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The I-70 Scout

# The I-70 Scout

Volume 31, Number 2

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

Thursday, December 5, 2024

## Post-holiday fire totals Byers building

by **Steven Vetter**  
Managing Editor

BYERS — No one was seriously injured or killed but a longstanding machine shop and its contents were destroyed during a late morning commercial building fire the day after Thanksgiving on the southeast edge of Byers.

Byers Fire Rescue and seven neighboring fire departments were dispatched to the 600 block of Pleasant Avenue about 10:30 a.m. Nov. 29 after neighbors reported a fire in one of two commercial buildings on the site. Upon arrival, the large steel building was found fully involved in flames and smoke.

“We took a defensive posture, meaning it was initially fought from the outside,” said Strasburg Fire Chief and lead fire investigator Pat Conroy. “The real challenge

was the volume of fire that was initially faced. There was large equipment and the typical flammable and combustible materials that are present in this type of building all along the I-70 Corridor.”

Neighbors as far as several blocks away reported hearing multiple explosions — in most cases a burst of three pops — that emanated from the burning building. Acetylene bottles, other welding materials, vehicles, and other machinery were among the contents torched and lost.

While the building and everything inside is considered a total loss — preliminarily estimated at “north of a million dollars,” according to Conroy — damage to equipment and materials outside of the structure was minimal and no neighboring structures, including

**SEE BYERS FIRE  
PAGE 10**



COURTESY ARAPAHOE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Firefighters and apparatus from seven local and neighboring fire departments joined forces to fight a commercial metal building fire on the southeast corner of Byers Nov. 29.

## Bennett town board renews contract with ArapCo Sheriff

by **Kathy Smiley**  
Staff Writer

BENNETT — The Town of Bennett Board of Trustees enthusiastically approved a 2025 contract for policing services with the Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office Nov. 26.

The \$313,070 contract retains the same level of service the town currently receives and includes two full-time deputies and a half-time detective. The Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office has served the town of Bennett since May 1 of this year after negotiations broke down with the Ad-

ams County Sheriff's Office, which had served Bennett for decades.

The contract states that compensation for the base law enforcement services will be calculated as the actual cost to the county for the designated personnel, including all salaries, benefits, equipment and other direct and indirect costs, and \$313,070 is the base sum for the estimated annual costs for 2025. The base sum does not include overtime hours or victim advocate services as needed, which will be billed separately on a quarterly basis.

Town Manager Trish Stiles said the decision to partner with Arapahoe County is proving to be sound.

“This decision was made to enhance the quality, professionalism and responsiveness of law enforcement services for the community,” she said in her staff report on the contract. “While the initial transition presented challenges, the partnership has proven to be highly effective and beneficial for the town.”

Notable changes since

**SEE BENNETT BOT  
PAGE 16**



STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout

The Bennett Public Safety Building, formally opened earlier this fall along Palmer Avenue immediately west of the Fourth Street interchange, includes an office for the Arapahoe County Sheriff's deputies that patrol and investigators of incidents that occur in and around the town. Town trustees recently approved renewing the law enforcement contract with Arapahoe County after it switched from Adams County early this year. The Public Safety building, which was funded by Colorado Department of Local Affairs grant money, was the previous location of Bennett Public Works, which was moved to the north edge of town.



ISAAC MANAUGH/The I-70 Scout

Crystal Richie smells the holiday joy as she picks out her favorite candle from one of the many vendors in attendance at the Small Business Saturday event hosted by the Bennett Park & Recreation District Nov. 30. **SEE PAGE 7.**



COMMUNITY CORRAL

Performing arts boosters plan food drive in Bennett

BENNETT — The Bennett Performing Arts Booster Club will host a winter food drive from Dec. 2-18 to help families along the I-70 Corridor to stay fed all winter long.

The following unexpired items are needed: canned fruit and vegetables, hot and cold cereal, rice, pasta and juice.

Drop-offs donations are during any concert throughout December in the Bennett High School auditorium.

Items collected will benefit the Bennett Community Food Bank. For additional information, contact the Bennett Performing Arts Booster Club at BennettPABC@gmail.com.

Town of Bennett readies for Breakfast with Santa

BENNETT — The Town of Bennett Board of Trustees will again host Breakfast with Santa from 8-11 a.m., Saturday, Dec. 7, at the Bennett Community Center.

Along with breakfast will be music and opportunities for photos with Santa Claus.

Tickets cost \$5 per adult; \$3 per child; and free for children 3 and under.

Proceeds support the Bennett Holiday Help Program. Donations to the Food Bank will be accepted.

Mountain View Fellowship begins Christmas toy drive

STRASBURG — The MomCo at Mountain View Fellowship is organizing a Christmas toy drive for struggling families.

Donations of new and like-new toys for kids of all ages are wanted, but cloth toys and stuffies will not be accepted for sanitary reasons. Like-new toys should be cleaned and in working condition; new batteries are a bonus.

Toys can be dropped off from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 1, at MVF, 1955 Headlight Road, Strasburg.

Holiday event set for ArapCo Fairgrounds

AURORA — Residents and visitors alike are invited to swing by Visit the Village, a holiday-themed family fun day from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 7, at the Arapahoe County Fairgrounds & Event Center, 25690 E. Quincy Ave., Aurora.

There’s something for everyone – from holiday shopping with local artists and vendors to a Santa meet-and-greet, petting farm, horse-drawn carriage rides, games, gingerbread house-making, and a group pajama contest for prizes.

Tickets cost \$10 per person (kids 2 and under get in free), or donate a new, unwrapped gift and receive one free admission per household.

The donation will support the Arapahoe County Human Services Partnering for the Holidays gift-giving program that supports the most vulnerable and at-risk children and adults in the

county.

5K FUN RUN

Dec. 7 will open with the Yeti Set Go! 5K Fun Run at the fairgrounds.

A prize will be awarded to the best-dressed Yeti at this 5K event that ends at Visit the Village.

The race starts at 9:30 a.m., and tickets for entry into the 5K Fun Run and Visit the Village cost \$15 each. Children ages 5 and under can participate for free.

TICKETS & SHIRTS

Yeti Set Go! 5K Fun Run shirts will be available for purchase through Big Frog (local Aurora printer); shirts will be approx. \$25 each, with 15% of proceeds benefiting AnderLoch Foundation.

To purchase tickets or shirts, visit [www.arapahoe-countyeventcenter.com](http://www.arapahoe-countyeventcenter.com).

A no-cost shopping day for struggling families is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 7, at the church.

Toy collection commences for yearly Christmas Shop

BYERS — The annual Our Lady of the Plains Catholic Church Christmas Toy Drive is underway through Thursday, Dec. 5.

The event benefits families in financial need with gifts for their children up to age 14.

Donations of new or gently used toys can be delivered to Byers General Store, Western Hardware in Strasburg, or the Bennett Recreation Center.

The drive will culminate with the annual Christmas Toy Shop from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 7, at Our Lady of the Plains Catholic Church, 186 N. McDonnell St., Byers.

Families in the Bennett, Strasburg, Byers, Deer Trail and Agate areas should register their chil-

dren at [tinyurl.com/OLPtoyshop](http://tinyurl.com/OLPtoyshop).

For additional information, call Jane Benz at (303)621-2981. Para español llamar a Karla, (720)226-8720.

High Plains musical group plans holiday performance

BENNETT — The High Plains Music Ensemble will present Christmas with the HPME starting at 7 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 14, at the Bennett High School Performing Arts Center, 610 Seventh St.

The performance will feature music of the holiday season with selections such as “A Christmas Festival” by Leroy Anderson; “The Hallelujah Chorus” by Handel; “’Twas the Night Before Christmas,” with narration by George Cronk; some vocal selections, including “Noel,” “Christmas Valentine,” “Santa got Run Over by a Reindeer,” and a sing along of holiday favorites.

Admission is free.

The High Plains Music Ensem-

ble rehearses at 6:30 p.m. Mondays in the Bennett High School band room. For more information, visit [www.highplainsmusicensemble.com](http://www.highplainsmusicensemble.com) or call Kurt Elliott at (303)895-7568.

Christmas Eve gathering slated for Saron Lutheran

STRASBURG — Advent and Christmas Eve gatherings are coming to Saron Lutheran Church in Strasburg.

A Holden Evening Prayer service, a quiet time to reflect on the birth of Jesus, will start at 7:15 p.m., Wednesdays, Dec. 4, 11 and 18 For those that can arrive earlier, potluck soup supper is planned at 6:30 p.m.

A Christmas Eve service will start at 7 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 24. The service will include many of the favorite carols, closing with a candlelight singing of “Silent Night.”

Saron Lutheran Church is located at 1656 Main St., Strasburg. For additional information, visit [saronstrasburg.org](http://saronstrasburg.org).

Bennett seeks toys, gifts for Holiday Help program

BENNETT — Participants in the town of Bennett’s Holiday Help program can bring new and unwrapped toys or gifts to various donation boxes in town.

Donations can be delivered to collection boxes at Town Hall, Independent Financial, Bennett Asian Cafe, High Plains Diner, Bennett Recreation Center and Sonic Drive-In.

All boxes will be available through Dec. 11.

The town of Bennett will continue to accept items until the start of Holiday Help Distribution Day, which runs from 8-10 a.m., Saturday, Dec. 14, at Bennett Town Hall, 207 Muegge Way.

The contributions will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis.

For additional information or to make a monetary contribution, visit [www.bennettco.gov](http://www.bennettco.gov).

# Eastern Colorado News

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# AdCo names new deputy manager

BRIGHTON — Adams County has appointed a Colorado native with more than 20 years of experience in public administration as deputy county manager.

According to a release, Dionne Stroter brings a passion for equity and community engagement with her wealth of expertise to her new role.

Most recently, Stroter served as deputy executive director of the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, where she helped manage over \$1.5 billion in federal stimulus funds for pandemic recovery and spearheaded initiatives focused on enhancing communications and digital accessibility.

Her extensive experience in managing complex projects and fostering operational excellence will be key to her new role in Adams County, the press release continues.

“Her vast experience and commitment to equity will be invaluable as we continue to meet the needs of our diverse community,” said Commissioner Emma Pinter, board chair.

Stroter’s dedication to public

service is apparent in her previous position as executive director with the Denver Office of Children’s Affairs.

During her tenure there, she expanded Head Start services, piloted innovative youth transportation programs, and increased funding for child care and after-school services.

Stroter has also held leadership positions in several Denver city agencies, including Finance, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and General Services.

“Dionne’s hands-on leadership and commitment to creating accessible, community-focused programs make her a fantastic addition to our team,” said Interim County Manager David Fraser. “Her experience is a perfect match for our mission to provide inclusive, effective service for everyone in Adams County.”

Stroter has worked tirelessly to improve outcomes for under-served communities throughout Colorado, according to the release.

She has been actively involved in numerous community initiatives, serving as chair of the Aurora Cultural Affairs Commission and co-chair of the Central Park United Neighbors Equity & Diversity Committee.



Stroter

## BYERS WATER AND SANITATION DISTRICT

### NOTICE OF HEARING ON PETITION FOR INCLUSION OF PROPERTY

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A PETITION FOR INCLUSION OF THE BELOW DESCRIBED PROPERTY INTO THE BYERS WATER AND SANITATION DISTRICT HAS BEEN SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE DISTRICT PURSUANT TO C.R.S. §32-1-401 ET. SEQ. Said petition has been signed by May Farms RV Resort & Sanctuary @ Byers LLC as the owner of 100% of the property described. A hearing on said petition will be held before the Board of Directors of the District on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2024, at 7:00 p.m., at the District offices 421 South Sherman Street Byers Colorado 80103. All persons interested shall appear at such time and place and show cause in writing why the said petition should not be granted.

Description of Property:

### EXHIBIT A

A PARCEL OF LAND LOCATED IN SECTION 4, TOWNSHIP 4 SOUTH, RANGE 61 WEST OF THE 6TH PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, COUNTY OF ARAPAHOE, STATE OF COLORADO BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:  
BEGINNING AT THE CENTER ¼ CORNER OF SAID SECTION 4, BEING A FOUND 2.5" ALUMINUM CAP, LS 30127, FROM WHENCE THE WEST 1/16TH CORNER OF SAID SECTION 4, BEING A FOUND 2" ALUMINUM CAP, LS 18475, BEARS S 89° 01'53" W A DISTANCE OF 1,314.70 FEET, SAID LINE FORMING THE BASIS OF BEARING FOR THIS LEGAL DESCRIPTION.  
THENCE S 89° 01'53" W ALONG THE SOUTH LINE OF THE EAST HALF OF NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION 4 A DISTANCE OF 1,314.70 FEET TO THE WEST 1/16TH CORNER OF SAID SECTION 4;  
THENCE N 01° 09'10" W, ALONG THE WEST LINE OF THE EAST HALF OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION 4, A DISTANCE OF 2,571.42 FEET TO A POINT ON THE SOUTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF EAST 15TH AVE.  
THENCE N 89° 59'25" E ALONG SAID SOUTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE A DISTANCE OF 1,318.73 FEET TO A POINT OF INTERSECTION WITH THE EAST LINE OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION 4;  
THENCE N 89° 00'08" E, CONTINUING ALONG THE SOUTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF EAST 15TH AVE., A DISTANCE OF 948.34 FEET TO A POINT;  
THENCE S 01° 03'47" E A DISTANCE OF 2,572.29 FEET TO THE POINT OF INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTH LINE OF THE WEST HALF OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION 4;  
THENCE S 17° 46'39" W A DISTANCE OF 937.93 FEET TO A POINT;  
THENCE S 88° 59'55" W A DISTANCE OF 646.41 FEET TO THE POINT OF INTERSECTION WITH THE EAST LINE OF THE WEST HALF OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION 4;  
THENCE N 01° 05'05" W ALONG SAID EAST LINE A DISTANCE OF 888.00 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING, CONTAINING 6,533.939.1040 SQUARE FEET OR 150.00 ACRES, MORE OR LESS.

Dated this 18<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2024

BYERS WATER AND  
SANITATION DISTRICT

*Kagen W. Kitzman*  
Manager  
Kagen W. Kitzman

Published in the *Eastern Colorado News* on Fridays, Nov. 22 and 29, and Dec. 6 and 13, 2024, and in *The I-70 Scout* on Thursdays, Nov. 28, and Dec. 5, 12 and 19, 2024.



# ARAPAHOE COUNTY



# Visit the Village

Saturday, Dec. 7, 2024 | 11 a.m.–4 p.m.

A holiday-themed fun day at the  
Arapahoe County Fairgrounds  
and Event Center

- Santa Meet-and-Greet
- Petting Farm
- Horse-drawn Rides
- Hot Chocolate
- Ornament-making
- Local Craft Vendors
- Frosty’s Fun Zone
- Games
- Group PJ Contest

Tickets: \$10 (kids 2 and under FREE)

Share the season with neighbors in need! Donate a new, unwrapped gift for one free admission per household. Your generous donation will support Arapahoe County Human Services’ Partnering for the Holidays gift-giving program.

arapahoecountyeventcenter.com



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ArapCo strives to help neighbors in need

LITTLETON — Arapahoe County residents can bring holiday joy to children and adults in crisis of any sort.

Arapahoe County Human Services and the Arapahoe County Foundation are seeking donations for all ages to fill the shelves of their Winter Wonderland Gift Shop. Contributions will be accepted through Dec. 12.

GENERAL NEEDS

- warm blankets.
- family games, puzzles.
- wrapping paper, bows, gift bags.
- gently used or new winter coats, gloves, scarves, hats.

TEENS (AGES 13-18)

- gift cards.
- beauty kits, headphones, sports gear, Broncos items.

- Hydro Flask water bottles, journals, skateboards.

ELEMENTARY (AGES 6-12)

- LEGOs, National Geographic toys, science kits.
- dolls, superhero toys, remote controlled cars, headphones.
- soccer balls, basketballs, baseball mitts.

PRESCHOOL (AGES 3-5)

- Puzzles, books, trucks, dolls, “Frozen”-themed toys.
- Paw Patrol, Doc McStuffins, dinosaurs, princess items.

TODDLERS, INFANTS (AGES 0-2)

- Educational toys (e.g. Baby Einstein, Vtech), board books, stuffed animals.
- Glow worms, rattles, play mats, soft dolls of all races.

PARENTS, CAREGIVERS

- Gift cards for Walmart, Target, Sephora, Home Depot, Amazon.
- perfume, cologne, nail or massage certificates.
- cozy blankets, family-friendly games.

DROP-OFF LOCATIONS

- 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, Arapahoe County Human Services, 14980 E. Alameda Drive, Aurora.
- 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, Arapahoe County Sheriff’s Office, 13101 E. Broncos Parkway, Centennial.
- 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturdays, Colored Red, 13960 E. Mississippi Ave., Aurora.

OTHER WAYS TO GIVE

Ship gifts directly to Kala Slater, 14980 E. Alameda Drive, Aurora.

To make donations with a credit card or electronic funds transfer, visit www.arapahoeco.gov. Monetary gifts are tax-deductible and go directly to families in need.

Checks payable to the Arapahoe County Foundation Partnering for the Holidays can be mailed to 14980 E. Alameda Drive, Aurora, Colo. 80012.

Volunteer to help during the Winter Wonderland Gift Shop. Sign up at www.arapahoeco.gov.

For information, send an e-mail to kslater@arapahoegov.com.

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**Raffles for 5 Holiday Baskets \$1 per ticket**

Proceeds go to Hemphill Middle School’s 8th-grade Washington D.C. Trip and Mountain View Fellowship youth camps.

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20th ANNUAL  
**CHRISTMAS NIGHT**  
In Strasburg  
Dec. 7, '24

**The Gift Shop**

56781 E. Colfax Ave.  
Open 10 A.M. - 7 P.M.  
**COME ENJOY Lighting of the Lights, and other festivities!**



# \$75K reward in '17 killing still unclaimed

BAILEY — As the seventh anniversary of the Maggie Long homicide passes, the Colorado Bureau of Investigation is reminding the public of a \$75,000 reward for information leading to an arrest in her murder.

The 17-year old was found murdered in her burned home near Bailey in Park County on Dec. 1, 2017. The home was burglarized and set on fire. Several items were stolen to include guns, ammunition, jade figurines, and a safe. Investigators have reason to believe more than one person may have been involved in her death.

“We believe someone knows something that could help solve this case and bring a measure of justice to Maggie’s family and the Bailey community,” said Park County Sheriff Tom McGraw. “It could take just one person to help our investigation and we are determined to bring a resolution to one of Colorado’s most high-profile cold cases.”

The \$75,000 reward is offered on behalf of the Park County Sheriff’s Office, Maggie Long’s family, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Colorado Bureau of Investigation.

Anyone with information can call (303)239-4243 or e-mail to [maggie.long.tips@state.co.us](mailto:maggie.long.tips@state.co.us).

# CSU releases 2 new wheat strains

BURLINGTON — The Colorado Wheat Research Foundation has released two new hard red winter wheat varieties this fall.

Sheridan is a hard red winter wheat variety with excellent stripe rust resistance, very good test weight, and a long coleoptile.

Stripe rust can be problematic some years and this variety is currently resistant to the disease. The long coleoptile length will allow Sheridan to be planted at deeper depths when a lack of topsoil moisture exists. In Colorado State University research trials, Sheridan out-yielded Langin, Avery and Byrd.

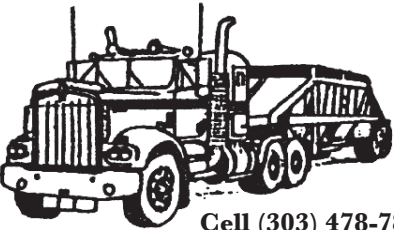
Telluride is a hard white winter wheat variety. Telluride has excellent straw strength, making it a candidate for irrigated production. Quality characteristics make it a candidate for the Ardent Mills UltrGrain program.

Registered seed is currently being increased by Certified Seed Growers and certified lots will be available to growers in the near future. For more information, visit [www.PlainsGold.com](http://www.PlainsGold.com)

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## Saron Lutheran Church

1656 Main St. | Strasburg, CO | [saronstrasburg.org](http://saronstrasburg.org)  
Worship 8:30 a.m. In-Person or on Facebook

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## Mountain View FELLOWSHIP

Bible-Based • Nondenominational

**Sunday Services**  
8:30am & 10:15am  
**Servicio en Español a las 10:15am**  
1955 Headlight Road in Strasburg

**Sunday Service Livestream at**  
<https://www.mvfcolorado.online.church>

Midweek Elementary Gathering - Tuesdays @ 6:30pm  
Middle/High School Youth Group - Wednesdays @ 7pm  
Find us on Facebook/Instagram: Search "mvfcolorado"

[mvfcolorado.com](http://mvfcolorado.com)  
303.622.9600



## Strasburg Church of Christ

Serving Christ and His children on the High Plains  
**Sunday Service 8:30 a.m.**  
American Legion Hall  
56423 Westview Ave., Strasburg, CO  
Please visit our web site to learn more...  
<http://StrasburgCOC.org>



## Christ Our Redeemer Lutheran Church

Missouri Synod

**Sunday Worship at 9:30 a.m.**

275 Ash Street, Bennett • 303-644-3044  
[www.corlms.org](http://www.corlms.org)



## Strasburg Orthodox Mission

**Every Sunday:**

- Lauds at 10AM •
- Fellowship follows •

at Strasburg American Legion (56423 Westview Ave.)

**For more information:**  
[strasburgorthodox.org](http://strasburgorthodox.org)



## Our Lady of the Plains Catholic Church

Pastor: Fr. Jeff Wilborn  
186 N. McDonnell St., Byers CO 80103  
Parish: 303-822-5880, Hall: 303-822-5889  
Sacramental Emergencies: 303-351-2551  
[www.ourladyoftheplains.org](http://www.ourladyoftheplains.org)



## MASS TIMES

- Tue, Wed, Thur, Fri & every 1st Saturday 8:30 am
- Saturday 5:00 pm
- Sunday 9:00 am

11:30 am en español

**SACRAMENT OF PENANCE**  
Saturday 4:15-4:45 pm  
Sunday 8:15-8:45 am & 10:45-11:15 am  
Or by Appointment  
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## calvary bennett




Teaching God's Word  
verse-by-verse

Sundays 10:45 AM  
Meeting @VFW in Bennett  
115 Palmer Ave

Live-streamed @ [calvarybennett.org](http://calvarybennett.org)

Offices located at 545 Palmer Ave  
303.261.8853  
[info@calvarybennett.org](mailto:info@calvarybennett.org)

Download our app:



## Mt. Tabor Baptist Church

278 S. Sherman St., Byers  
303-822-9366 • [mittaborbyers.org](http://mittaborbyers.org)

Sat., 6:00 p.m. .... Saturday Service  
Sun., 9:00 a.m. .... Sunday School  
Sun., 10-10:30 a.m. .... Fellowship; 10:30 a.m. .... Church  
Awana ..... Tuesday, 5:15-7:15 p.m., Dinner served

**Psalm 104:24** O LORD, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all.



## Strasburg Presbyterian Church

56635 Iowa Ave., Strasburg, CO  
[www.spcusa.us](http://www.spcusa.us)  
**303-622-4325**  
• Sunday Worship 10 a.m.



Churches and other nonprofits!  
Please keep us informed of your activities for publicity and coverage!  
— Douglas Claussen, Publisher & Editor

# 15th TOY DRIVE

kindness starts with you





## Cancer Fighters to the Rescue





**LOCATIONS TO DROP OFF TOYS:**

Strasburg Parks & Rec; Bennett Parks & Rec; Byers General Store; Gift Shop, Strasburg; O'Malley's Mercantile (1600 Hudson Rd., Watkins); Escape the Clock (251 U.S. Hwy. 40, Byers); NAPA Auto Parts, Strasburg; Salinas Restaurant, Strasburg; Latinas Salon II (992 S. Abilene St., Aurora); Salon Envy, Byers; Wide Open Heating, Air & Electric, Byers; Maverick Mercantile, Byers; Outlets at Castle Rock; 20/20 EyeVenue, Strasburg; Audi of Denver; and 2354 Basil Street, Strasburg.

Remember, kindness starts with you.

Bring new unwrapped toys for ages 0 to 21

**DROP-OFF DEADLINE:**  
**DECEMBER 17**

LIKE AND FOLLOW MY SOCIAL NETWORKS:  
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# CORRIDOR CALENDAR

**FRIDAY, DEC. 6**  
**Deer Trail PTO craft fair.** 2-7 p.m. during Eagle Classic basketball tournament, Deer Trail School, 130 S. Second St.

**SATURDAY, DEC. 7**  
**Deer Trail PTO craft fair.** 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. during Eagle Classic basketball tournament.

**MONDAY, DEC. 9**  
**Food Bank of the Rockies Mobile Pantry.** 9-11 a.m., Kelter Library parking lot, 585 S. Main St., Byers. Optional pre-registration at [newclient.link-2feed.com](http://newclient.link-2feed.com).  
**Strasburg School Board.** 6 p.m., Strasburg High School Central Services building board room. Zoom participation available. Visit [strasburg31j.com](http://strasburg31j.com) for link.  
**Byers Water & Sanitation District Board.** 7 p.m., District Office, 421 S. Sherman St.  
**Deer Trail Fire Protection District Board.** 7 p.m., Deer Trail Firehouse.

**TUESDAY, DEC. 10**  
**Food Bank of the Rockies Mobile Pantry.** 4-8 p.m. or while supplies last, Hinkley High School, 1250 Chambers Road, Aurora.

**Daughters of the American Revolution** Silver Spike Chapter. 6:30 p.m., TBK Bank conference room, 56641 E. Colfax Ave., Strasburg.  
**Bennett Board of Trustees.** Work-study 5:45 p.m. Regular meeting 7 p.m. For a Zoom link, visit [townofbennett.colorado.gov](http://townofbennett.colorado.gov).  
**Deer Trail Town Board.** Work session 6:30 p.m., regular meeting 7 p.m., Town Hall, 555 Second Ave.

**WEDNESDAY, DEC. 11**  
**Deer Trail Conservation District Board.** 1 p.m., Farm Service Agency office, 133 W. Bijou, Byers.  
**Strasburg Sanitation & Water Board.** 7 p.m., TBK Bank conference room, 56641 E. Colfax Ave., Strasburg.  
**Bennett secondary instrumental band concert.** 7 p.m., Bennett High School auditorium.  
**Bennett School Board.** 5 p.m., Bennett High School library. Visit [bsd29j.com](http://bsd29j.com) for a Zoom link.  
**Deer Trail School Board.** 6:30 p.m., Dorothy Pisel Meeting Room at Davies Library.

**THURSDAY, DEC. 12**  
**Bennett Fire Protection District Board.** 7 p.m., Administrative Office, 355 Fourth St., Bennett.

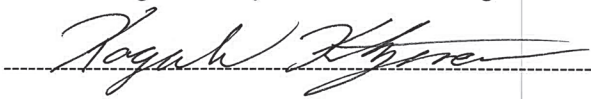
NOTICE OF BUDGET

Byers Water and Sanitation District

Notice is hereby given that: a proposed budget has been submitted to Byers Water and Sanitation District Board of Directors for the ensuing year of 2025; a copy of such proposed budget has been filed in the office of Byers Water and Sanitation District, 421 S. Sherman Street, Byers, Colorado, where same is open for public inspection; such proposed budget will be considered at the regular meeting of the Board of Directors to be held at 421 S. Sherman Street, Byers, Colorado on December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 7:00 pm.

Any interested elector of the Byers Water and Sanitation District may inspect the proposed budget and file or register any objections thereto at any time prior to the final adoption of the budget.

Manager of the Byers Water District: Kagen Kitzman





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# Advances in ag tech result in better, more plentiful crops

by **R.F. Meyer**  
Golden Plains Area Agronomist

Plant scientists have employed science to improve crops for centuries. David Harris from the University of London believes that gatherers began selectively breeding wheat about 12,500 B.C. Cutting edible grasses with rock-edged sickles, they took the grain-bearing grasses home. Only the strongest kernels of wheat or barley were left on the stalk because they may have been hard to cut. Those plants had stronger stalks and those plant seeds fell to the soil nearest the Neolithic campsites and, after sprouting and growing, they produced plants with perhaps stronger straw and heartier kernels. Thus began an unintentional plant breeding program for different and better plants.

As knowledge improved, science improved. Plant scientists (agronomists by today's title) advanced plant varieties and traits, one gene at a time. Early plant breeders selected plant varieties that yielded better and had improved qualities for processing needs or human preferences (plants that tasted better). A striking break-

through occurred in 1866 when an agronomist monk named Gregor Mendel crossed pea plants and became known as the Father of Genetics. As it turned out, traits for peas could be easily manipulated using manual cross pollination techniques. Scientists quickly adopted the cross pollination strategies to create plant hybrids. These new hybrids were selected to produce plants that yielded better, produced stronger stalks, and had superior quality characteristics. The new hybrids not only benefited farmers planting them (in the form of higher yields), but also consumers who noticed better and healthier food.

In 1953 scientists discovered a long molecule found in all living things they called DNA, which contained genetic "codes" for traits and characteristics. Later it was discovered that desirable DNA (e.g. rust tolerance, higher yields) could be transferred to new plants with success. As a result, agronomists now found selected genes that produced positive outcomes (better yield) that could be transferred from one plant to another with greater accuracy and less time. But plant breeding

was still a hit-or-miss science. Agronomists knew what gene they wanted to advance but needed multiple tries to finally get the desired result. The effort required lots of cross pollination and then further back crossing to finally achieve success. As a result, it sometimes took as many as 15 years to get a new and improved variety released.

In 1973, another scientific agronomic breakthrough occurred. Scientists discovered how to successfully transfer a gene from one species into a completely different species. The discovery was something thought impossible by many in the scientific community and a new science was immediately born: biotechnology. Scientifically referred to as transgenic crops or Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO), the new science continues to produce better and healthier plants today.

In 1996, the first commercially available GMO crops were planted. The new crop was a herbicide tolerant soybean and the herbicide applied was glyphosate. The new discovery now made controlling weeds much less difficult for producers who adopted

the new technology.

Herbicide tolerance in other crops followed. Glyphosate resistant corn was widely adopted by corn farmers looking for an easier method to control weeds. Another innovation occurred when an insecticide-producing trait was inserted into corn plants. Known as BT corn, the trait enabled corn plants to produce a naturally occurring insecticide, eliminating chemical insecticide applications to control insects that attack corn plants. BT corn did not require farmers to apply insecticides to corn plants to control insects.

So how does transgenic technology work? Early methods used a .22-caliber pistol's bullet that was dipped into DNA material and shot into young corn plant material. The result didn't always work but, when it did, the corn plant's DNA accepted the foreign genes and began to replicate and multiply them. From there, corn plants were tested to make sure they contained the desired traits. Current improved research uses a natural soil borne bacterium to transfer the desired trait from one species to the next.

Is GMO technology in

plants safe for us to consume? Estimates indicate that today more than 70% of U.S. food contains GMO plants. In the United States prior to release into the food system, GMO plants are compared to their traditional counterparts for chemical, genetic, biochemical, compositional, nutritional and environmental tests as well as known allergens. GMO crop testing is performed by the Food & Drug Administration, Environmental Protection Agency, and U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Further, more than 50 scientists from the National Academy of Science regularly evaluate GMO crops, and countries such as Argentina, Canada, Australia and China conduct their own testing for GMO food safety. As a result, GMO crops are highly regulated and tested for both human and environmental safety.

Plant breeders also work with non-transgenic methods to transfer desirable traits from one plant to the next generation. Wheat and sunflower are two crops that are not GMO or transgenic, which means that more traditional plant-

**SEE AG TECH  
PAGE 8**

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breeding techniques are employed.

To employ new technologies more efficiently with non-transgenic crops, plant breeders have discovered better and faster methods for transferring desirable plant traits to the next generation. DNA Marker-Assisted Selection (MAS) is one current technology. DNA markers have now been found that allow a plant breeder to more efficiently identify and select specific plant traits to advance to the next generation. While some genetic markers may or may not be the DNA that controls the desired trait, they act as a “flag” that point to the specific gene that breeders want to transfer. The technology has been used since the early 2000s.

One particularly powerful form of DNA marker technology is Single Nucleotide Polymorphism or SNP (pronounced snip). This plant breeding technology allows less expensive and high-throughput DNA sequencing methods to identify and locate genes controlling important traits such as better yield and quality. SNPs located close to a particular gene act as a marker for that gene. Once the marker is identified, plant breeders know which genes to focus on and select for transfer.

Two other plant-breeding methods that are currently garnering increased attention are Genomic Selection and High Throughput Phenotyping. Genomic Selection allows the breed-

er to use SNPs to increase the efficiency of trait selection with the key goal of shortening the breeding cycle time and more quickly increase the rate of genetic gain. High throughput phenotyping uses remote sensing and other technologies to rapidly and inexpensively evaluate breeding germplasm for drought tolerance, heat tolerance, plant biomass, pest tolerance, and other key characteristics.

Further, another new plant genetic transfer technique is called Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats or CRISPR. The CRISPR breeding method involves more nature than science and uses proteins to change the sequence and potentially “deactivate” certain undesirable genes. For instance, CRISPR technology could disable a plant’s gene that allows disease or insect susceptibility, thus making the plant resistant to specific pests without using transgenic methods. This technology could make plants more insect- or disease-resistant by turning off the bad genes and enabling the good genes to thrive without inserting foreign genes into the plant. The process could also eliminate or reduce pesticide applications to control pests.

As a result of improved crop production techniques, agronomists are now able to reduce the time required to release a new and improved variety equipped with targeted pest



JEFF HORNER/AP Photo  
A combine harvests a patch of genetically modified wheat along the Oregon-Washington border southwest of Walla Walla, Wash.





tolerant traits from 10 years to approximately three years, in some cases. As a result, farmers can now employ better varieties in a third of the time it used to take to develop.

It is no accident that record crop yields are happening yearly. The record corn yield harvested in 2018 was 477 bushels per acre. In 2023, David Hula, a farmer from Charles City, Va., set the world record for corn yield at 623 bushels per acre in the National Corn Growers Association yield contest.

To be sure, agricultural scientists are employing the best technology available and the return on investment is showing up with quicker release times, enhanced pest resistance, and higher yields using similar inputs.

# Gift Distribution

Saturday, December 14, 2024  
8 a.m. - 10 a.m.  
Town of Bennett Town Hall



Thanks to generous donations from the community, including CORE and the Fraternal Order of Police Arapahoe Lodge 31, the Town of Bennett will be hosting a toy and gift distribution.

Gifts will be given out on a first-come, first-served basis. If you or someone you know may need extra holiday help this year, please join us.

[www.bennettco.gov/community/page/holiday-help](http://www.bennettco.gov/community/page/holiday-help)

# May Farms Christmas Market

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20<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

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**2024 Schedule:**

- Visit SANTA & his Reindeer from 4-7pm
- Christmas Tree Lighting at 5pm
- FIREWORKS at 7:30pm
- Hayride Route: Lyons Park - Colfax - Arapahoe
- Craft Fair at Legion Hall from 10am-4pm
- Roasted Chestnuts, U.S. Mechanical 1486 Main St.
- Visit LOCAL businesses for specials and extended hours. See website for full event schedule!

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LIBRARY NEWS

KELVER LIBRARY

585 Main St., Byers  
(303)822-9392  
www.arapahoelibraries.org

**Adult book club:** “A Big Little Life: A Memoir of a Joyful Dog Named Trixie” by Dean Koontz. 6-7 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 10.

**Winter Crafts:** Enjoy a variety of festive crafts to get in the holiday spirit. All supplies provided. Kids ages 5-12 will make winter crafts. 1-2 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 21.

**Little Makers Club:** Children ages 18 months to 5 years can learn about cars and transportation through activities, crafts and snacks.

Each session includes a take-home goody bag to continue the learning at home. For more information and to register, visit arapahoelibraries.org or call (303)822-9392. 10:30-11:30 a.m., Friday, Dec. 13.

**Victorian holiday traditions:** Adults will learn about holiday celebrations of the early 1900s from a representative of the Molly Brown House Museum in Denver. 1:30-3 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 18.

ANYTHINK BENNETT LIBRARY

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

**Tsik+ri Amulet Workshop:** Ages 16 and up can learn about Meso-american culture and the practice of constructing Tsik+ri amulets in an informative and hands-on workshop with local expert Andres Duarte Ortiz.

Space limited; registration required. Visit anythinklibraries.org to sign up. 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 7.

**De-stressing the Holidays:** Library fans of all ages can take a break

from the hustle and bustle of the holidays. They can snuggle a puppy from Lifeline Puppy Rescue, play video games in a luxury event truck, and enjoy sipping hot drinks.

Some gifts wrapped at free gift-wrapping station. 1-4 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 7.

**After School Crafting:** Kids ages 7-14 can get creative in the library after school a with a different project each month. 4-6 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 11.

**All Aboard:** Visitors of all ages can enjoy an amazing display of a LEGO model train as it travels through a wintry landscape. A member of the Youth in Model Railroading Club will answer model train questions. 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., Wednesday and Thursday, Dec. 18-19; 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Friday, Dec. 20.

DAVIES LIBRARY

128 Second Ave., Deer Trail  
(303)769-4310  
www.arapahoelibraries.org

**Tea at 2:** Adults are invited to Tea at 2 on the first Wednesday of every month. The library will provide tea and activities, such as playing cards, puzzles and adult coloring pages. Patrons can also bring their own activities 2-3 p.m., Friday, Dec. 6.

**Gnome sewing:** Teens are invited to learn the whimsical art of gnome sewing. No experience necessary, all supplies provided. 4-5:30 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 11.

**Winter crafts:** Kids and tweens are invited to make winter crafts. Get cozy with a variety of festive crafts. All supplies provided. For ages 5-12. 4:30-5:30 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 18.

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PHOTOS BY STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout

Firefighters from seven area agencies work diligently to make sure fire that claimed a steel building on the southeast edge of Byers Nov. 29 doesn't stoke back up.

BYERS FIRE

FROM PAGE 1

a nearby wooden fence, were impacted.

“The fact this was a metal building helped with containment, but it was still a very heavy fire load to deal with,” he said. “An evacuation request originated as a result of the several explosions from inside the building, but it was mostly done out of an abundance of caution and was suspended pretty quickly.”

The Arapahoe County Sheriff’s Office said 25-30 residences were part of the Code Red emergency alert conducted during the early portion of the firefight. Only Pleasant Avenue was blocked off during the response.

Byers received support from Strasburg, Bennett-Watkins, Buckley Space Force Base, Sable Altura, Deer Trail, North Central Fire, and Agate fire departments. Of the approximately 25 pieces of apparatus, about a third



STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout



COURTESY ARAPAHOE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Left photo, diligent efforts of firefighters prevented a commercial building fire in southeast Byers from spreading to any neighboring structures Nov. 29. Right, contents of the building were destroyed by the fire, which included multiple indoor explosions from acetylene tanks and other equipment.

were 2,000- to 3,000-gallon tankers to ensure adequate water availability.

“Water supply in a [scarce] hydrant area is typically a concern, but thanks to the great response from the I-70 Corridor agencies, it was not a major problem in this instance,” Conroy said. “North Central and Agate were specifically requested for an additional water tender each.”

Of the approximately 40 responders on scene, one firefighter suffered a minor burn to his arm, but no serious injuries were reported and the property owners were reportedly not on site when the fire occurred.

Conroy, during comments immediately following the fire being extinguished, said the investigation will continue but preliminary indications are no foul play was involved.

“[Cause] is undetermined; however, it is most likely an accidental fire,” he said.

While the fire was considered no longer a threat to the area about an hour from the first firefighters arrival, the scene remained active for approximately 4½ hours. The final personnel and pieces of apparatus left the site a little after 3 p.m.



STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout

The roof and walls of a metal commercial building in southeast Byers are severely warped from a fire that sparked mid-morning the day after Thanksgiving.



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# SPORTS



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Strasburg and Byers cheerleading squads will represent the I-70 Corridor during the first day of the Colorado State Spirit Championships Dec. 12-14 at the Denver Coliseum. Left photo, Strasburg celebrates its second-place Game Day finish at the Patriot League Championships Nov. 22 — back row from left, head coach Stephanie Peabody, Jennifer Escobar, Alyssa Schaffer, Jordan Duhon, Liberty Rose, Jaddah Duhon, Princess Enriquez Enriquez, and assistant coach Alaina Franklin and, front row, Aislynn Safe, Maddie Roberts, Elena Reyes, Jordan Garcia, Lily Aldana Hernandez, Yamie Coronel Munoz. Peabody was also named the Patriot League Coach of the Year by her peers. Right photo, Byers is pictured following its second-place finish in the Game Day category at Denver Christian Nov. 15 — head coach Megan Jackson. left, Precious Calma, Isabella Rains, Daisy Clark, Callie Sharp, P.J. Dillingham, Adriane Dillingham, Princess Calma, Lilah McQuate, Shelby Fricke, and assistant coaches Lindsey Hoke and Chandra Sanders; not pictured is Pamela Valle Luna.

## 'Burg, Byers to compete at State Spirit

When the three-day Colorado State Spirit Championships kick off at the Denver Coliseum Thursday, Dec. 12, two I-70 squads Corridor will put their best feet forward.

Strasburg and Byers will both compete in the 2A/3A Game Day with their preliminary round routines, scheduled at 10:06 and 10:18 a.m., respectively. If either squad advances to the Game Day finals, they will be contested later that day, starting at 4:45 p.m.

According to the Colorado High School Ac-

tivities Association, 35 schools are entered into the 2A/3A Game Day division with the top nine from the preliminary round advancing to the finals.

Last year, Byers was one of seven finalists in the 2A/3A Game Day competition but Strasburg failed to reach the finals in the 3A Traditional Cheer division.

Both schools have had preparatory competitions within the month leading up to the state meet.

Strasburg hosted the annual Patriot League Spirit Championships Nov. 22 and finished runner-up in the Game Day category behind Lyons.

Byers has led up to the state meet with two second-place Game Day finishes — at Denver Christian Nov. 15 and at Lamar Nov. 22.

All three days of the state cheerleading championships, Dec. 12-14, will be available online at [nfhsnetwork.com](https://nfhsnetwork.com). A subscription is required.



ISAAC MANAUGH/The I-70 Scout



SCOTT GERRARD/For The Scout

Strasburg cheerleaders perform on their way to a second-place finish in the Game Day category during the Patriot League Spirit Championships Nov. 22 in Mundell Gym.

## I-70 Corridor winter sports season starts this week

by **Steven Vetter**  
Managing Editor

The 2024-25 winter sports season starts in earnest for all I-70 Corridor high schools this week with notable changes in classifications occurring.

For full team previews, see the next two editions of the *Eastern Colorado News*, but the first week to 10 days of local games or

matches follow.

**BENNETT BASKETBALL**

After participating in 3A basketball for more than two decades, the Bennett boys and girls have both been bumped up to 4A this season. According to the Colorado High School Activities Association's basketball bulletin, Bennett is tied for the second smallest school in 4A with Ster-

ling with 431 high school students. The enrollment range for 4A is 424 to 900 students.

The Tigers and Lady Tigers will still be part of the 3A/4A Frontier League. The smallest high school in 4A is Frontier League foe Arrupe Jesuit with 426 students.

While the Bennett girls will continue under the tutelage of head coach Mike

Rios, the Tiger boys have a new mentor in Wesley Burke, who comes to town after leading Denver Christian the past two years.

Unlike previous years, Bennett's own three-day, round-robin Tiger Tip-Off Tournament won't be on the first weekend of the basketball season, but on Dec. 12-14. Instead the Tiger boys and girls will begin their 2024-25 hard-

wood campaign at a three-day tournament in Lamar Dec. 5-7. The girls are slated to play Rye at 5 p.m. today and the boys game with University is to follow. Friday and Saturday games will be determined after today's results.

Between the two tournaments to start the season, both Bennett boys and


**SEE WINTER SPORTS**  
**PAGE 12**



# Good Luck Indians!

# We're all rooting for you at State Spirit!





## Good Luck at State Spirit!!!

### Congratulations to coaches Jackson, Hoke & Sanders and all our Bulldog Cheerleaders!

*From the Byers Bulldog Booster Club*



## Good Luck Bulldogs!

### @ Colorado State Spirit Championships



### Byers Athletic Dept. & Byers School District 32J


# Good Luck Indians at State Spirit!




## Colorado State Spirit Championships

### 2A/3A Game Day, Thursday, Dec. 12

### Denver Coliseum



### From Strasburg School District & Athletic Department



WINTER SPORTS

FROM PAGE 11

girls will play at Byers on. Tuesday, Nov. 10.

When the Tiger Tip-Off occurs, Bennett will play Fort Morgan and Ellicott on Thursday and Friday, respectively. The girls will take on DSST: Montview on Saturday with the boys to face Rocky Ford.

**BYERS BASKETBALL**

The green-and-white girls and boys will lead up to their home-opener against Bennett with a trip down to southeast Colorado for the Cheraw Tournament Dec. 6-7. Both the Bulldog boys and girls will take on Sierra Grande Friday and will play either the host school or Evangelical Christian on Saturday.

Byers remains in 2A with the girls led by head coach Chris Cary and the boys under the tutelage of longtime mentor Jeremy Kerns.

Following the Bennett game, Byers will host Lyons Dec. 12.

**STRASBURG BASKETBALL**

The Indian girls and boys will tip off their season Friday, Dec. 6 at Merino.

Before both Strasburg squads participate in the Simla Tournament Dec. 13-14, the boys will host Prospect Ridge Academy on Dec. 10.

The annual rivalry matchup with Bennett will take place in the Tigers' home gym Dec. 17.

Strasburg remains in CHSAA's 3A classification, which has an

enrollment range of 197 to 423 students. The enrollment number utilized for Strasburg was 393. The red-and-black remains in the Patriot League, which has seen the addition of a handful of schools, including Wiggins and Wray from the 2A ranks and Yuma, which had last year's 3A boys state champions.

The Lady Indians, who made the Elite Eight last year, remain under the leadership of Merci Ames with the boys led again by Kyle Bollers.

**DEER TRAIL BASKETBALL**

When Deer Trail hosts its own Eagle Classic to start the season Dec. 6-7, Phil Donovan will once again be on the bench leading the Lady Eagles, but the boys coach will be a blast from the past for longtime fans and community members as Mark Dille returns to the sideline. Donovan has spent the last five years leading the girls but Dille returns to lead the boys after more than 20 years away from the sideline.

"I have coached basketball at Deer Trail for 16 years but some time in the past," Dille said.

Deer Trail will open up the season with Friday games against Miami-Yoder in the Eagle Classic; the girls game will tip about 6 p.m. with the boys to follow. Saturday's matchups won't be known until Friday's games are complete, but the girls third-place game is scheduled at 11 a.m. The other two schools in the tournament are Pikes Peak Christian and Bethune.

The red-and-black follow-up the Eagle Classic with a trip to Hanover Dec. 10.

**WRESTLING**

While there remains four classifications in boys wrestling, 2024-25 will mark the first time that girls will be split into multiple divisions.

In the case of both the Strasburg and Bennett girls programs, they will compete in the 4A classification, which is high schools with enrollments of 1,051 or fewer. The 5A classification is for schools of 1,052 students or more.

On the boys side, Byers remains in 2A while Bennett and Strasburg both stay in 3A.

Strasburg got the local wrestling season underway first when both the boys and girls hosted Wiggins Dec. 3. Results were unavailable at press time. The Lady Indians continue a busy first week of the season with a trip to the Greeley West Invitational on Friday, Dec. 6, and their own invitational tournament at 8:30 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 7. Strasburg's boys travel to Akron for the Chuck Annand Invitational also on Saturday. Strasburg's overall wrestling program is now led by Matt Croft, who was the girls head coach last year.

For Bennett, the boys follow up a dual at Chapparral High School Dec. 4 with a trip to the Buena Vista Duals on Saturday. The Lady Tigers start their season at an invitational tournament at Arapahoe High School on Saturday.

The Bennett boys are once again coached by John Faczak, with the Lady Tigers led by Brittaney Hudson.

The Byers wrestlers travel to Akron to start their season.





PHOTOS BY ISAAC MANAUGH/The I-70 Scout

Small Business Saturday was in full effect Nov. 30 as vendors from across the I-70 Corridor converged at the Bennett Rec Center to display and sell their wares. Along with the numerous booths of products and services, visitors had the opportunity to bid at a silent auction. From left photo, Julia Justice is all smiles as she repairs Kim Gilland's bracelet, and Melanie Coughenour, left, Ed McCreer and many others get their sweet tooth satisfied at the bakery booth of Marilee Wilson, who is all smiles and appropriately adorned for the holiday season.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Senior Bennett band students Annalisa Millholland, left, Tyrone Haymore, Angelia Castilleja, Justin Wilson and Robbie Harris celebrate the Bennett Marching Tigers' first-place showing against four other Class 1A bands at the Eaton Friendship Cup Sept. 21. Bennett's band also received accolades in High Visual and General Effect. Scoring, both as individuals and as an ensemble, is based on Musicality (60%) and Visual (40%). The band scores points by looking like one unit, communicating the story to the audience, execution of the drill, and movements on the field.

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Glade and I helped to store apples,...



...potatoes and onions in the cellar.

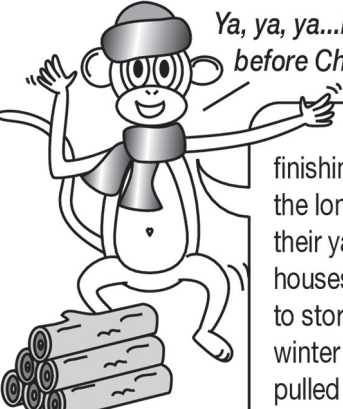
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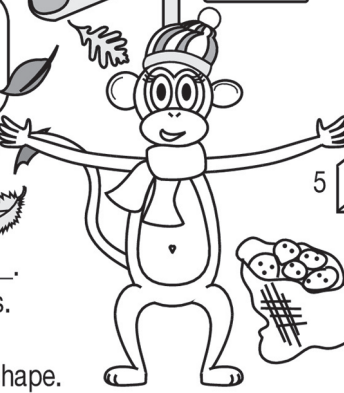
Kids: color stuff in!




Ya, ya, ya...I finished before Chatter!

## Getting Ready for Winter

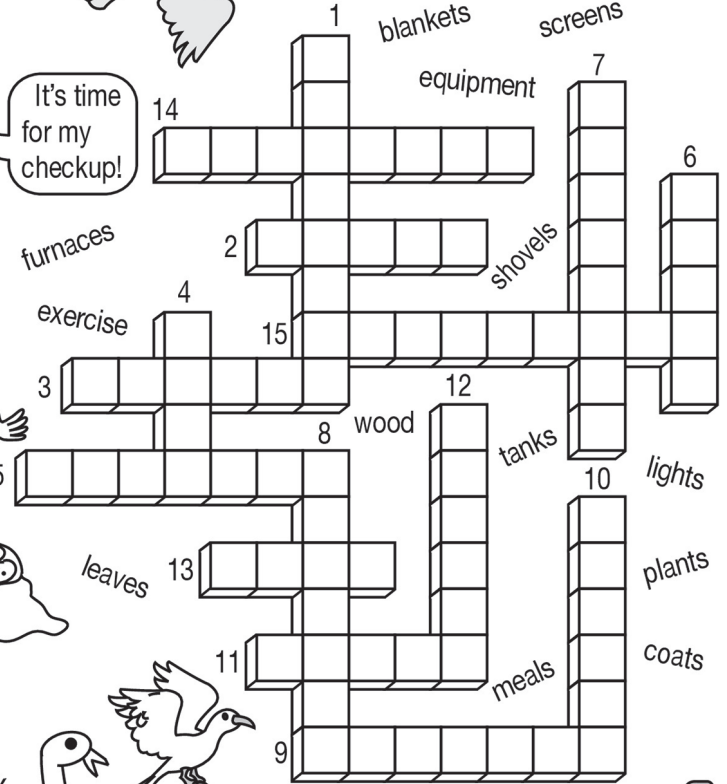
Winter will be here soon. Everyone is outside finishing tasks that need to be done to get ready for the long, dark, cold days. Some people are cleaning their yards. Others are emptying the gutters on their houses that are filled with leaves. Some people like to store potatoes, carrots and onions for hot delicious winter stews and soups. Coats and jackets are being pulled out of closets. Oh, that reminds me...I need to try on last year's boots to see if they still fit me.




Hey, **my** list of chores was this long!




It's time for my checkup!




1 blankets  
2 screens  
3 equipment  
4 shovels  
5 furnaces  
6 exercise  
7 wood  
8 tanks  
9 lights  
10 plants  
11 coats  
12 meals  
13 gardens  
14 sand  
15




Whew! This sure is a long walk.




South




We're headed for warmer climates.




leaves




potatoes




onions




apples




carrots




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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

THE NOT-SO DUSTY PAGES

20 YEARS AGO  
DECEMBER 7, 2004

A 2002 graduate of Bennett High School has written and directed a musical for the Xperimantal Theater through the University of Minnesota. Christina Akers began writing “The Mockery” a year ago during a playwriting class. After much hard work, Akers has seen her play performed on the main stage.

The Xperimantal Theater is an entirely student run project, but is also collaborative in its nature. Akers teamed up with Jonathan Edington, a musical undergraduate student, to help compose the music for Akers’ text.

This play will be the first Xperimantal Theatre project performed on the main stage.

15 YEARS AGO  
DECEMBER 8, 2009

STRASBURG — Just over two years after the I-70 Corridor’s primary health care provider almost shuttered its clinics, Plains Medical Center is showing significant progress towards meeting patient needs, staffing goals and improving facilities, especially in Strasburg.

“We’ve received two of three federal stimulus grants. One (of about \$180,000) was to retain staff positions, mostly administrative-type

folks throughout our system. The second grant (of about \$500,000) was earmarked for construction, all of it on Strasburg,” said Plains Medical Center Executive Director Dr. Zettie Page Dec. 2. “We’ve expanded (the Strasburg clinic) to nine exam rooms, a staff break-room, and overall improved the environment for our patients and staff.”

10 YEARS AGO  
DECEMBER 9, 2014

DEER TRAIL — Deer Trail School District 26J was one of 27 districts statewide accredited with distinction under the state’s accountability system.

Superintendent/principal Robin Purdy attended the Colorado Department of Education 2014 district and school performance results awards ceremony Dec. 2 at CDE in Denver, where Commissioner Robert Hammond Honored schools and districts that earned acclaim in 10 categories.

Deer Trail School earned the state’s highest accreditation rating because of gains in student growth. The District Preliminary Framework released by CDE in mid-August showed overall growth in the district increased by 30 points.

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2				5			3	
7	5							3
8	3						6	2
9							7	1
	9			1				7
		6		7	3		9	
				4	9			

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Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

SOLUTION ON PAGE 20

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is Thursday, Dec. 5, the 340th day of 2024. There are 26 days left in the year.

**TODAY’S HIGHLIGHT**

On Dec. 5, 2013, Nelson Mandela, the anti-apartheid leader who became South Africa’s first Black president, died at age 95.

**ON THIS DATE**

In 1848, in an address to Congress, President James K. Polk sparked the Gold Rush of ‘49 by confirming that gold had been discovered in California.

In 1933, national Prohibition came to an end as Utah

became the 36th state to ratify the 21st Amendment to the Constitution, repealing the 18th Amendment.

In 1952, the Great Smog of London descended on the British capital; the unusually thick fog, which contained toxic pollutants, lasted five days and was blamed for

causing thousands of deaths.

In 1955, the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations merged to form the AFL-CIO under its first president, George Meany.

In 1994, Republicans chose Newt Gingrich to be the first GOP speaker of the House in

four decades.

**TODAY’S BIRTHDAYS**

Author Calvin Trillin is 89. Opera singer Jose Carreras is 78. Musician Jim Messina is 77. Golf Hall of Famer Lanny Wadkins is 75. Rock singer-musician John Rzeznik (REZ’-nihk) (The Goo Goo Dolls) is 59.

— Associated Press

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

THEME: HAPPY HOLIDAYS

ACROSS

1. F, unit of electrical capacity

6. \*Buche de Noël, e.g.

9. What influencers do?

13. Yemeni’s neighbor

14. Another word for Tokyo

15. Singer Ross of “Where Did Our Love Go” fame

16. Laundry room fire hazard, pl.

17. Much of it about nothing?

18. Furnish with a fund

19. \*\*A Bad Moms Christmas” actress Bell

21. \*Tiny Tim creator

23. Tibetan ox

24. Khrushchev’s domain

25. \*Goo on real Christmas tree

28. Sketch

30. \*Poinsettia’s motherland

35. “\_\_\_\_\_ Good Men”, movie

37. Brussels’ org.

39. Plant fungus

40. Reluctant

41. Klutzy

43. \*\*It’s beginning to look \_\_\_\_\_ like...”

44. Domains

46. Bog down

47. Oxen connector

48. Under epidermis

50. Mums’ mums

52. Over, poetically

53. Alleviate

55. \_\_\_\_\_ Mahal

57. \*Tanne in “O Tannenbaum” (2 words)

61. \*It is feliz to Feliciano

65. Radioshow host: “Hello, you’re \_\_\_\_\_”

66. Knot-tying vow (2 words)

68. Dispatch boat

69. Carthage’s ancient neighbor

70. \*Egg\_\_\_\_\_

71. Oil lamp dweller

72. Fishing poles

73. Bigheadedness

74. Painter Degas

DOWN

1. Lore people

2. Mideast ruler

3. Hindu princess

4. Jittery

5. Farthest from point of origin

6. Ground beef description

7. Like Lemmon and Matthau together

8. Merchandise

9. Swim’s alternative

10. Dwyane, once of Miami Heat

11. Any day now, to Shakespeare

12. Swerves

15. King’s order

CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11	12
13						14				15			
16						17				18			
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20. Increasing

22. Philosophy ending

24. Undo, as in strings

25. Green side

26. Before, in the olden days

27. J.M. Barrie’s Pan

29. “Howdy, \_\_\_\_\_”

31. Internal picture

32. Meltable home

33. Singer Sam of “Twistin’ the Night Away” fame

34. Weasel’s aquatic cousin

36. \*\*Last Christmas” band, with !

38. Edible pod

42. Busybody, in Yiddish

45. Mountain range

49. Certain fraternity house letters

51. Cruel

54. Èle de la CitÈ river

56. Tripped the light fantastic

57. \*Number of ghosts in “A Christmas Carol”

58. \*\*He’s Just Not That \_\_\_\_\_ You”, movie

59. Police’s surprise

60. Habitual twitches

61. Not happening (2 words)

62. Minor bumper damage

63. “Heat of the Moment” band

64. Opposite of talker?

67. \*The Grinch’s Max

ANSWERS ON PAGE 20

HOROSCOPE

**Solar Conjunction Alliance**

The sun and Mercury join in Sagittarius, a supportive alliance that breeds more successful bonds between people actively contributing to one another’s efforts. Some chip in with resources or focus on emotional generosity, building others up with encouragement. Others pipe up with the tough truths that motivate change.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** You have a way of getting the best performance out of people. Sometimes it’s your up-lifting words or compliments, but today it’s your keen eye, spotting greatness and calling it into the light.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** With so much experience with a subject, it would be easy to overlook something basic. Step back and look at things as though you’d never seen them before. Starting from the very beginning elevates your work to a new level.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** Sensitive people will feel how happy you are and will catch your mood to some degree. Because of this, you feel a responsibility to be happier and to generate warmth and excitement for the others.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** You have luck for shopping, negotiating and finding just what you’ve been searching for. Today, your instincts are spot on, guiding you to deals and discoveries that fit your need and delight your people.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** Love isn’t always sweet smiles and cozy moments. Experimenting with different sides of yourself could enrich the relationship. Today, stay open to expressing yourself in new ways and being someone you haven’t met yet.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** Talk about who you want to be as if you’re already that person. You’ll cross paths with people who can open doors, inspired by your confidence and vision, ready to help you bring your dreams to life.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** You may not have intended to end up here in the re-

lationship, but this is where it’s landed. Accept it as your new starting point, and with an open mind, you’ll find fresh ways to move forward together.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** You’ve found work you enjoy even more than conventional “fun” activities, and that’s a gift. Today, embrace what brings you that unique satisfaction; it’s a rare pleasure to find joy where others might not even look.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** Even if you tried, you couldn’t trace exactly how you arrived here, nor would you be able to duplicate your successes were you given the chance. Trust life’s mysterious, winding road, and go forward knowing you’ll always be in the right place.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** When things work out the way you want, it feels like destiny is sending you to the heart of your dreams. When they don’t, it might feel bad at first, but it’s still destiny, sending you to the heart of your dreams, but on a different route.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** Balance usually comes naturally to you, though every now and then, you trip up. This is actually a gift; it helps you appreciate your innate talent for keeping things steady, even when life feels momentarily out of sync.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** Because you are curious, social and multifaceted, you have relationships with people from different walks of life, with whom you have little in common but for a shared interest or two and the possibility of exchanging joy.

**TODAY’S BIRTHDAY (Dec. 5).** Being happy actually changes your chemical make-up in this year of joy, health and progress. You cherish other people’s time and attention and they will heap it on you in meaningful and abundant ways. More highlights: A surprise award, attendance at events that once seemed of reach, the expansion of a business. You’ll be an excellent employer. Scorpio and Capricorn adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 10, 3, 33, 28 and 11.

— Horoscopes by Holiday



BENNETT BOT

FROM PAGE 1

the transition include improved communication between the town and law enforcement. Stiles added that she, as town representative, now receives comprehensive daily reports.

“They arrive in my inbox every morning promptly at 7 a.m. and detail calls for service,” she said, adding that officer-initiated actions are highlighted in yellow, “so I know what they took on as calls themselves versus what were response calls.”

Stiles said that Bennett Community Service officers’ involvement in calls is noted in the reports.

“It’s helpful to know when (the deputies) have utilized our CSO program as well,” Stiles said.

In addition to the daily updates, the sheriff’s office provides a thorough monthly report.

“This reporting structure ensures that any questions or concerns are addressed promptly and fosters a strong working relationship between town staff and law enforcement personnel,” Stiles said.

Stiles said that, as planned when the collaboration began, a detailed review of calls for service and operational data by both parties determined that the current staffing levels are sufficient to meet the town’s policing requirements in 2025.

“Data-driven decision-making will continue to guide adjustments moving forward,” she added.

Community engagement has significantly increased under the new partnership, according to Stiles.

“Deputies and sheriff’s office staff actively participate in community events such as Bennett Days, Cops and Bobbers (a fishing event,) and Community Night Out, strengthening their connection with residents,” she said. “They also visit our businesses; I see business checks on daily reports. They have also brought town staff along for those conversations.”

Deputies were provided office space after the opening of the safety building in Bennett, allowing the sheriff’s office staff to operate directly out of the town, improving response times.

As the old song goes, “breaking up is hard to do” and, as Stiles said, the transition was challenging.

The official decision to change the provider of police services in Bennett was finalized by the town board Jan. 9 of this year. Adams County Sheriff Gene Claps’ 2024 contract proposal was \$489,922.64 — up nearly \$100,000 from 2023’s \$390,000 contract. Bennett staff had budgeted a 6% increase for 2024 based on the reported 6% increase in calls for service during the third quarter of 2023. A 26% increase was deemed untenable by trustees and Claps was unwilling to negotiate any lower, according to a town release at the time. What followed was month-to-month tug of war with Claps until Arapahoe County Sheriff Tyler Brown rode into town May 1.

Claps’ office sent a \$40,826.89 bill for ser-



STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout

Amongst the multiple upcoming projects for the town of Bennett is the expansion of its wastewater system, which was converted from a lagoon system to a mechanical plant several years ago. Bond funding for the project was recently finalized.

vice to the town in January even though no contract had been signed. The Board of Trustees, after deliberation, paid the bill, but balked when the same amount was billed for February. Then-Mayor Royce Pindell, in a letter to Claps Feb. 20, demanded a refund of the January bill and noted that, in absence of a contract, Adams County is statutorily obligated to provide services to in-county areas of town to keep the peace, protect the public by stopping criminal acts, and arresting offenders for crimes.

“You have already been paid for them through Bennett residents paying Adams County taxes to fund your department,” he wrote.

Community Service Officers Keith Buono and Sonya Zimmerman took on extra vigilance during the interim.

The intergovernmental agreement with Arapahoe County that took effect May 1 included start-up costs and called for an annual base rate of \$502,129, which included the two full-time deputies’ and part time investigator’s salaries and benefits, plus equipment and other direct and indirect costs.

OTHER BUSINESS

Another agenda item brought welcome news to the town of Bennett — the board authorized a contract agreement to begin construction of Civic Center Park. The park, located on Muegge Way just west of Town Hall, will be approximately six acres in size and will feature baseball fields, a playground, a splash pad, a restroom and concessions building, and additional site furnishings and landscaping. Construction is funded through an Adams County Open Space Grant.

In her staff report, Public Works Director Robin Price said getting to the construction phase of the park has been a long time coming.

“We got our first grant in 2022 and started working on the design and site approval,” she said. “Staff has been really diligent, working through all of the approval processes for the site plan, for traffic, and for drainage. When we realized we needed more money, we went back to Adams County and received a second

grant this year.”

Bids for Civic Center Park Phase 1 were solicited in October and six qualified contractors submitted proposals. After review, staff recommended authorizing a contract with ECI Site Construction Management, Inc., for \$5,309,616. Price said the company, which has completed more than \$400 million in park and recreation improvement projects over the last 20 years, will get started right away.

“They’re ready to go,” she noted. “Within the next week they want to get big items ordered because of long lead times — things for the restroom, the playground, and the splash pad. They want to get their permit set up to do some initial grading in December if weather allows.”

Mayor Whitney Oakley expressed her excitement about the progress on Civic Center Park.

“It was really neat to get to look through the plans and start to picture kids playing there,” she said. “This is really fun and exciting.”

In other action, the board:

- adopted a resolution supporting the town’s application for the Energy & Mineral Impact Assistance Fund Grant through the Department of Local Affairs. The grant will fund improvements on the western side of Market Place Drive;
- acting through its wastewater activity enterprise, approved a resolution confirming bond issuance provisions and other details for the wastewater revenue bonds. These bonds will fund the expansion of the Town’s Wastewater Reclamation & Resource Recovery Facility and related wastewater improvements; and
- approved the OA Dental Properties Bennett Minor Subdivision Plat. The property, located south of Colfax Avenue and west of Cherry Street, includes a multi-tenant commercial/office building and parking lot. Dividing the lots will allow for the expansion of the parking lot.

The next regular meeting of the Town of Bennett Board of Trustees is at 7 p.m., Tuesday, Dec.10, at Bennett Town Hall and virtually via Zoom.



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8	3	1	7	9	4	5	6	2
9	6	4	2	3	5	8	7	1
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Thursday, Dec. 12: Barbecue pulled pork.  
Friday, Dec. 13: Burritos.

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# CHUCK WAGON



## Sweet & Sour Skillet Meatballs

by **Bobbie Keefer**  
For The Scout

You can never go wrong with serving meatballs at a party for an appetizer. I make these in a skillet and transfer them to a Crock-Pot to keep them warm.

My sister, Linda, uses frozen meatballs. I prefer the taste of homemade.

This recipe uses up unwanted bread crusts. White, wheat, dark, it doesn't matter — the bread is hidden inside.

For a party, I serve the meatballs with long toothpicks. For a main dish, I serve them with rice. This recipe is so delicious and colorful, it brings me joy!

### SWEET & SOUR SKILLET MEATBALLS

#### MEATBALL INGREDIENTS

- 2 slices bread, cubed
- ½ cup milk
- 1 pound lean ground beef
- ½ cup diced onion
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 tablespoon oil

#### SAUCE INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup ketchup
- 2 teaspoons mustard
- 2 tablespoons diced onion
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire Sauce
- ½ cup beef broth
- ¼ cup brown sugar

#### DIRECTIONS

In large bowl, soak bread in milk. Add hamburger, onion, garlic, egg. Mix until combined. Do not overmix.

Roll mixture into meatballs. Size is optional. Heat oil in large skillet over medium-high heat.

Add meatballs and brown on all sides.

Meanwhile, combine ketchup, mustard, onion, Worcestershire Sauce, beef broth, brown sugar in bowl. Mix well.

Add sauce to pan and toss to coat meatballs when browned. Cover and simmer 20 minutes. Remove lid and continue cooking another 10 minutes to thicken.

Transfer to slow cooker to keep warm, if desired.



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# 20th Annual Christmas Night In Strasburg

## Saturday December 7

Santa & His Reindeer  
4-7 p.m.  
Lyons Park

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