



The I-70 Scout

Volume 31, Number 32 Searching for news in Watkins, Bennett, Strasburg, Byers, Deer Trail and Agate Wednesday, July 9, 2025

3 die, 1 injured in crash near Cedar Point

by **Steven Vetter**
Managing Editor

CEDAR POINT — Three members of a Montana family, including two children, were killed and another member seriously injured when their SUV collided with a semi and trailer mid-afternoon July 2.

At approximately 2:30 p.m., the Colorado State Patrol and emergency responders were dispatched near mile marker 348 in the area of the Cedar Point exit on eastbound I-70 on re-

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Rescue workers clear the wreckage from an accident near Cedar Point July 2. The crash claimed the lives of three of four Montanans riding in an SUV that struck the rear of a semi tractor-trailer.



PHOTO COURTESY CBS NEWS



STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout

Wes Butterfield of Byers competes in the steer wrestling at the rodeo hosted by the Byers Park & Recreation District as part of Byers' Independence Day festivities on July 2. **SEE PAGES 12-13.**

Water valve issues continue to flood Bennett town gov't

by **Shylo Bockenfeld**
Steven Vetter
The I-70 Scout

BENNETT — The breadth of the negative residential impacts from the town of Bennett's ongoing effort to convert its water system to a single pressure zone continue to grow.

During the June 24 board of trustees meeting, Capital Projects & Utilities Director Daniel Pershing said that the town's ongoing Pressure Reducing Valve (PRV) Program would affect 882 homes.

Town officials have repeatedly suggested the plumbing upgrades are standard on new homes and that PRV upgrades would only be required on older homes; however, Pershing's estimate indicates that most homes built on the Adams County side of Bennett before the past few years could be impacted.

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Area roots run deep for DT Rodeo parade Grand Marshals

by **Kathy Smiley**
Staff Writer

DEER TRAIL — if you're seeking the quintessential candidates for the Grand Marshals of the Deer Trail Rodeo, look no further than Raymond and Donna Morris.

Raymond's great-grandfather came to Eastern Colorado in the 1860s — early enough to conceivably have been present at the first Deer Trail Rodeo in 1869. Raymond grew up near Deer Trail where his family ranched and farmed for generations. His memories of Deer Trail rodeos stretch back to the late 1940s.

Raymond and Donna are rodeo enthusiasts and travel to several rodeos each year. In short, they tick all the boxes for the title of Grand Marshals and the honors the title bestows.

Raymond's great-grandfather, Alex Benham, arrived in Colorado from New York in 1860. He lived

in Julesburg and was the proprietor of a stagecoach and pony express station on the Smoky Hill Trail.

"During much of the 1860s and '70s he worked various routes in Colorado, Wyoming, Kansas, Nebraska and South Dakota," Raymond told The I-70 Scout July 4. "In 1880 Alex and his son — my grandfather Jay Benham — began cattle and sheep ranching north of Deer Trail. Family members have ranched and farmed in the same area since."

Jay Benham established a desert claim on land located 18 miles northeast of Byers in 1886. (The Desert Land Act of 1887 amended the Homestead Act and encouraged development of arid and semi-arid public lands in certain Western states.)

"The family ranch has always been in the Leader area, but Leader wasn't there until 1909," Raymond noted.

Jay Benham and his wife Louise had four chil-

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SUBMITTED PHOTO

Donna and Raymond Morris are the Grand Marshals of the 2025 Deer Trail Rodeo.