www.arapahoelibraries.org

Friday matinee: All ages are invited to an afternoon showing of "Turning Red" (2022, rated PG, 100 minutes). 1-3 p.m., Friday, Jan. 13.

ANYTHINK BENNETT LIBRARY

495 Seventh St.
(303)405-3231
anythinklibraries.org

Whimsical Wish Token Art: Artist Charlotte Bassin will teach adults to create a custom sculpture using colorful wooden tokens of their choice. Each token used in the program was previously "wished upon" by a community member during last year's mySummer reading program. Space limited; registration required. Visit anythinklibraries.org to sign up. 2-3:30 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 7.

Virtual writers workshop: Adults can share their work with other aspiring writers in a fun, supportive online workshop. Participants will learn to write better and hone their skills through creative exercises. Space limited; registration required. Visit anythinklibraries.org to sign up. A Zoom link will be provided in advance. The deadline to share work is Dec. 31. 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 7.

Hybrid teen writer's workshop: Teens can share their work and ideas with other writers in a fun and supportive workshop that will occur in person and online. They can hone their skills through creative exercises and learn to write better, receive feedback and be more creative. Appro-

priate for ages 12 and older. Space limited; registration required. To sign up, visit Anythinklibraries.org. A link will be provided in advance. 4:15-5:45 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 10.

Kids Adventure Yoga: Children ages 2-6 can practice yoga with local instructor Scott Noble, using their imagination to explore movement through stories, songs and play. The class will focus on yoga poses (and noises) related to animals. Caregivers are encouraged to participate. Yoga mats provided. 10:30-11:30 a.m., Thursday, Jan. 12.

Yoga in the Stacks: Adults will join local yoga instructor Scott Noble and practice yoga poses that focus on alignment, stability and flexibility. Mats provided. All skill levels welcome. Space limited; registration required. To sign up, visit Anythinklibraries.org. 3-4 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 14.

Pokémon Trainer League: Kids ages 7-14 will play, trade and discuss all things Pokémon. They can bring their own cards or use a library deck. Snacks provided. 4:15-5:15 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 17.

Baby Social Hour and Footprint Crafts: Parents with infants up to age 1 year old who want to meet and socialize with other new parents are invited to hang out and play with their little ones in baby circle time activities. They will also make foot and handprint keepsakes. 11 a.m. to 12 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 19. 11/17

Artist meetup: The Corridor Creative Arts League will host a holiday party for adult and aspiring artists to help promote a greater understanding of art and the creative process while collaborating and exchanging ideas.

LUNCH MENUS

BENNETT

Monday, Jan. 9: Chicken nuggets, chips, baked beans, apple, brownie.
Tuesday, Jan. 10: Cheese quesadillas, shredded mozzarella, corn, banana.

BYERS

Wednesday, Jan. 4: Pulled pork sandwich, chips, baked beans, pears.
Thursday, Jan. 5: Hot ham and cheese sandwich, tomato soup, steamed carrots, applesauce.
Friday, Jan. 6: Cheese pizza, garden salad with ranch, grapes.
Monday, Jan. 9: Bean and cheese burrito, Spanish rice, mixed vegetables, orange wedges.
Tuesday, Jan. 10: Macaroni with cheese, Little Smokies, broccoli with ranch, peaches.

DEER TRAIL

Wednesday, Jan. 4: Beef spaghetti garden salad and dressing, peaches.
Thursday, Jan. 5: Chili, crackers, corn, Craisins, cinnamon roll.
Monday, Jan. 9: Rosy chicken pasta, red peppers and dressing, pears.
Tuesday, Jan. 10: Frito pie, green beans, orange.

STRASBURG

Wednesday, Jan. 4: Pretzels with cheese.
Thursday, Jan. 5: Walking tacos.
Friday, Jan. 6: Chicken nuggets, French fries.
Monday, Jan. 9: Chicken strip wraps.
Tuesday, Jan. 10: Hamburgers, potato chips.

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Stories & More: Caretakers will listen to stories, sing and play with their little ones. Families will leave with books and activities to facilitate learning at home. The program, activities and materials are geared for ages 18 months to 5 years, but younger children are welcome. 10-11 a.m., Wednesday, Jan. 4.

Adult book club: "The Curious Charms of Arthur Pepper" by Phaedra Patrick. 6-7 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 10.

DIY framed key holder: Adults are invited to create a creative and stylish framed key ring. All supplies included. 1-2:30 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 14.

Gentle Movement: Members of the Byers community can connect with each other while learning light exercises to remain active in the new year. The guest presenter is an expert in gentle movement. Each month features a different subject. 1:30-3 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 18.

Bug Safari: Families and children ages 5-12 years old can join a bug safari presented by the Butterfly Pavilion. They will meet invertebrates from environments around the globe and learn more about their characteristics, living environment, and importance. 1-2 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 21.

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Sun., 10:15 a.m. Worship (Nursery available)
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ArapCo Coroner Dr. Kelly Lear honored for key contributions

LITTLETON — Arapahoe County Coroner Kelly Lear, M.D., was recently acknowledged for Outstanding Service by the National Association of Medical Examiners.

The award acknowledges Lear's contributions to the organization and reflects the high esteem of her colleagues.



The NAME's Outstanding Service award is presented to an individual who has demonstrated dedication and service to the organization and Lear its mission and recognizes significant contributions to the advancement of medicolegal death investigations in the United States.

Lear is one of three medical professionals to be honored in 2022.

"Following an unprecedented increase in youth suicides within Arapahoe County, Dr. Lear helped create the Suicide Prevention Taskforce, advocating for increased access to and understanding of mental health resources within high schools and the community," said Arapahoe County Commissioner Nancy Jackson. "She has been a

strong voice in our community in raising awareness of the fentanyl and opioid epidemics by participating in the county's Prescription Drug Abuse Task Force and the state's first-ever summit focused on the growing fentanyl crisis."

First elected to the position in 2014, Lear's office works on behalf of the deceased to obtain the truth about their death and supports families in crisis and grief with compassion and professionalism.

As a forensic pathologist, Lear is responsible for performing autopsies, determining the cause and manner of death, supervising medicolegal death investigations, and providing expert witness testimony and consultation to the district attorney's and public defender's offices.

Lear is a nationally recognized expert in forensic pathology, infant and childhood death investigation and prevention, mass fatality management, and forensic pathologist training and education, according to a release.

NAME was founded in 1966 as the premier professional organization for medical examiners, forensic pathologists, and medicolegal affiliates and administrators.



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ARAPAHOE COUNTY NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING CASE NOS. PF22-003 AND USR22-002, OUR LADY OF LIGHT MONASTERY/ FINAL PLAT AND USE BY SPECIAL REVIEW

PROPOSAL: The Final Plat proposes to subdivide approximately 107.62 acre parcel into five lots located at the southeast corner of N. Calhoun Road and E. U.S. Highway 36. Lots 1, 2, 3 and 5 are to be developed for single-family residential and Lot 4 is proposed to be developed as a monastery for the Capuchin Poor Clares of Denver. The monastery will house a maximum of 15 sisters who are devoted to lead a cloistered life centered on prayer. The monastery will consist of a chapel, community room, library, refectory, kitchen, garage, and offices along with private bedrooms and bathrooms for the sisters. The proposed monastery is being reviewed through the Use by Special Review process.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on January 24, 2023 at 9:30 A.M., or as soon thereafter as the calendar of the Arapahoe County Board of County Commission permits, a public hearing will be held; at which, all interested persons will be given an opportunity to be heard concerning the above-described PF22-003 and URS22-002, Our Lady of Light Monastery Final Plat and Use by Special Review. The public hearing will be held at 5334 S Prince St., East Hearing Room, Littleton CO 80120, with the option to participate remotely. The agenda will typically be posted by the Friday afternoon preceding the hearing and can be viewed on our website at <https://arapahoe.legistar.com/Calendar>. You can also listen to, or speak at, the meeting by calling 1-855-436-3656. To join the speaking queue, press *3 on the telephone keypad.

More information about this proposal is available at the offices of the Arapahoe County Public Works and Development Department, Planning Division, 6924 S Lima St., Centennial CO 80112 (please call ahead to schedule an appointment if you plan to walk-in), by calling 720-874-6650, or by emailing planning@arapahoegov.com during regular business hours (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday).

Joan Lopez, Clerk to the Board

Published in *The I-70 Scout* Tuesday, Jan. 3, 2023, and the *Eastern Colorado News* Friday, Jan. 6, 2022.

Tri-County Health Department closed Dec. 31 after 75 years

GREENWOOD VILLAGE — The Tri-County Health Department (TCHD) dissolved completely Dec. 31 and is no longer offering services.

The last day of regular business hours was Dec. 30. On Jan. 1, Arapahoe, Adams and Douglas counties began providing public health services through their own, individually operated health departments.

"I have been part of TCHD for nine of its 70+ years. They have been unforgettable ones for me, really representing the zenith of my career in public health," said Dr. John Douglas, executive director of Tri-County Health Department. "Leading TCHD has allowed me to work with an amazing range of talented colleagues — our staff, our departmental leadership team, our Board of Health, and our many innovative and extremely devoted partners in our communities. It also allowed me to work on an amazing array of issues important to the health of our residents."

TCHD opened on Jan. 1, 1948 — just a few years after the end of

World War II — and will close on Dec. 31, 2022, — one day shy of its 75th birthday.

"We have built a world-class, award-winning health department, and we are proud of our team members and the high-quality services we offered," Douglas said. "What an extraordinary span of time that three-quarters of a century has been for our nation, the world, and the discipline of public health."

TCHD was a joint operation among Adams, Arapahoe and Douglas counties to provide public health services to their residents. The counties made the decision that they would rather have their stand-alone public health departments instead of a regional provider.

For more information about the new county health departments, call the:

- Adams County Health Department at (303)220-9200;
- Arapahoe County Public Health at (303)795-4584; or
- Douglas County Health Department at (720)643-2400.

Experts: More than 200,000 children in Colorado could lose health coverage

by Eric Galatas

Public News Service

They will have to go through a complicated and lengthy application process.

The Georgetown report warns that, nationally, 6.7 million children could lose coverage when the pandemic is declared over.

Report lead author Joan Alker, executive director of the Georgetown's Center for Children & Families, said three out of every four children who might lose insurance through Medicaid will still be eligible for coverage.

"Sometimes children lose coverage in normal times at Medicaid renewal, just because the letter gets lost in the mail," Alker said. "Families with limited English proficiency may have more trouble getting through the renewal process successfully."

When families have insurance, Miller said, maternal and child mortality rates go down — and kids are more likely to graduate from high school and college and have higher income as adults.

She said the continuous coverage protections established during the pandemic, which kept families enrolled without all the red tape, shows it's possible to ensure kids get the health care they need.

"Government policy makes a huge difference in the lives of people and in families," Miller said. "One silver lining of the pandemic is that if you say that folks need to stay enrolled in their coverage at the state level, they do."

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Colo. wheat orgs plan yearly gatherings

FORT COLLINS — Colorado wheat farmers are invited to the annual county business meetings and elections Jan. 5-6 at four locations.

The program at each meeting will include an update on the Colorado State University Wheat Breeding Program from breeder Dr. Esten Mason. Organizational updates will be provided on the sponsors of the event: the Colorado Wheat Administrative Committee (CWAC), the Colorado Association of Wheat Growers (CAWG) and the Colorado Wheat Research Foundation (CWRF).

County representatives for both CWAC and CAWG will be elected. To attend, RSVP to the Colorado Wheat office at info@coloradowheat.org or (970)449-6994.

A complimentary meal will be

served at each meeting.

2023 COUNTY WHEAT MEETINGS

THURSDAY, JAN. 5

Baca, Prowers, Bent, Kiowa, Crowley, Otero, Las Animas counties. 12 p.m., Lamar Community Building, 610 S. Sixth St.

Lincoln, Elbert, El Paso, Adams, Arapahoe, Cheyenne, Kit Carson, Jefferson, Douglas, Fremont, Custer, Huerfano, Pueblo counties. 6 p.m., Community Building, 477 D Ave., Limon.

FRIDAY, JAN. 6

Morgan, Weld, Boulder, Larimer counties. 8 a.m., The Block, 19592 E. Eighth Ave.

Logan, Sedgwick, Phillips, Washington, Yuma counties. 12:30 p.m., Haxton Community Building, 125 E. Wilson St.

2023 county wheat events announced

FORT COLLINS — Wheat farmers can participate in the yearly county business meetings and elections sponsored by Colorado's three main wheat organizations.

A meeting for Adams, Arapahoe and Elbert counties will begin at 6 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 5, at the Limon Community Building, 477 D Ave. The program will include an update on the Colorado State University Wheat Breeding Program from breeder Dr. Esten Mason.

Organizational updates are slated on the Colorado Wheat Admin-

istrative Committee (CWAC), the Colorado Association of Wheat Growers (CAWG), and the Colorado Wheat Research Foundation (CWRF).

To attend an event, RSVP to Colorado Wheat at info@coloradowheat.org or (970)449-6994.

County-level representatives for CWAC and CAWG will be elected. For more information, visit coloradowheat.org.

Additional meetings will occur in Lamar (6 p.m. Jan. 5), Fort Morgan (8 a.m. Jan. 6) and Haxton (12:30 p.m. Jan. 6).

Prairie no-till conference speakers named

KIT CARSON — The Colorado Conservation Tillage Association Nov. 28 announced its keynote speakers for the 35th annual High Plains No-Till Conference Feb. 7-8 at the Burlington Community & Education Center.

The speakers will be Jason Mauck, Jim Gerrish and Don Day Jr.

Mauck, a proponent of relay cropping who is blazing a new path using cash and cover crops in unison, will headline the event. Mauck works 3,000 acres of corn, soybeans and wheat in addition to 25,000 hogs each year. His company, Constant Canopy, develops cutting edge farming methods and uncovers clues toward greater farming efficiency.

Jim Gerrish, an independent grazing lands educator, consultant and writer, will serve as the second keynote speaker. Gerrish lives in central Idaho and works with numerous ranchers using irrigated pastures and native rangeland.

His experience includes more than 22 years of beef-forage sys-

tems research and outreach with the University of Missouri, which encompassed many aspects of plant-soil-animal interactions and provided the foundation for many basic principles of management-intensive grazing.

The final keynote speaker will be president and chief meteorologist of Day Weather, Inc., Don Day Jr. For more than 25 years, Day has provided customized broadcast weather services to over 70 radio stations across Wyoming, Colorado and Nebraska.

He will discuss long-range and seasonal weather forecasting as it relates to agricultural producers in the High Plains region.

The two-day conference will also showcase more than 40 breakout sessions presented by producers and industry experts on topics such as direct marketing, inter-seeding, regenerative grazing, soil health economics, wheat stem sawfly and estate planning.

For more information, visit www.HighPlainsNoTill.com.

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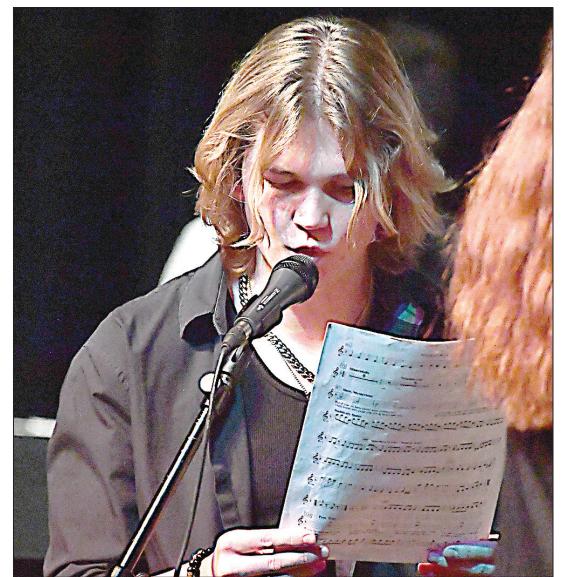
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PHOTOS BY STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout

The Bennett High School instrumental music department hosted a holiday concert Dec. 15 along with guest musicians from the Denver Brass. From left photo, Kayla Barela, left, and Annissa De Santiago play their French horns during the symphonic band's performance of "Jingle Bell Rock;" high school music director Valerie White leads the wind symphony during "Blue Christmas;" and Colten Reams narrates the symphonic band's version of "A Christmas Tale."



PHOTOS BY STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout

Bennett Elementary first-graders presented their "A Christmas List" winter concert Dec. 6 at the high school auditorium. From left photo, Penelope Spiez, Mila Kovell, and Rodrigo Ramirez-Delgado put their hearts into their performance; music teacher Jessica Scott prompts a properly adorned Katelyn Harris; and Alan Hermosillo Lujan provides accompaniment on the xylophone.

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SUBMITTED PHOTO

Colorado Parks & Wildlife advises the public to use the correct equipment to stay safe and warm on the ice this winter.

Caution on ice advocated

DENVER — Frozen waters provide unique opportunities for people to go places that are inaccessible by foot. But ice can also be dangerous without proper preparation and an understanding of the dangers.

Whether ice fishing, skating, sledding or snowshoeing, the right precautions and correct equipment are important.

On Nov. 22 at Crystal Lake Park in Littleton, teenager Dyllan Whittenburg was trapped under ice when he and three other teenagers fell through the barely frozen lake. Dive crews retrieved him, but he died two days later at Children's Hospital Colorado. Nearby neighbors rescued the other three teenagers with hoses, extension cords and rope.

The tragedy marks the 41st water-related fatality in Colorado this year. Residents must understand the dangers water and ice can pose, according to a release.

"When you fall into icy waters, cold water immersion shock can cause you to involuntarily gasp and inhale water," said Grant Brown, a boating safety expert with Colora-

do Parks & Wildlife. "Your body will conserve heat by reducing blood flow to your arms and legs, making it difficult to swim and pull yourself out of a hole in the ice. Bringing the correct equipment, like a life jacket, ice picks and warm clothes, can save your life."

ICE FACTS

- Ice near a structure like a dock or log will be significantly thinner than ice in the center of a lake.
- Off-highway vehicles require ice that is at least 6 inches thick. Cars and medium trucks require 8-15 inches of ice.
- The safest ice is solid and clear because it froze quickly and is at least 4 inches thick.
- Milky ice indicates more freezing and thawing has occurred and is considered less safe.
- Ice always expands and contracts, which can make scary popping and cracking noises. The sounds mean ice is forming. They are completely natural.

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AdCo North Pole Gift Shop



SUBMITTED PHOTO

BRIGHTON — Shoppers and workers interact at the third annual North Pole Gift Shop Dec. 3 at the Adams County Human Services Center. Parents of children from newborn to 17 from more than 120 families chose gifts from a large selection of items such as toys, clothes, socks and hoodies. The event, which served more than 350 kids, included a resource fair featuring Adams County community resources.

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75 "Medium" Fitness Challenge - Deadline January 22nd
Dates: February 6 - April 21; Fee: \$20; Registration includes: a 5K training plan, fitness app recommendations, meal prep/freezer meal recipes, and 50% off the Earth Day 5K Fun Run in April.

Senior Excursion: The Paint Cellar - January 26th
Call (303) 622-4260 to RSVP. Fee: \$35 (plus cost of lunch).

2023 BYBSA Pink Sox Rec Softball & Strasburg Baseball - Deadline February 14th
Practices begin in April in Strasburg. Games will be played the end of April-June on weeknights with the exception of 5/20 for baseball & EOS tournament June 24-25. Go to BYBSA.net/current-programs for more information and to register.




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GARY LESMANN/The I-70 Scout



STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout

Left photo, cleanup of a burned semi trailer carrying apples took all afternoon and evening on the eastbound off-ramp of I-70 at the Peoria exit 322. Right photo, a semi tipped about 2 miles east of Watkins at 4:15 p.m. the same day and kept the eastbound lanes of I-70 closed for 12 hours, until 4:20 a.m. Friday.

CRASHES

purposes."

A full-out hazardous materials response was deemed necessary as at least 200 gallons of fuel and oil that reportedly had escaped the vehicle and required extensive cleanup.

"You get that much fuel leakage, it's a time-consuming process," the

State Patrol representative said.

The road closure lasted almost 12 hours with reopening at 4:20 a.m. Dec. 30. Traffic was detoured north to Highway 36 at Watkins. At approximately 10 p.m. Thursday, the backlog of traffic at the eastbound off-ramp of I-70 at Watkins was at

least another mile long.

Bennett Fire Rescue was assisted by Sable Altura, Buckley and Strasburg fire departments.

FIRE @ PEORIA EXIT

Just before 11:30 a.m. Thursday, local fire agencies and law enforce-

FROM PAGE 1

ment were dispatched to the I-70 interchange at Peoria (mile marker 322) on reports of a semi on fire.

Upon arrival, a trailer full of bags of apples was fully engulfed in flames on the eastbound off-ramp of the interstate.

"It didn't take us too long to extinguish things but the most time-consuming part of these kind of fires is taking care of the hot spots," said Deer Trail Fire Chief Rich Loveless. "In this case, pallets caught fire, and things got so hot around the axles, that it melted the aluminum and sent it running onto the ground. The trailer was a total loss."

The incident was considered the result of mechanical malfunction, so the driver of the rig left the scene about 2 p.m., the same time emergency personnel had completed their response.

As of 10:30 p.m., the scene was still being cleaned up, which included loading the debris onto tow trucks. Reports said the location was clear of activity about 11:45 p.m.

I-70 between Byers and Deer Trail was never shut down.

Byers and Strasburg fire departments assisted.

Best wishes in 2023!
Stay safe this winter!

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CALENDAR

THURSDAY, JAN. 5

Bennett Parks & Recreation District Board. 5:30 p.m., Bennett Recreation Center.
Winter concert for grades K-2. 6:30 p.m., Deer Trail School.

SATURDAY, JAN. 7

Bennett Community Food Bank. 8-10 a.m., Bennett Community Center.

MONDAY, JAN. 9

Food Bank of the Rockies Mobile Pantry. 9-11 a.m., Kelver Library parking lot, 585 S. Main St., Byers. Optional pre-registration at newclient.link2feed.com.

Deer Trail School Board. 7 p.m., commons area.

Byers Fire Protection District Board. 6:30 p.m., Byers Firehouse.

Byers Water & Sanitation District Board. 7 p.m., District Office, 421 S. Sherman St.

Byers Park & Recreation District Board. 7 p.m., Quint Valley Fairgrounds.

Deer Trail Fire Protection District Board. 7 p.m., Deer Trail Firehouse.

TUESDAY, JAN. 10

Deer Trail Town Board. Work session 6:30 p.m., regular meeting 7 p.m., Town Hall, 555 Second Ave.

Bennett Board of Trustees. Work-study 5:45 p.m. Regular meeting 7 p.m. For a Zoom link, visit townofbennet.colorado.gov.

Strasburg Sanitation & Water Board. 7 p.m., TBK Bank conference room, 56641 E. Colfax Ave., Strasburg.

Aurora councilman who mocked minorities on Facebook ripped

by Max Levy
Sentinel Colorado

AURORA — An Aurora City Council member filmed himself imitating Mexicans, Arab Muslims, South Asians and other minority groups as advertisements for his sports bar in 2020, drawing scorn from a spectrum of community leaders.

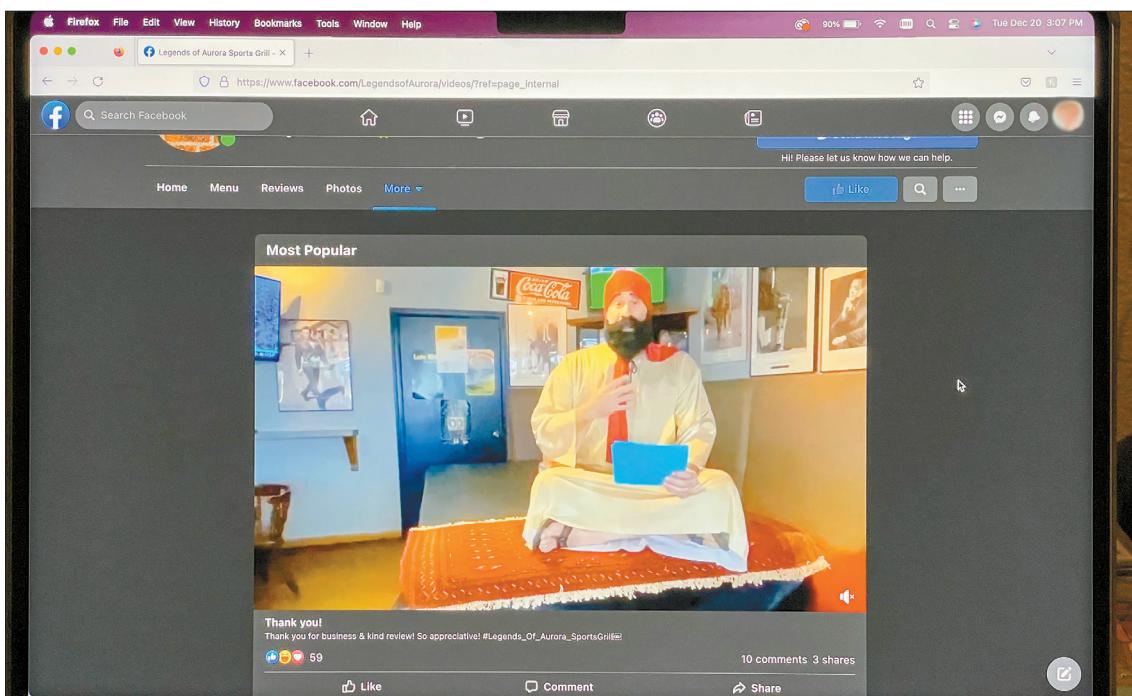
The *Sentinel* was alerted via a confidential tip to the existence of the videos showing Councilmember Steve Sundberg, who was elected in 2021, promoting Legends of Aurora Sports Grill by performing stereotypical impressions of various groups.

Community leaders shown the videos responded with frustration and disappointment, while Sundberg did not respond to multiple requests for comment and a detailed list of questions sent Dec. 19.

"It's disrespectful, and it's insulting to our city. Aurora is a very multicultural city. What's his intent, just to get people to go to his business? That's not the right way," said Lucy Molina, a Chicana mother of two and community organizer who works in Aurora. "I used to run a restaurant and a bar, and I would have never done something like that for bank. It's horrible. It shows so much bad taste. 'Mal gusto,' we say."

Often described as Colorado's most diverse city, Aurora is home to 390,000 people, around 21.2% of whom identify as foreign-born, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. More than a quarter of the city, 29%, identifies as Hispanic or Latino. About 16.6% of Aurorans are black, 6.6% are Asian, and 10.6% are descended from two or more races.

"Using brash stereotypes of our communities does not respect the many hard-working families that live and contribute to Aurora," said Dilpreet Jammu, a leader in the local Sikh



Aurora City Councilmember Steve Sundberg is seen imitating an Arabic individual while advertising a meal special at his bar, Legends of Aurora Sports Grill, in the photo of the original Facebook post. The bars social media page is filled with a bevy of cultural appropriation videos.

community and executive director of Colorado Sikhs. "Aurora is one of the most diverse cities in our state, and we value the contributions of all citizens to make this a wonderful and safe place to live."

Three former Legends employees, who spoke with *The Sentinel* on the condition of anonymity, said Sundberg came up with the ideas for the videos himself and encouraged workers to take part.

While none recalled Sundberg threatening workers into participating, they said the supervisor-employee relationship between Sundberg and his employees made some feel uncomfortable saying "no."

Sundberg imitates a variety of accents in the videos while wearing costumes that resemble stereotypical depictions of Mexicans, Arab Muslims and other groups.

In one video, he sits cross-legged on a carpet, dressed in a turban and robe, and brandishes a scimitar after being offered bacon by an employee. He then repeatedly exclaims "haram," a term referring to behavior prohibited under Islamic law, such as eating pork.

In another video, Sundberg wears a Mexican falsa blanket, folded to look like a poncho, and pretends to be a translator for a kitchen employee, saying in Spanish that the man has "26 girlfriends" and asking if the viewer likes his large "conejos," which literally means "rabbits."

Colorado State University associate professor of Spanish Andrea Purdy, who translated the clip for *The Sentinel*, questioned whether Sundberg instead meant to say the similar word "cojones," which is Spanish for "testicles." Sundberg also imitates a Mexican accent throughout the video.

"What is offensive to me about the video is putting a Latino employee in this situation of seeming to be the person with language dominance and then have the person who owns the business pretend to be a Spanish translator," Purdy wrote in a follow-up e-mail. "It may be that he thought it was funny, but it has racist overtones nonetheless."

He imitates a South Asian accent in another video meant to promote the curry sold by Legends as well as in a video promoting the Maharaja IPA produced by

Avery Brewing Co.

In another video promoting Legends' dark lager beer — referred to by its German name, "schwarzbier," meaning "black beer" — Sundberg imitates a German accent as he performs a skit revolving around the stereotype of black men having large penises.

The discovery of the videos marks the second time this year that Sundberg's workplace behavior has been called into question. In October, *The Sentinel* reported that Sundberg had been investigated for making sexually suggestive comments in the presence of city employees.

In another video, Sundberg dresses as a Viking; jokes about "raping and pillaging season coming up soon;" refers to a woman, apparently a Legends bartender, as a "bar wench;" and asks another if she wants to be his "shield maiden."

The videos in which Sundberg imitated Arab Muslims, South Asians and Mexicans and joked about black men and rape were posted on the Legends Facebook page in 2020 and remained publicly available on the afternoon of Dec. 19.

Community leaders react-

ed to the videos with anger and disappointment. Iman Jodeh — spokeswoman for the Colorado Muslim Society and who represents the district including Legends in the Colorado House of Representatives — said the videos were "clearly not intended to welcome a diverse population to Sundberg's establishment."

Two years ago, Jodeh became the first Muslim elected to Colorado's General Assembly. The child of Palestinian immigrants and refugees who came to Colorado in the 1970s, she was raised in Aurora and is also the first Palestinian-American to earn a seat in the legislature.

"How can diverse communities trust that our government is working for our best interest when our elected officials use cliche stereotypes to mock our heritage, our religious practices, and our struggles?" Jodeh asked in response to the videos.

"I'm not sure what's more offensive about this pathetic use of trite, racist tropes: his desperate attempt for financial gain at the expense of marginalized people or his blatant disregard of the impact perpetuating these stereotypes has in a community needing to come together, decrease racial tension, and increase inclusivity when he is an elected official in this city."

Aurora NAACP president Omar Montgomery said that, beyond the videos, he was additionally disappointed by Sundberg's involvement in council decisions to eliminate unfilled positions in the city's Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, and in an office created to monitor the actions of police following the death of Elijah McClain.

Sundberg was the first to suggest that the city's diversity office be cut and joined fellow conservatives in supporting the cuts to the internal police monitor during

**SEE SUNDBERG
PAGE 14**

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WEEK OF JAN. 2

SUNDBERG

the 2023 budgeting process.

Montgomery said videos like those posted on the Facebook page of Sundberg's business hindered the city in its goal of building trust with residents of color.

"If he wants to make jokes about diversity and things of this nature, maybe he ought to fund that office so it can do the work of educating our city and our council members that Aurora is a diverse city," Montgomery said. "We need to do all we can to increase trust, and some of what the council does continues to drive a wedge between communities of color and the city itself. Commercials like these are not a good way of developing trust."

Qusair Mohamedbhai — a Denver-based attorney and a member of the South Asian community who has represented high-profile Aurora clients such as the family of

Elijah McClain — said he believed Sundberg's mocking of certain ethnicities could open the door for employees to sue him for creating a hostile work environment.

"That costume with the poncho and everything, that's like Exhibit A for 'my boss is a racist,'" Mohamedbhai said. "The fact that he's trying to advertise his business, ... I hope it has the exact opposite effect."

If Sundberg was discriminating against customers on the basis of race, Mohamedbhai warned he would also be running afoul of the state's public accommodation laws. Mohamedbhai said the videos reminded him of recent debates about the appropriateness of ethnic groups being used as mascots by schools and sports teams.

"It reminds me of that phrase, 'my culture is not a costume,'" Mohamedbhai said.

FROM PAGE 13

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STEVEN VETTER/Eastern Colorado News



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EMBER SEWARD-SORENSEN/Eastern Colorado News

Left photo, the driver of a semi lost control of his rig on black ice on eastbound I-70 near Deer Trail about 8:45 a.m. Dec. 26. The scene was cleared about three hours later. Center photo, The driver of this red pickup that rolled off of westbound I-70 near Byers about 6 a.m. Dec. 26 miraculously escaped injury despite requiring extrication from the vehicle. Left, a 16-year-old male driver was unable to navigate a slick part of County Road 181 south of Byers the morning of Dec. 26. He clipped a power post and took out a street sign.

Christmas snow snarls Monday traffic

by Steven Vetter
Managing Editor

While fresh snow this past holiday weekend didn't occur until late in the evening on Christmas Day and into the morning of Dec. 26, it

didn't keep regional weather officials from claiming a White Christmas.

But the additional snow and accompanying cold temperatures resulted in holiday nightmares for Monday morning commuters.

"It's officially a White Christmas in Denver and many other areas across Colorado," the National Weather Service's Boulder office declared about 5:30 a.m. Dec. 25. "A white Christmas is defined as having a snow depth of 1" or greater on

Christmas morning. Only 37% of years have had a white Christmas in Denver."

But the NWS definition of White Christmas doesn't require fresh

**SEE XMAS SNOW
PAGE 2**



DAVID MAGDANZ/Eastern Colorado News

Santa Claus confers with a boy while viewers sit enrapt at a showing of "The Polar Express" Dec. 16 at Christ Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Bennett.

Wastewater improvements authorized by DT trustees

by Kathy Smiley
Staff Writer

DEER TRAIL — Not only did the Deer Trail Board of Trustees discuss the required improvements to the town's wastewater system during their Dec. 15 meeting, it approved taking the first two steps in the process.

After the town received a compliance advisory from the state for in-flow violations, a proposal for possible solutions was presented by Nick Marcotte with Element Engineering, who said a meeting was held recently with the town attorney, staff

and Mayor Judd Behrens to discuss the town's response.

"Any wastewater plant has two limits, or capacities — a flow limit and a loading limit," Marcotte explained. "Your wastewater is within capacity with the flow, or hydraulics, but over capacity with respect to organics."

Marcotte said the first step is to prepare a formal letter to the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment (CDPHE) presenting a schedule for a return to compliance. The next step is to conduct a preliminary

**SEE DT SEWER
PAGE 4**

Battleship under construction at Brighton Veterans Memorial

by Belen Ward
Colorado Community Media

A lifesized replica of World War II-era battleship USS Colorado that's emerging on the banks of Brighton's Mann-Nyholm Lake will never see naval service, but it's already received honors from the U.S. Navy.

Several U.S. Navy officers joined veterans and Adams County officials for the official "mast stepping" ceremony for the replica battleship, destined to debut by Memorial Day 2023 as the county's new Veterans Memorial.

"The Navy is excited about it because they want to use it as

a recruitment tool, bring potential recruits, maybe bring out veterans to do physical therapy, weddings, military weddings, or commissioning of officers or chiefs, or retirements. We are going to have the USS Colorado's bell the same one on the submarine," said Adam County Commissioner Charles "Chaz" Tedesco, a retired Navy Veteran.

Crews are building the Veterans Memorial at the Riverdale Regional Park, on the shore of Mann-Nyholm Lake. It's meant to honor past, present and future veterans for their sacrifices to defend our

**SEE BATTLESHIP
PAGE 24**



IMAGE COURTESY OF ADAMS COUNTY

An artist's rendering presents a vision of the future Veterans Memorial in Adams County.

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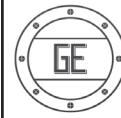


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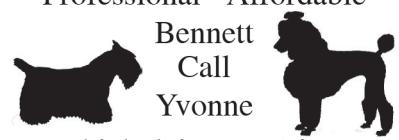
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Gov. to lead his 1st West Govs Assn. confab

DENVER — Gov. Jared Polis will host the meeting of the Western Governors Association this winter in Phoenix, his first since his election as the chair of the organization.

The Western Governors Association is a bipartisan organization for governors that addresses issues and develops policy strategies for the region.



Polis announced his 2023 "Heat Beneath Our Feet" initiative at the association's summer meeting. The campaign will explore and develop geothermal technology and policy across western U.S. states.

Harvested by drilling deep into the ground, geothermal energy is a renewable source of electricity that, at shallower depths, can be used to

heat and cool buildings and campuses with little electricity use.

The innovative renewable energy source can save people money on their bills, protect the environment, and cut carbon emissions. Western states hold a large portion of the nation's geothermal energy capacity, making the association uniquely positioned to support the development of related technologies. Geothermal energy holds the potential to reduce utility costs and local air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Geothermal energy creates new jobs as the industry grows.

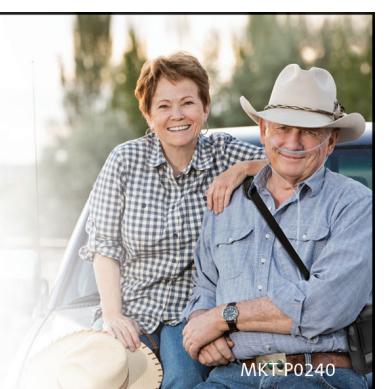
"Heat Beneath Our Feet" opened at Colorado Mesa University in Grand Junction last September. The university campus uses geothermal technology, a clean energy source that saves students money.

Polis was vice chair of the Western Governors Association in 2022.

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CHUCK WAGON



No-Bake Vanilla Cheesecake

by Bobbie Keefer
For The Scout

Rookies restaurant hosted a Christmas luncheon in December for the Strasburg Seniors Comanche VIPs.

If you attended, this cheesecake was served for dessert. Connie made it — or made many, I should say. She told me her mom, Barb Valle, gave her the recipe so I want to give her mom credit.

The Comanche VIPs provides a social outlet for area seniors. The monthly potlucks are held on the third Tuesday of each month. I was a guest speaker at one meeting. I had such a good time, my husband and I joined.

I'm glad we did because not only do we meet new friends, I got this recipe!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 (8-ounce) cream cheese, softened
- 1 (8-ounce) sour cream
- ½ teaspoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 (8-ounce) frozen whipped topping
- 1 graham cracker crust
- cherry pie filling
- blueberry pie filling

DIRECTIONS

In a mixer bowl, whip cream cheese on low speed until smooth. Add sour cream, sugar, vanilla. Mix again until combined.

Fold in whipped topping until mixture is creamy. Spoon evenly in crust. Cover and chill to set.

Slice in wedges and serve on pretty dessert plates with a dollop of pie filling.



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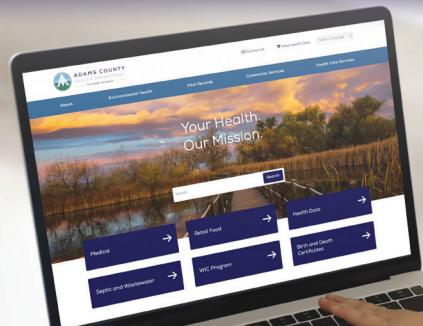
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**ADAMS COUNTY
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The Adams County Health Department has officially launched their website!



The website features a header with "Your Health. Our Mission." and a main menu with links like "Medics", "Retail Food", "Health Dept.", "Dept. and Businesses", "VFC Program", and "Birth and Death".

Visit adamscountyhealthdepartment.org or scan the QR code for important public health updates and information around major initiatives and developments.





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HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

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PHOTOS BY SEAN MARTIN/For The Scout

The after school Bennett Robotics club formed a team that competed in their first ever BEST Robotics competition in the metro area in mid-November. The team didn't advance to regional competition in early December but did receive the special award for most creative design. From right photo, the team's robot is put through its paces and the entire squad take a moment to have a laugh around its mechanical creation.

BENNETT BOE

during the Dec. 15 Bennett School Board meeting.

"We were a first-year group among 23 teams and that included high school and STEM school teams," Clark said. "We were third place after the first round. We finished in seventh, but we certainly didn't compete like rookies."

While Bennett didn't qualify for further regional competition Dec. 3-4 at Colorado School of Mines, it did bring home a coveted award.

"We did win the award for the most creative design," Baker said. "The judges told us that's one of the neatest designs they've seen, some-

thing they hadn't seen at this level before. We thought that was pretty exciting, especially being a first-year team."

The BEST Robotics competition includes building and programming a robot capable of moving around, picking things up, and dragging items around. Robots are controlled remotely by joysticks and points are scored by putting things in particular places.

"It's a pretty elaborate competition and the kids did very well," Baker added.

According to team members and parents, the amount of cell phone

interference inside the competition provided most of the issues after the first round.

"They just couldn't get that thing to move," one contest attendee said.

The Bennett team consisted of two students each from the sixth-grade and freshmen classes; three seventh-graders; and a quartet of eighth-graders.

"A young group, but they learned a lot," Clark said. "We are hoping to be able to encourage a lot more kids to participate and maybe get a couple of teams next time."

FOOD SERVICE ISSUES

In addition to the rising cost of food, food service director Amy Kirkwood announced her department is battling a rising increase in delinquent meal accounts.

Of the approximately \$10,000 in outstanding meal debt, Kirkwood indicated that 53 accounts make up about 70%.

"Sixteen percent of our negative balances own about 56% of the debt," she added.

Kirkwood said many families are confused because lunch and breakfast were free to all students during the previous two COVID-impacted school years and the fact that Colorado voters recently approved a ballot initiative for free lunches statewide.

"Unfortunately, a lot of people still think it's free, but not this year and the new program doesn't start until next school year," said Kirkwood, adding that many delinquent accounts date back to 2019 or earlier. "A lot of this dates well before COVID with some of these families."

Kirkwood asked the board to revisit food service policies including penalties for delinquent accounts.

"We have to figure out if we are going to enforce it and if there are going to be any consequences," she said. "We have something in place, but nobody wants to implement it."

Kirkwood reiterated that her staff will not turn students away from a hot or filling meal.

Additional fiscal stress is caused by weekly food prices which have escalated to about \$6,000.

FROM PAGE 1

"That's what we're spending and not being reimbursed on," Kirkwood said.

OTHER BUSINESS

Superintendent Robin Purdy said that decisions regarding weather-related closures or delayed starts are not made lightly or without proper due diligence when it comes to forecasts and weather patterns.

Concerns arose a couple days before the board meeting when school was canceled and followed up by a 2-hour delayed start the next day.

"It's all about safety of our students and staff," said Purdy, adding that road closures make it difficult for maintenance employees to get to the campus. "This last time, we needed time to get the 2 feet of snow removed from our parking lots and give our staff time to get here. A lot of our staff don't live right here, so it makes things more difficult, especially early in the morning."

"It needs to be all about the safety of our students and staff," added director Dennis Smialek. "If we end up getting scolded a bit, I'm fine with that. We need to err on the side of caution."

Athletic Director Lucas Devlin reported that a late-season football game that included attendance by Denver Broncos alumni and cheerleaders was a success with the NFL franchise donating \$1,000 to the Tiger football program.

"It was a lot of fun that night and I think everybody got a lot out of it," he said.

Bennett also returned football helmets borrowed from other schools over last season and added that the district is back on schedule to both receive new helmets and get current ones inspected and refurbished on a regular basis. The high school has 14 new helmets on order for next season while the middle school will have seven new headgears.

Purdy also announced that the high school's Career & Technical Education curriculum has grown to include fire science and EMT curriculum.

The board will next meet at 6 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 19.

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