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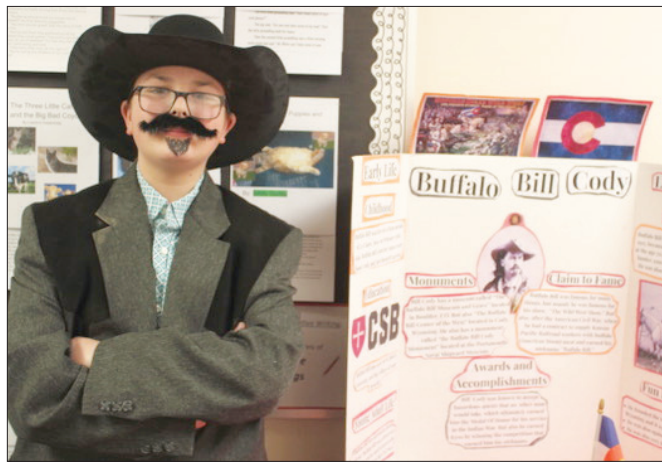
The I-70 Scout

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

Wednesday, February 26, 2025

Byers School expands teacher housing



Ryker Hurley portrays Buffalo Bill Cody (1846-1917), during A Night at the Museum hosted by Byers Elementary School fourth-graders Feb. 13. **SEE PAGE 24.**

by **Kathy Smiley**
Staff Writer

BYERS — Byers School District increased its inventory of teacher housing options after the board of directors approved the purchase of a home Feb. 20.

The 1,369 square feet, three-bedroom, one-bath house located on South Owens Street sits on a 2.5-acre lot. The property also includes an outbuilding and a chicken coop.

Superintendent Tom Turrell said the acreage has additional water taps and could potentially be used for the agriculture department.

“That water source is a plus for what you could do in the future — possibly a location for other shop or ag activities or a barn housing small animals,” he said.

After discussion, the school board unanimously passed a resolution authorizing the \$490,000 purchase from the general fund beginning fund balance. The resolution states that the district has identified a need for additional real estate to support its educational mission and that all necessary due diligence was conducted before the purchase was made. Turrell is authorized to execute all documents to complete the transaction.

The district now owns two houses and 10 apartments used as teacherages with low rent. A district policy outlines the specifics of the rent and other conditions. The policy was revised last August to include a provision for a small yearly increase in rent, based, in part, on the renter’s salary increase from the previous year. With the purchase of the

SEE BYERS BOE PAGE 22

Aspiring 'Burg artists request help from school board

by **Shylo Bockenfeld**
Editorial Assistant

STRASBURG — As the spring performing arts season quickly approaches for all levels of Strasburg School District students, hopes are the board of directors will help assist in funding future performances.

Student artists spoke during the public comment portion of the Feb. 10 school board meeting to lament the lack of funding for appropriate stage microphones and the overall distribution of support to the visual and performing arts programs.

Presenting students stated their passion for art or theater, which led them to conduct recent fundraisers for Christmas and Valentine’s Day, which garnered a total of \$339.50. The amount raised is still not enough to afford new stage microphones. According to the students, audience members have said they could not hear the performances in the old gym.

Senior band and drama student Erin Johnson added that the last two high-school drama productions were both student-led and that additional help is necessary.

“It cannot be supported by just the students,” Johnson said.

She added that, while the elementary school has a strong music department with its annual spring musical at the Bennett Schools auditorium, few art classes and programs exist at the secondary level. The students also noted the disparity between the financial support the arts receive compared to other extracurricular activities.

Johnson and her cohorts urged the board to consider more short-term funding, adding that more stage repairs are needed in addition to new microphones. They also presented more ambitious long-term goals, including a new auditorium that can be used by all grade levels for productions and assemblies.

The student artists overwhelmingly expressed the need for “better support of students’ career goals in the arts,” and that the arts receive the same level of financial support and recognition given other programs.

This year’s elementary musical is “Disney’s Newsies JR,” which will take place at 1 p.m. and 7 p.m., Friday, Feb. 28, and at 4 p.m. and 7 p.m., Saturday, March 1, at the Bennett auditorium.

“As most of you know, our fourth- and

SEE STRASBURG BOE PAGE 10



Fourth-grader Aspen Sir-Vandewerken plays “Breathe” on the piano as teacher Jenny Authier provides assistance during a Strasburg Schools recital Feb. 6. **SEE PAGE 6.**



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Firefighters from Bennett to Deer Trail and the Arapahoe County Sheriff’s deputies were dispatched to the 600 block of Third Avenue in Deer Trail about 8:30 a.m., Feb. 18, on reports of heavy smoke emanating from a house. Upon arrival, flames were discovered in the crawlspace and had climbed up the northeast corner wall, which had to be vented and extinguished. The fire investigation ruled the incident accidental. Two people were on-site when fire occurred but no one, including firefighters, were injured. Third Avenue between Date and Elm streets was reopened about 11:30 a.m.