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The I-70 Scout

# The I-70 Scout

Volume 31, Number 20

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

Wednesday, April 16, 2025

## 'Burg middle school personnel suspended

by **Steven Vetter**  
Managing Editor

STRASBURG — Hemphill Middle School is without their top administrators and two coaches after the Strasburg School District put them

on paid leave last week pending an investigation into an alleged incident between students.

“Upon becoming aware of a situation that warrants further investigation, we have placed the staff members involved on administrative leave

in accordance with district policy,” said first-year Strasburg Superintendent Kelle Bongard in an April 11 letter to school district families. “This necessary step allows us to conduct a thorough and fair investigation while maintaining a safe and supportive en-

vironment for all.”

Earlier that afternoon, Bongard, her support staff, and Adams County Sheriff's deputies escorted four of the five staff members off campus while

**SEE HEMPHILL MS**

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## Gun background checks signed into law by Polis

by **Jesse Bedayn**  
Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — People in Colorado will soon have to pass a background check and complete a state-sanctioned safety course to buy most semi-automatic guns with detachable magazines under a bill signed into law by Democratic Gov. Jared Polis April 10.



Polis

Colorado, which has seen some of the country's worst mass shootings — including the 2022 killings at the LGBTQ+ nightclub Club Q in Colorado Springs and the 1999 Columbine High School massacre — joins nearly a dozen other states in requiring some level of safety training or an exam to purchase a firearm.

One of the most restrictive gun control measures to be passed in the state as part of a long-running Democratic campaign to curtail gun violence, the law takes full effect in August 2026.

“We can't afford not to do all we can to change the continuing impact of gun violence,” said bill sponsor and state Sen. Tom Sullivan, whose son, Alex, was killed in a 2013 shooting at a theater

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ISAAC MANAUGH/The I-70 Scout



STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout

Children participate in Easter egg hunts in Strasburg April 12. Left photo, Owen Bloom looks through his eggs for prizes at Lyons Park. Right, Adalee Johnson reaches for an egg in a tree at Mountain View Fellowship.

## Sky's the limit. Spaceport chief touts CASP's potential



STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout

Jeff Kloska, director of Colorado Air & Space Port at Watkins, addresses the I-70 Corridor Chamber of Commerce March 19.

by **Steven Vetter**  
Managing Editor

WATKINS — In addition to boasting the tallest air traffic control tower in the U.S. for the past two decades, the I-70 Corridor's contributor to the aviation and aeronautics industries is planning for bigger and better things in the future.

After starting as a small plane and cargo airport in 1984 northeast of Watkins, Front Range Airport (FTG) formally converted to Colorado Air & Space Port (CASP) in 2018. CASP was the 11th commercial aerospace site approved by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

After spending its first 35 years as a general aviation facility with hangar facilities, fueling stations, and other customer services that grew to 500 site-based aircraft and 126,000 operations last year,

the past seven years has seen CASP expand to an FAA-licensed Horizontal Launch Spaceport, particularly the development of Concept X dual-propulsion vehicles.

“Colorado is the second per-capita state for aerospace — 180 companies, 2,000 workers in the state — and we are a part of that,” said CASP Director Jeff Kloska during the I-70 Corridor Chamber of Commerce's monthly meeting March 19 at May Farms. “We are able to handle 24-hour operations and we are among the backups for other (similar) bases.”

According to the Colorado Aviation Economic Impact Study for 2023, CASP generated \$213 million in total business revenues, supported over 1,000 jobs and contributed \$130.4 million toward the state's economy. According to Kloska, \$187.1 million of CASP's revenues

two years ago stemmed from on-airport activities, including aerospace manufacturing, flight training, aircraft maintenance, and corporate travel. Visitor spending added another \$25.9 million.

Kloska said efforts to expand CASP's impact to local, state, U.S. and international aerospace economies is ongoing, including facility and utility studies planned over the next year to 18 months.

As aerospace travel becomes more advanced, CASP is expected to keep pace but, to do so, modifications will likely be required.

“No other vehicles allowed unless we get an amended (FAA) license,” said Kloska, referring to the fact that Concept X dual propulsion is the only space travel vehicle currently allowed on site. “But we know it's important to add

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