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

Thursday, July 25, 2024

Bird blamed for Quail Hollow Fire

by **Steven Vetter**
Managing Editor

BYERS — What caused the Quail Hollow Fire that charred approximately 1,150 acres and burned down eight structures southeast of Byers July 13 appears to be the same catalyst of at least two significant power outages between Bennett and Byers about a month earlier. “The preliminary cause of the fire has been determined to be a small bird that came into contact with energized electrical equipment,” said a July 18 joint

statement from the Strasburg and Byers Fire protection districts. “While the electrical equipment itself did not fail, the energy was sufficient to ignite the dry feathers of the bird, resulting in the flaming carcass falling into the vegetation below.” At the July 18 Strasburg fire board meeting, Fire Chief Pat Conroy added, “There is no initial thought of any criminal activity,” and reiterated that an actual power line was not involved. “It was the re-

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PHOTO COURTESY 5280FIRE

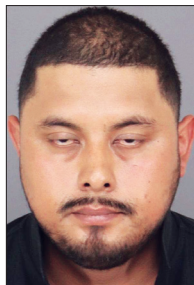
Flames follow the route of CORE Electric Cooperative power lines and power poles during the Quail Hollow Fire southeast of Byers July 13. The power network was breached by a bird, which fell to the ground igniting the blaze.

Watkins: Auroran gaffed for cockfighting

by **Steven Vetter**
Managing Editor

WATKINS — Multiple felony charges were expected to be filed this week against an Aurora man accused of fighting roosters near Watkins. Midmorning July 18 at 4300 Hudson Road, Jesus Orozco, 34, was taken into custody by Adams County Sheriff's office deputies

and 39 chickens were seized, including 32 roosters, most with body modifications and a handful with injuries associated with illegal cockfighting. According to Adams County Sheriff's Detective James Graham, who serves



Orozco

the Eastern Plains Division, the investigation into the alleged illegal activity commenced July 9 with himself, Adams County Animal Management Supervisor Natalie Clarke, and county code enforcement personnel following concerns from neighbors about animal health and safety. Upon arriving at the address,

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Water district scrubs 'Burg boiling order

by **Steven Vetter**
Managing Editor

STRASBURG — Whether recent firefighting efforts are to blame for last week's temporary notice to Strasburg water customers to boil their water is being disputed by the community's first-responder agency.

As firefighting efforts at the Quail Hollow Fire southeast of Byers were wrapping up July 13, the Strasburg Water & Sanitation District started distributing a Drinking Water Warning.

“The fire department needed to draw water to help [fight a fire near Byers],” said the water district statement, which was released that Saturday evening. “This caused our water tower and water main to run low on water. Our system is back to normal, but you will need to boil water until we notify you that the water is proven to be safe without boiling.

“While no contamination has been detected, the loss of pressure in the distribution system may have allowed disease-causing organisms to enter the water system.”

The warning was officially lifted by the water district midafternoon July 16, a day ahead of the anticipated resolution date of July 17.

Water district officials went door-to-door and made phone calls to customers giving the all-clear.

But Strasburg Fire officials deny that limited water draws to fill fire

SEE BOILING PAGE 8

155th Deer Trail Rodeo



STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout

Australian cowboy Cody Angland won the Deer Trail Rodeo's bareback bronc riding title with a 73-point ride on Friday night. The 155th version of the World's First Rodeo was held July 12-13. Angland's family is among a handful of Australian families that came to the United States with kids competing in this month's National Junior High and High School Finals Rodeos in Rock Springs, Wyo. **SEE PAGES 12-13.**