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The I-70 Scout

Volume 32, Number 8

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

Wednesday, January 21, 2026

'Burg shooting suspect charged as adult

First-degree murder amongst eight felony counts filed against 17-year-old defendant

by **Steven Vetter**
Managing Editor

BRIGHTON — Despite being only 17 years old, the suspect in a fatal shooting north of Strasburg early Jan. 11 will be charged as an adult.

The 17th Judicial District Attorney's Office announced Jan. 16 that Carlos Padilla-Garcia, 17, is facing eight felony counts, including first-degree murder, for allegedly wounding four, one fatally, during what appears to have been a large-scale "warehouse party"

at 9720 Defoe St. about 12 miles north of Strasburg.

In addition to the murder count, Padilla-Garcia also faces three counts of first-degree attempted murder, three counts of first degree assault, fifth-degree felony menacing, misdemeanor

possession of a handgun by a minor, and four counts of the crime of violence sentence enhancer.

A district attorney's office spokesman on Friday said Padilla-Garcia

SEE SHOOTING SUSPECT
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Winds wreak havoc on main thoroughfares, power lines

by **Steven Vetter**
Managing Editor

Strong winds permeated much of the Front Range and Eastern Plains of Colorado Jan. 15-16, but the most significant impacts to the I-70 Corridor occurred on Friday when electric power and highway travel were both snarled or interrupted.

Consistent 35-50 mph winds with gusts of up to 80 mph wreaked havoc on highway traffic as eastbound I-70 between Airpark Road and Flagler was shut down for several hours midday Friday, especially for semis and other high profile and lightweight vehicles on westbound lanes between Kansas and Limon.

While members of the driving public stated their discontent with the highway situation, officials with the Colorado Department of Transportation cited unsafe driving conditions.

"All traffic is being removed at E-470," a CDOT emergency road closure announcement said.

"High-profile, empty and lightweight vehicles are being turned back to Denver. Small vehicles are allowed to continue on east."

According to the Colorado State Patrol, multiple semis were tipped or rolled at the interchange on the west side of Limon and farther east towards the Kansas line, forcing the closure of the interstate. But the westernmost blockade at Airpark Road was also problematic. Accident reports indicated "property damage only with no injuries to occupants."

Friday's roadway snafus impacted multiple I-70 Corridor schools as Strasburg and Byers middle school wrestlers, coaches and staff were stranded at Stratton until the all-clear was received in order to head home and the Byers High School home basketball games against Genoa-Hugo/Karval were postponed. Basketball makeup dates were unknown at press time.

SEE WIND IMPACTS
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ISAAC MANAUGH/The I-70 Scout



PHOTO COURTESY COLORADO STATE PATROL

Left photo, a tree waves furiously and a flag pole bends significantly under the stress of 50 mph-plus winds a couple miles south of Byers Jan. 16. Right photo, multiple tipped semis, including this one at the I-70 interchange on the west side of Limon helped lead state transportation to issue traffic restrictions and road closures between Airpark Road and the Kansas line for much of Friday afternoon.

Deer Trail School adds two elementary classes midyear

by **Steven Vetter**
Managing Editor

DEER TRAIL — When classes resumed following the holiday break, about half of students from two Deer Trail Elementary grade levels found themselves in a different classroom with a new teacher.

The district is also seeking a new school board member.

Deer Trail Superintendent Mike Jobman told board

of education directors Jan. 12 that the first and second grades were both split into two classes to start the spring semester.

"We had three or four qualified candidates for the two extra teaching positions, so that didn't turn out to be an issue," said Jobman, noting that one of the new positions was filled by a previous teacher at the district. "Had to get a little bit creative on some classroom space, but both new classes

have a room."

The additional elementary classes didn't result in additional students being moved to the detached modular spaces on the south side of campus. Jobman thanked Title 1/Reading Interventionist Rhonda Fischer for her willingness to move into a cordoned off hallway area.

The current classroom setup is similar to last school year when multiple elementary classes had to be split up.

Both first and second grades have approximately 30 students at the start of the new semester.

According to October student count information released by the Colorado Department of Education, Deer Trail Elementary reported 178 total students, up four from 2024-25.

BOARD VACANCY

During December's board meeting, director Steven

Musser cited family obligations as he tendered his resignation, which became effective at the end of the year.

During last week's board meeting, a resolution about the appointment process was approved.

Interested residents of the district are urged to submit a letter of interest to the district office by Jan. 28 with interviews of candidates planned

SEE DEER TRAIL BOE
PAGE 4

COMMUNITY CORRAL

Indians Youth Cheer Clinic scheduled from Jan. 26-31

STRASBURG — The Strasburg High School Cheer Squad will host the Indians Youth Cheer Clinic for boys and girls age 4 through the sixth grade from Monday through Saturday, Jan. 26-31.

The clinic will run every weekday from 3:45-5:45 p.m. except Wednesday, Jan. 28. On Saturday, Jan. 31, the participants will perform at the Strasburg basketball games against Skyview.

The early registration fee is \$65 per participant or \$70 at the door. For more information, contact Stephanie at speabody@strasburg31j.com.

Adopt-A-Pole assistance sought for 2026 holidays

STRASBURG — With 2025 concluding, the Strasburg Lighting Crew is seeking donations for the 2026 Adopt-A-Pole program.

Anyone can adopt as many poles as they like at \$20 each with contributions funding decorations for Christmas 2026.

Each year, volunteers donate time, talents and equipment to repair, rebuild, and create new decorations to be placed on the first Saturday of December. The upgrades include replacement of old bulbs with LEDs.

Checks can be mailed to P.O. Box 14, Strasburg, Colo. 80136 or dropped off at The Gift Shop.

Wildlife agency opens roster for special mgmt bison hunts

DENVER — Colorado Parks & Wildlife is now accepting hunter registrations for the bison roster, a list that would be used if special management licenses are needed to manage wild bison that roam into the state.

Under Senate Bill 25-053, free-roaming, wild bison that naturally enter Colorado are managed as a big-game species by CPW. While the agency is not proposing regular bison seasons, it may issue special licenses on a case-by-case basis for time-sensitive needs, such as prevention of property or agricultural damage.

Hunters interested in the chance to



Ambassadors for Cancer Fighters to the Rescue celebrate the successful 2025 toy drive with 5,729 toys collected. They are, from left, Rachael Sorensen, Rachel Ruppel, Cam Manahan and Daniel Alvarado. The toys are donated to the oncology department at Children's Hospital in Aurora. Cancer Fighters to the Rescue hosted the drive for the 16th consecutive year.

receive one of these special licenses may sign up for the bison roster for 2026 through Jan. 31.

For information, call (303)297-1192. To register, visit cpw.state.co.us.

Golden Plains Extension sets seminar on calving, calf care

BURLINGTON — Golden Plains Area Extension will host a calving and calf care clinic from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 7, at the Kit Carson County Fairgrounds in Burlington.

Dr. Kathy Whitman, a Colorado State University Extension veterinarian, will lead the educational program, which will cover dystocia management, neonatal calf health, epidurals, and colostrum and stressed calves. Participants will engage in hands-on activities using calving simulators.

To register, visit goldenplains.extension.colostate.edu. For more in-

formation, call Extension Specialist Scott Stinnett at (719)346-5571.

Specialty Crop Block Grant application deadline nears

BROOMFIELD — Producer organizations, as well as local governments, colleges and universities, nonprofits, and other specialty crop stakeholders can now apply for a Specialty Crop Block Grant through the Colorado Department of Agriculture.

Specialty crops are defined as fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops, including floriculture. A list of plants commonly considered specialty crops, as well as ineligible commodities, can be found at www.ams.usda.gov.

The purpose of the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program is to enhance the competitiveness of Colorado specialty crops in areas such as market-

ing, promotion, education, research, trade and nutrition. The application deadline is Friday, Feb. 13.

Studio environment offered thru I-70 arts organization

STRASBURG — The Corridor Creative Arts League will host an "Open Create" session from 12-3 p.m., every other Sunday starting Feb. 8, at the Strasburg American Legion Hall.

"Open Create" is a studio environment where artists can work with different mediums. Instructors will not lead the sessions. Each artist must create on their own.

A variety of supplies will be on hand. Participants can also bring their own projects.

Participation is free. Donations will be accepted. For more information, visit corridorcreativeartsleague.org.

Public invited to help make Valentines for military folk

STRASBURG — The Strasburg Parks & Recreation District and Hemphill Middle School are partnering to make valentines for military personnel past and present.

The Valentines for Veterans Soldiers' Angels mission ensures that no one who serves the country feels unloved, especially on Valentine's Day.

Card-making supplies are available at the Strasburg Recreation Center, 1932 Burton St. Cards must be returned for distribution by Feb. 5.

To provide the name of a soldier who would like to receive a Valentine, send their mailing address to jessica@strasburgparks.org.

Blood contributions solicited for Vitalant visit to Strasburg

STRASBURG — A Vitalant blood drive is planned from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 27, at Strasburg High School.

Each donation saves up to three lives. Scan the QR code to make an appointment.

Walk-ins are welcome but appointments are encouraged.

For more information, visit vitalant.org or call 1-877-258-4825.

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PHOTO COURTESY STRASBURG FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

It took about a half-hour to remedy a community wide power outage and about two hours to clear the road blockage when a semi driver was unable to navigate the turn from southbound Highway 36 onto eastbound I-70 at Byers midday Jan. 15.

Jackknifed semi closes I-70 ramp, cuts power at Byers

by **Steven Vetter**
Managing Editor

BYERS — A temporary blockade of the eastbound I-70 on-ramp at Byers and power outage throughout much of the community midday last Thursday was not related to strong winds in the area, reports say.

A little after 11:30 a.m. Jan. 15, the Colorado State Patrol and Byers and Strasburg fire departments were dispatched the southeast corner of the I-70 interchange at mile marker 316 and, upon arrival, a Kenworth semi and empty trailer was found across the lane of the eastbound on-ramp.

"The semi was blocking the ramp. The semi was leaking oil," a State Patrol spokeswoman said. "The semi also clipped a guy wire, which shorted power to a whole town. The semi driver was transported to the hospital."

According to CORE Electric Co-op Bennett Branch Manager Robert Kiess, the power company responded

immediately and the outage was short-lived.

"The outage affected 647 meters in the Byers area, but our serviceman responded quickly to the scene and cleared the guy wire so power could be restored," he said. "Power was restored at 12:07 p.m. with a total outage duration of 33 minutes."

The outage included the Byers School campus, but the interruption was brief enough that students were not released early.

"The power will be restored in 10-15 minutes. We will have fifth hour as planned," said a mid-outage Facebook announcement. "NO early release."

While multiple people said they saw the semi moving at a high rate of speed on southbound Highway 36, making it unable to navigate the turn onto eastbound I-70, the driver was not cited. The extent of the driver's injuries was unknown.

The eastbound on-ramp was cleared by 1:30 p.m.



The Arapahoe County Mayors and Commissioners Youth Awards recognize teenagers who have overcome obstacles and risen to challenges life has presented. Scholarships are awarded to graduating seniors who have overcome adversity and wish to pursue post-secondary educational opportunities at vocational, two- or four-year schools. Teachers, counselors, and school administrators can nominate exceptional high school seniors through **March 2**.

Visit arapahoeco.gov/youthawards



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Shovel snow for a neighbor in need

Help an older adult this winter by volunteering to shovel their walkways and driveway. When you sign up, you will be paired with someone within walking distance or a short drive from your home. Visit arapahoeco.gov/volunteer.



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SUBMITTED PHOTO

The Deer Trail FFA hosted its annual Creed Speaking Contest Jan. 7. Winners were Autumn Merz, first; Kendall Bryant, second; and Janeyrie Ontiveros-Vazquez, third.

DEER TRAIL BOE

FROM PAGE 1

during the next school board meeting on Monday, Feb. 2. For more information, see the resolution on page 22.

OTHER BUSINESS

Middle and High School Principal Riley Williams said that the first student assembly after break included addressing attendance, tardiness and the number of Fs over last semester.

“A lot of sickness in December and still a 92.58% attendance rate, but that was still just below the state average,” he said. “Having a lot of heart-to-heart discussions with students.”

Williams said he and counselor Josh Rogan are currently working on class schedules for the 2026-27 school year with both seven- and eight-hour day options and whether to include “home room” or not.

Williams added that more split classes and elective opportunities are under review for the high school next year.

High school career expos are planned at Strasburg and Limon later this semester. Elementary Principal Seandra Humbert reported that the rampant illness at the end of last semester resulted in about a 90% attendance rate.

Facilities Director Hunter Kitman’s resignation was accepted by the board and, according to Jobman, the position was posted in-house and was expected to be filled within five days of the position being open.

Transportation Director Robert Allen said recent bus battery issues related to constantly running surveillance cameras have been remedied and that the number of vehicles nearing 15 years of operation is rising.

Once reaching 15 years of age, many school vehicles can’t be insured for hauling students.

The elementary spelling bee is scheduled for 2 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 29, in the school auditorium.

TOWN OF BENNETT MUNICIPAL ELECTION

TOWN OF BENNETT TO HOLD MUNICIPAL ELECTION FOR TOWN BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Town of Bennett will conduct an election on Tuesday, April 7, 2026. The 2026 Town Board election ballot will list the positions of three (3) Trustee seats. All available seats are for a four-year term.



Nomination Petitions will be available at the Town Clerk’s office beginning Tuesday, January 6, 2026, at 8:00 a.m. and must be returned to the Town Clerk no later than 5:00 p.m. on January 26, 2026. Petitions may be picked up during this time Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. at Town Hall, 207 Muegge Way. Only petitions obtained directly from the Town Clerk’s office may be circulated. **Blank petition forms may not be copied for the purpose of obtaining additional signatures or to give to other candidates. Petition forms from the Town Clerk’s office may NOT be disassembled.** Each candidate must turn in all of his/her petitions at one time.

Every registered elector 18 years of age or older may be a candidate for office, if he/she has resided within the Town for a period of at least 12 consecutive months immediately preceding the date of the election. Residency within an area annexed to the Town shall count towards the residency requirements in the Town.

Nomination petitions require a minimum of 10 signatures. Each signer must be a registered elector residing within the Town limits. No registered elector shall sign more than one nomination petition for each separate office to be filled.

Persons desiring to vote in the upcoming election and who have not registered to vote must do so on or before Election Day. Persons may register to vote, if living in Adams County at the Adams County Motor Vehicle Office, 355 South 1st Street in Bennett; and if living in Arapahoe County at the county offices at 5334 South Prince Street in Littleton or Arapahoe County Motor Vehicle Office, 538 N. Highway 36, Byers, CO 80103. Persons may also register to vote online at govotecolorado.com

If you have questions, please contact the Town Clerk at 303-644-3249 ext. 1001 or [bennettco.gov](https://www.bennettco.gov)

Christina Hart
Town Clerk

#3167

Published in *The I-70 Scout* on Wednesdays, Jan. 14 and 21, and the *Eastern Colorado News* on Friday, Jan. 16.



THOMAS 'DETOUR' EVANS/Colorado Department of Agriculture

The new mural is hanging at the National Western Stock Show, which runs through Jan. 25. The mural was created under the working theme of "Setting Colorado's Table: 150 Years of Agricultural Legacy."

Anniversary mural celebrates Colorado's agricultural heritage

by Douglas Claussen
Publisher & Editor

DENVER — A new mural that honors America's 250th birthday and the 150th anniversary of Colorado statehood was unveiled by the Colorado Department of Agriculture at the National Western Stock Show Jan. 10.

The 35-foot-long mural depicts a kaleidoscope of landscapes and people tied to Colorado's rich harvest.

The piece was created by Denver-based artist, Thomas "Detour" Evans, who recently had another major art piece featuring nearly 200 bags of luggage revealed at Denver International Airport.

The mural features indigenous elements, nods to agricultural pioneers like Frank Zybach, a Strasburg man who invented the center-pivot irri-

gation system, and John Stulp, and iconic Colorado farm industry images like cattle.

The artwork is a visual narrative that starts with snowmelt from the Rocky Mountains.

"This mural is a powerful way to kick off our celebration of America's 250th birthday and the 150th anniversary of Colorado's statehood while celebrating our state's agricultural legacy," said Colorado Commissioner of Ag-

riculture Kate Greenberg. "Detour's work brilliantly captures the heart of our farming and ranching traditions, from those of the past to the innovative spirit of today."

In a statement, Detour says the mural is part of the state's 150th anniversary celebration.

"Creating this mural was an opportunity not only to reflect on 150 years of agricultural history, but also to inspire curiosity and pride in what

comes next," Detour wrote. "If the work encourages even one young viewer to envision themselves as a future farmer, rancher or steward of the land, then it has fulfilled its purpose."

The National Western Stock Show runs through Jan. 25. The mural can be seen in the Sue Anschutz-Rodgers Livestock Center in the CoBank Arena West Concourse. Grounds admission to the Stock Show is required to see the mural.

CALENDAR

THURSDAY, JAN. 22

Bennett-Watkins Lions Club. 6:30 p.m. via Zoom. Call Diane, (303)644-3717, for meeting ID.

Bennett fifth-grade concert. 6 p.m., high school auditorium.

SATURDAY, JAN. 24

Adams County Honor Band and Choir. 6:30 p.m., Mapleton Performing Arts Center, 7480 Broadway St., Denver.

MONDAY, JAN. 26

West Arapahoe Conservation District Board. 5 p.m. Virtual meeting at westarapahoe-conservationdistrict.wordpress.com.

Agate School Board. 6 p.m.

Bennett Planning & Zoning Commission. 6 p.m., Town hall or virtually. Visit the Planning & Zoning meeting agendas page at bennettco.gov for information.

TUESDAY, JAN. 27

Senior citizen game day. 1-3 p.m., Strasburg American Legion Hall.

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

Bennett Board of Trustees. Work-study 5:45 p.m. Regular meeting 7 p.m. For a Zoom link, visit bennettco.gov.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 28

Bennett Municipal Court. 6 p.m., Town Hall.

4-H Open House. 5-7 p.m., exhibit hall at Adams County Fairgrounds 9755 Henderson Road, Brighton.

THURSDAY, JAN. 29

Adams County Community Call-In with the county commissioners, who will address funding, federal issues, social programs, and community concerns. 6-7:30 p.m. Registration closes at 3 p.m. day of event. To sign up, visit tthm.com.

EVERY MONDAY

AA open meeting. 7 p.m., white historic Victorian schoolhouse at Ace Hardware parking lot, 21761 U.S. Highway 40, Limon. For more information, call Sara at (828)243-7681.



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UP League Champs!



SUBMITTED PHOTO

For the fourth consecutive year, Byers High School took home first-place honors during the Union Pacific Knowledge Bowl Championships Jan. 9 at Genoa-Hugo. The team consisted of Ben Gerhardt, left, Krayton Ebert, Torin Wardall, and Ian Foose.

Church Directory

Strasburg Presbyterian Church
 56635 Iowa Ave., Strasburg, CO
 www.spcusa.us
 303-622-4325
 • Sunday Worship 10 a.m.

Saron Lutheran Church
 1656 Main St. | Strasburg, CO | saronstrasburg.org
 Worship 8:30 a.m. In-Person or on Facebook

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 God's work. Our hands.

Christ Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
 Missouri Synod
 Sunday Worship at 9:30 a.m.

275 Ash Street, Bennett • 303-644-3044
 www.corlcms.org

Mt. Tabor Baptist Church
 278 S. Sherman St., Byers
 303-822-9366 • mttaborbyers.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 — Meetings every Tuesday (5:15-7:15 p.m., Dinner served)

Ezekiel 36:26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.

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

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 303.622.9600

Strasburg Orthodox Mission

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 Tuesday, 7 p.m. & Saturday, 7 p.m.
 Saron Lutheran Church (1656 Main St.)
 Info: strasburgorthodox.org

calvary bennett
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Offices located at 545 Palmer Ave
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info@calvarybennett.org

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 Sacramental Emergencies: 303-351-2551
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 Please keep us informed of your activities for publicity and coverage!
 — Douglas Claussen, Publisher & Editor

Coloradans warned of radon danger; Health dept offers free testing kits

DENVER — Gov. Jared Polis has proclaimed January as National Radon Action Month to encourage Coloradans to reduce their risk of radon-induced lung cancer.

In keeping with the proclamation, the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment is urging residents to test their homes for radon using a free radon test kit while supplies last.

Radon is a naturally occurring, radioactive gas with no color, odor or taste. Radon easily enters homes and other buildings through small openings, like cracks in foundations, openings around pumps and drains, and crawl spaces.

Homeowners and renters who spend a significant amount of time in basement offices or gyms are more susceptible to negative health effects from radon exposure, as are children and pets due to their relative proximity to the ground.

The best way to protect against radon is to perform a simple test. All Colorado homeowners are encouraged to test regardless of their neighbors' radon levels because they vary from home to home. Homeowners who already have radon mitigation systems should retest their homes every two years to make sure the system is working properly. They should keep exterior doors and windows closed throughout the home for the duration of the test.

"Through our free testing program, we're helping ensure every homeowner can identify potential radon issues," said Jill Hunsaker Ryan, executive director of CDPHE. "And with

RADON FACTS AND STATISTICS

- In Colorado, approximately half of homes have radon levels that exceed the EPA action level (4.0 pCi/L), which means half of Colorado's homes should be mitigated to reduce the risk of lung cancer.
- Radon is responsible for about 21,000 deaths nationally each year.
- CDPHE distributed more than 12,500 free radon test kits to Colorado residents in 2025.
- CDPHE mitigated more than 200 homes through the Low-Income Radon Mitigation Program in 2025.

our Low-Income Radon Mitigation Assistance program, we're removing financial barriers so families can take action to protect their health and well-being."

If a home has high levels of radon, the occupant should take action to reduce risk. Radon mitigation systems can reduce levels in any home. For those who cannot afford a mitigation system, Colorado offers a Low-Income Radon Mitigation Assistance program to qualifying homeowners.

Gail, a Denver resident, shared her experience with the Low-Income Radon Mitigation Assistance program.

"The generous income guidelines and simple application made the process easy," she said. "The contractor completed the mitigation in one day, and it didn't cost me anything."

For more information, visit www.coloradoradon.info.

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Rural-urban divide apparent at History Colorado discussion

by **Allen Best**
Big Pivots

Panel discussions often are echo chambers. This session sponsored by Colorado Solar and Storage Association was something more interesting.

We live in echo chambers. We gather in our various pews to hear the particular gospel that we have received, to share our particular world views.

A delightful exception to this was an event sponsored in November by the Colorado Solar & Storage Association. The purpose was clear enough: raise money for COSSA. Seats at the noon gathering at History Colorado did not come cheap.

The session had four state legislators on stage — including Faith Winter, who died two weeks later in an auto accident. Two were women and Democrats from Denver’s northern suburbs. Two were men and Republicans from more rural areas of northeastern Colorado.

It was a classic illustration of Rural vs. Urban.

The juiciest part was when K.C. Becker, the director of COSSA since March and a former state legislator from Boulder, asked questions of Sen.

Byron Pelton, the Republican from Sterling who represents areas from Weld County to the Kansas border. Pelton has consistently maintained that rural Colorado has been getting short-changed in this energy transition.

The session suggested some of the arguing points in the upcoming legislative session and perhaps the next gubernatorial race.

Gov. Jared Polis had opened the gathering with remarks that extolled Colorado’s progress in the transition to clean energy even as President Donald Trump was trying to push the state — and nation — backward.

“Colorado is moving full speed ahead to make it easier, faster and more affordable to build out low-cost clean energy and storage,” he said. “We’re very excited about helping Coloradans save money on energy bills and reducing pollution and creating good jobs of the future.”

Colorado utilities are on track, he said, to achieve 70% emissions-free electricity by 2030, the goal set in 2019.

Polis went on to acknowledge “headwinds” posed by federal policy but also by the cost of needed ma-

terials, owing to tariffs first during the Biden presidency and then those ordered by Trump. He also alluded to Trump administration plans to order continued operation of coal plants (as Secretary of Energy Chris Wright so ordered for Craig Unit 1 in late December). Polis said states are “in the best position to plan for resource adequacy, to plan our electric utility system.”

The governor also talked about EVs.

“We also recognize the storage capacity that EVs bring to the grid,” he said, noting a new \$3,000 additional EV tax rebate for low and moderate-income Coloradans that was recently announced.

And he called out Xcel for its plans to order as much as four gigawatts of new wind and solar before federal tax credits expire in 2026.

Polis nodded toward the coming legislative session when he said that Colorado is focused on “further breaking down barriers, to make it faster and easier and more transparent to build out the low-cost energy infrastructure we need to meet our goals. And that includes transmission.”

SEE RURAL-URBAN DIVIDE PAGE 8



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LEGAL NOTICE
NOTICE OF SUBSTANTIAL COMPLETION
TOWN OF BENNETT, COLORADO

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Town of Bennett, Colorado, has determined that the work on the Kiowa-Bennett TIP Trail Improvements Project (Contract No. 25-005), performed by HCG Construction LLC, 383 S. Inverness Parkway #100, Englewood, CO 80112, has been substantially completed.

The date of substantial completion is December 22, 2025.

Pursuant to §§ 24-91-103 and 38-26-107, C.R.S., all persons having claims for labor, materials, equipment, or other services furnished to HCG Construction LLC or its subcontractors in connection with the above-named project must file such claims with the Town of Bennett at the address below within sixty (60) days from the first publication of this Notice. Claims not filed within this period shall be forever barred.

Claims shall be filed at:
Town of Bennett
Attn: Director of Finance
207 Muegge Way
Bennett, CO 80102

Final settlement will be made not sooner than sixty (60) days following the first publication of this Notice, and then only if no claims have been filed pursuant to law.

Dated this 26th day of December 2025.

TOWN OF BENNETT, COLORADO

By: _____
Title: Director of Finance

#3166
Published in the *Eastern Colorado News* on Fridays, Dec. 26, 2025, and Jan. 2, 9 and 16, 2026, and in *The I-70 Scout* on Wednesdays, Dec. 31, 2025, and Jan. 7, 14 and 21, 2026.

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RURAL-URBAN DIVIDE

FROM PAGE 7

Tariffs and supply chain disruptors and the end of the federal tax credits for clean energy will increase costs, he said. "It's important that we do everything we can to make energy more affordable and by making sure we can reduce costs of permitting transmission and energy projects."

And again Polis note transmission: "We hope to be even more supportive to make it easier to permit and site renewable energy transmission," he said.

The conversations were generally polite, temper evident only in the final moments when Rep. Carlos Barron, the resident of Fort Lupton, said that he has no problems breathing and proudly lives in oil-and-gas country. To that, Winter sharply retorted that her children in Weld County had asthma and other problems.

State Rep. Shannon Bird, who is seeking the Democratic nomination for the 8th Congressional District, a seat now held by Gabe Evans, noted the impact of H.R. One, the bill passed by Republicans in Congress during July. It is also called One Big Beautiful Bill Act, and it basically upends key Biden era initiatives.

Most pertinent to budget discussions in Colorado, that new law changes what the federal government considers taxable income at the state level.

"I just want you to know there isn't going to be a lot of money out there," Bird said. "So for any of you who are championing legislation, this is something just to be aware of."

"Any new tax credit that gets approved will, by definition, cut into taxable revenue or tax revenue that the state would otherwise expect to be getting to fund critical services," said Bird, the former chair of the Joint Budget Committee and hence particularly attentive to budget woes.

That comment was an obvious reference to the proposal to waive sales taxes for new data centers, as is common in many other states.

Legislation to provide incentives for data centers was introduced in each of the last two legislative sessions. The first year, the legislation was dropped, the state senator in question seemingly unaware that data centers by 2024 were seen as a mixed blessing at best.

In the 2025 session, Sen. Nick



State Sen. Faith Winter, two weeks before her death, Rep. Shannon Bird, Rep. Carlos Barron, and Sen. Byron Pelton share the stage at a panel discussion in November hosted by the Colorado Solar & Storage Association at History Colorado in downtown Denver.

Hinchrichsen of Pueblo introduced legislation (SB25-280). Three of the four sponsors were Democrats, but that was not enough even in a body dominated by Democrats. It failed to get out of its first committee hearing.

Becker, as the panel moderator, presented the chicken-and-egg dilemma:

The proponents of the tax exemptions have said if you don't create those tax exemptions, the revenue (principally property tax) will never come back to the state because those data centers aren't coming to the state now, she said.

"How is the legislature going to look at that? And what questions do we need to think about when it comes to data centers?"

Pelton was first. "I had to laugh from the hypocrisy," he said, because Colorado was willing to give tax incentives to bring the Sundance Film Festival to Boulder but declined to give tax incentives to data centers.

Those data centers will require more energy, and he said he believes the solutions lies in requiring the data centers to provide their own generation. And he suggested he is comfortable with nuclear energy, having served in the Navy, which deploys nuclear-powered submarines.

In some ways, the statements hewed

to familiar political contours. Democrats were inclined to dwell upon how to move forward with minimal carbon footprints and without impacts to existing consumers of electricity.

Bird acknowledged justification for lost revenue from sales tax exemptions if it produced more revenue with development.

"That being said, the core concern for me as a legislator would be impacts to affordability. I know that I'm hearing in my district over and over a key concern is energy affordability."

The Republicans talked with less nuance about economic development being paramount.

"AI is going to be the next new frontier, and we don't want to be left behind with that," Pelton said.

"We want that frontier to come to us," Barron added.

The meatiest part of the session was between Becker and Pelton. Pelton would make strong statements, and Becker would challenge him to support what he had said.

Pelton, a master electrician for 20 years whose work has taken him to the Roaring Fork Valley to install solar panels, among presumably other places, is from the Cheyenne Wells area near the Kansas border but has spent his adult life near Sterling. He was a Logan County commissioner prior to his election to the Statehouse.

At the State Capitol, Pelton consistently argues that rural Colorado is consistently being shortchanged. A special beef has been the state money allocated to rural highways.

"I represent the best people in Colorado with the worst roads," he said.

As regards renewable energy, he argued that respect must be shown to local desires. This position reflects a tension about whether state legislation is needed to move along local permitting of the new energy infrastructure, be it transmission lines or solar or wind energy siting.

"What the Front Range doesn't understand all the time is that when you put green energy in my district you are affecting us as well," Pelton said. "You are taking that land and those power lines and those wind towers and the solar panels off the tax rolls, and then you are making the community ... figure out how are we going to pay for our ambulance service? How are we going to pay for our fire (protection)? How are we going to pay for our unfunded mandates?"

Additional tension can be found in

the question of how much state authority should override local discretion in permitting of renewable energy projects. A bill introduced in the 2023 session would have substantially expanded state authority in siting but was moderated to provide state aid.

Becker said that she read into Pelton's comments about tax assessment a desire to see greater incentives. As a former county commissioner and now a state senator, what would make communities he represents more amenable to seeing renewable generation and transmission?

Pelton again suggested the tax breaks for renewables was a problem. And, alluding to the comments by Polis about expedited permitting, he predicted strong pushback if a bill is passed and signed into law by Polis.

"Those counties, they can use anything at their disposal to delay those projects, like roads and the health department. I hate to see that happen, because right now we have a really good partnership with the developers," he said. "We don't need the state coming and telling the counties what they need to do."

Becker pushed back. "I've heard a lot of support for data centers here. You can't have a data center without having good transition. What are your thoughts about that process or how we can accelerate transmission build out?"

Pelton did not answer directly except to point to a sore spot, Xcel Energy's contested fifth segment in its 550-mile Colorado Power Pathway. That segment goes through El Paso and Elbert counties, and both counties reject Xcel's proposed route. Local residents allege they were threatened with eminent domain by Xcel.

"If eminent domain has to be used, which nine times out of 10 it shouldn't be used — but if it has to be used, wait until the permitting process is over before you go there," said Pelton.

Again he pointed to the need for incentives. "Nobody wants to look at it out of their backdoor. You have to make it worth their while."

And so it went, Becker probing Pelton's positions about what constitutes middle ground. The discussion didn't go real deep, but it was more interesting than most in the echo chambers we often assemble.

This story was made available via the Colorado News Collaborative. Learn more at <https://colabnews.co>.

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STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout

Staff at Kelper Library in Byers competed in a New Year Gingerbread Contest with patrons voting for their favorite Jan. 5-9. Senior Library Specialist Becca got the most votes for her entry, above.

LIBRARY NEWS

ANYTHINK BENNETT LIBRARY

495 Seventh St.
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anythinklibraries.org

Craft Night: Adults can make winter-inspired candles. Space limited; registration required. To sign up, visit anythinklibraries.org. 6-7:30 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 22.

Adult book club: "The Signature of All Things" by Elizabeth Gilbert. 11 a.m. to 12 p.m., Friday, Jan. 23.

KELVER LIBRARY

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

Little Makers Club: Children ages 0-5 and their families will participate in winter-themed activities. Free crafts, toddler-friendly snacks, and a goody bag provided. 10-11:30 a.m., Friday,

Jan. 23.

Books and Beyond: Kids are invited for book-related games and crafts to celebrate our favorite book characters. 3:30-4:30 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 27.

DIY Stamp Making: Tweens can with make their own experimental stamp designs using acrylic blocks and adhesive craft foam, then stamp the image onto paper to create a greeting card, postcard or bookmark. All supplies provided. 4-5 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 3.

DAVIES LIBRARY

128 Second Ave., Deer Trail
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Adult book club: "Burn It Down: Power, Complicity, and a Call for Change in Hollywood" by Maureen Ryan. 6-7 p.m., Monday, Jan. 26.

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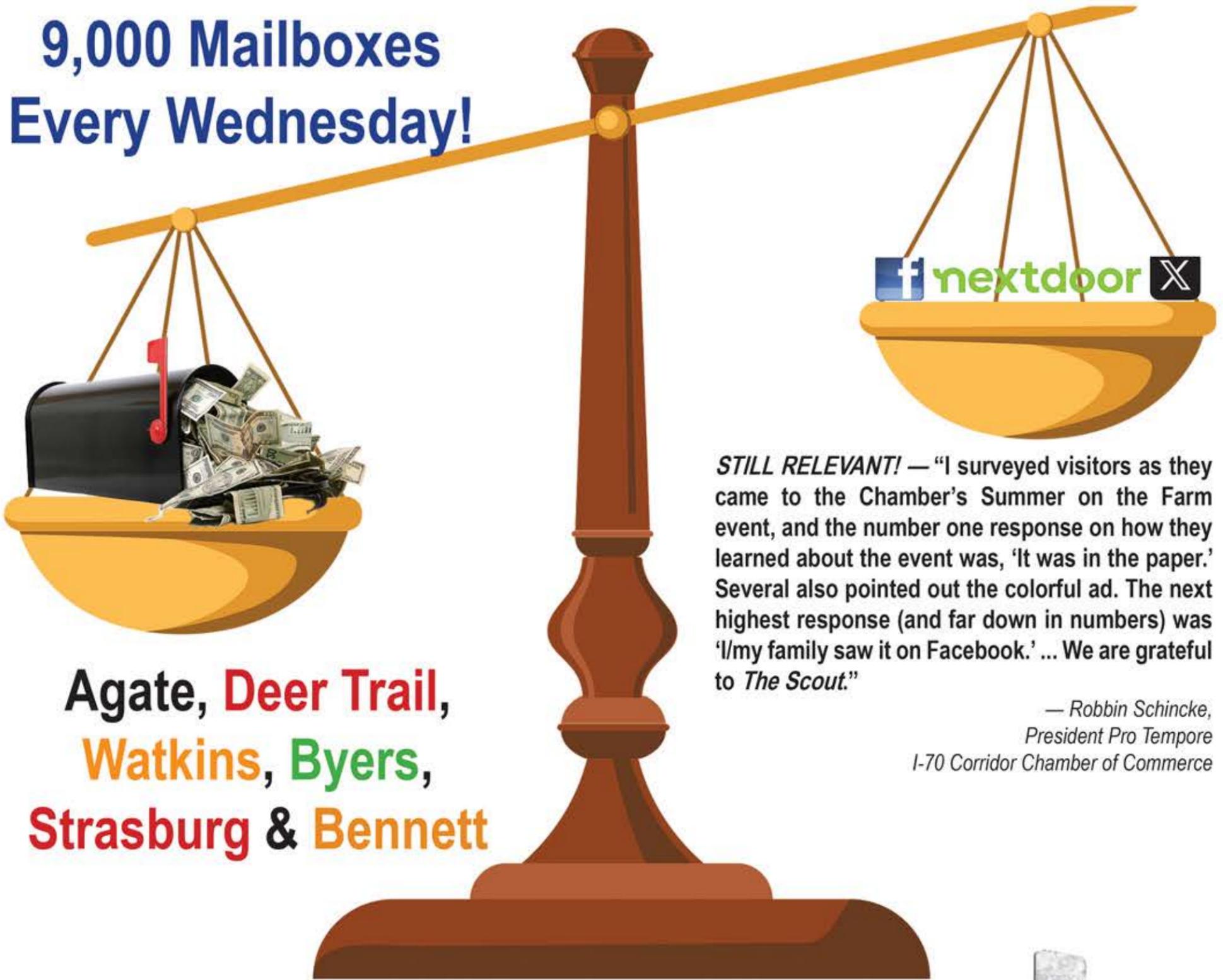
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— Robbin Schincke,
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SPORTS



'Burg, Byers boys post statement victories



STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout

Indian Cade Hemphill hits the floor to fight for possession against Wiggins Jan. 13. Hemphill recorded a game- and career-high 23 points on a school single-game record of seven made three-pointers.

Indians 'd'eclaw Patriot League Tigers

by Steven Vetter
Managing Editor

STRASBURG — "Spurtability." That term, coined by former Ohio State basketball standout and current TV analyst Clark Kellogg, probably best describes the season so far for the undefeated Strasburg Indians. Most recently, the troops of head coach Kyle Bollers overcame a sluggish first quarter and dominated the final three quarters en route to an 87-43 home Patriot League victory over Wiggins Jan. 13. After Wiggins jumped out 10-2 over the first few minutes, the Indians tied the visitors 14-14 after quarter No. 1 and took control in the second, outscoring the Tigers 20-2 to go into the locker rooms up 34-16. "Again, we're one of the top teams and getting the best of everyone as they are coming out with nothing to lose and that has showed in the first quarters of recent games," Bollers said. "Wiggins came out and punched us in the mouth and we missed a lot wide open shots early. Once we started to knock down some open looks,

we were able to take control and distance ourselves." Strasburg maintained its momentum in the second half, outscoring the Tigers 31-17 over the third quarter and 22-10 in the final eight minutes. "Once our shots started falling, we struck fast and in a hurry," Bollers said. Offensively, Strasburg concluded the night 33-of-61 (54%) from the field, including 13-of-30 from the three-point line, and went 8-of-10 at the free-throw line. Senior wing Cade Hemphill paced the Indians with a game-high 23 points, including a school single-game record of seven three-pointers, while fellow senior and forward Nick Glatfelter added 15 and junior guard Brody Hopwood added 14. Ten Indians scratched the scoring column, including junior starter Colton Holloway, who's gone through a scoring slump in previous games. Hemphill's career-high in points occurred two nights before his father, Indian alum and longtime Strasburg

SEE BB STRASBURG
PAGE 12

Bulldogs defeat 3A Thunder; guard scores 1,000 pts

by Douglas Claussen
Publisher & Editor

BYERS — Two Byers Bulldogs broke the 20-point plateau and one, their star senior guard, attained a major career milestone in a hard-fought 66-62 home win against 3A Denver Christian Jan. 13. Quincy Eacret finished with 23 points and passed 1,000 points for his career to lead the Bulldogs. Byers head coach Jeremy Kerns, who has known Eacret since he was in preschool, said that the rest of the team might be more proud of the accomplishment than he was. "It makes you happy about how together our team is, when everybody can be so excited for him and recognize they all played a role in that over the years," Kerns said. Eacret's junior backcourt mate James Maes also rang up 23 points. "Both are really skilled guards," Kerns said. "They have a knack for scoring and they handle the ball

SEE BB BYERS
PAGE 12



PHOTOS BY CARL STEITZ/For The Scout

Above, Byers head basketball coach Jeremy Kerns, left, celebrates alongside senior guard Quincy Eacret, who reached the 1,000-point mark for his high school career during a Jan. 13 home victory over Denver Christian. Below, Bulldog Gabe Price drives the baseline against a Thunder defender.



CHSAA 2026-28 proposals: Bennett, Byers to 1A football

Editor's note: This is the first of a pair of stories leading up to next month's meeting of the Colorado High School Activities Association's Legislative Council when final proposals for the upcoming 2026-28 cycle will be voted on. This week's story focuses on the impact of anticipated fall sports changes to I-70 Corridor schools while the Jan. 28 Scout will focus on winter and spring activities.

by Steven Vetter
Managing Editor

AURORA — Proposals for classification changes and conference realignments over the next two school years for Colorado high schools statewide won't be finalized until voted on by the Colorado High School Activities Association's Legislative Council on Feb. 3; however, in most cases, last-minute changes are expected to be minimal. CHSAA's Classification & League Organization Committee (CLOC) met Dec. 10 and moved forward with submitting final proposals to the Legislative Council for the upcoming 2026-28 activities cycle. Final proposals for fall sports for the 2026 and 2027 seasons and their local impacts follow. At press time, the breakdown for spirit was not available.

FOOTBALL
The most drastic gridiron change for the Corridor is expected to occur in 1A where Byers and Bennett are currently placed in League E with Burlington, Colorado Springs Christian, Ellicott, Limon and 2A Salida. After being in the 8-man ranks since 2018, Byers' enrollment calculation forces the bump back up to 11-man. In the case of Bennett, its enrollment figure is still high enough to stay in 2A but the Tigers were placed down a classification because of recent lack of competitiveness, which is allowed under CHSAA policy. Over the past three seasons, Bennett's record was 2-25 in 2A. According to Byers head football coach Casey Pelton, the addition of Salida will be handled similar to split leagues in other sports. "Same as the Union Pacific League for basketball — it's a split 1A/2A league. It looks like Stratton could win the league, but they will play in the 1A tournament," he said. "Buena Vista was originally put in there but said no and ended up down in the league with Centauri. Salida wanted to be in their place. It's final [and] I think it will be passed." Strasburg will remain in 2A and is expected to be part of League B with D'Evelyn, Denver West, Forge Christian, The Classical Academy and Eliz-

abeth, this past season's 2A state runner-up who was in Strasburg's conference the past couple of seasons. In 6-man, Deer Trail will be part of a revamped East Central League with Bethune, Flagler, Idalia, Kiowa, Otis and a new Washington County co-op program between Arickaree and Woodlin schools. Idalia was last season's state champion and Otis was a quarterfinalist. "Got shifted into quite a bit tougher league than the past couple of seasons," said Deer Trail Superintendent/Athletic Director Mike Jobman, who is also a member of CHSAA's Board of Directors, representing District 10 that has consisted of the Patriot, Union Pacific and YWKC leagues.

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL
After the conclusion of this school year, the Frontier League will be disbanded and Bennett will be relocated to the new Pioneer League, which includes mostly former Frontier schools. For volleyball, the Lady Tigers' conference opponents will be Alameda, Arrupe Jesuit, Arvada, Englewood, Fort Lupton, Jefferson and The Pinnacle as well as unfamiliar schools

SEE CHSAA CHANGES
PAGE 20

BB STRASBURG

FROM PAGE 11

teacher and coach, Kevin, died after about a 10-month battle with battle pancreatic cancer.

“It was an emotional night and Cade just played exceptional for us. When he got hot from the outside, it went through the entire team and we really got on a roll,” Bollers said. “Also a great game for Colton hitting both of his three-pointers after really struggling with his shots.”

On the glass, the Indians fell one shy of the 40-rebound mark, led by senior Cam Manahan and Glatfelter with nine and seven rebounds, respectively.

Defensively, Strasburg forced 20-plus turnovers, including 16 steals, led by Hemphill and junior Jayden Miller with three apiece. The Indians also blocked seven Tiger shots, led by Manahan with four.

“This is the best team I’ve ever coached, especially tremendous on-ball defenders,” Strasburg’s 17-year head coach said. “And when [Glatfelter and Manahan] are controlling the boards and dominating around the basket, we’re pretty unstoppable.”

While the 9-0 Indians remain atop multiple 3A coaches and media polls, the red-and-black continue to be No. 2 in the Colorado High School Activities Association’s postseason seeding index, trailing only 11-0 Forge Christian.

After its Jan. 17 makeup game at Woodland Park, Strasburg hosted Windsor Charter Academy Jan. 21 before traveling to the defending 3A state champions Resurrection Christian Jan. 24. The Indians beat Windsor Charter in the state semifinals last year before falling to Resurrection Christian for the third time in the championship game. Windsor Charter entered this week 7-2 overall



STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout

Strasburg's Nick Glatfelter elevates over a Wiggins defender for 2 points Jan. 13.

and ranked No. 8, while Resurrection Christian is 7-1 and fifth-ranked.

“Our guys are ready to play the last two teams we played last season,” Bollers concluded.

SCORE BY QUARTERS

	1	2	3	4	F
Wiggins	14	2	17	10	43
Strasburg	14	20	31	22	87

Wiggins @ Strasburg

Points (87): Ayden Dodge 3; Jayden Miller 8; Brody Hopwood 14; Nick Glatfelter 15; Cade Hemphill 23; Froy Morales 2; Levi Hart 2; Koby Meulhausen 6; Colton Holloway 8; Gideon Miller 6.

Rebounds (39): Dodge 2; Miller 4; Hopwood 4; Glatfelter 7; Hemphill 3; Morales 1; Meulhausen 1; Cam Manahan 9; Holloway 3; Miller 1; Dalton Velasco 3.

Assists (21): Dodge 2; Miller 4; Hopwood 4; Glatfelter 3; Hemphill 2; Manahan 2; Holloway 1; Miller 1; Velasco 2.

Steals (16): Dodge 1; Miller 3; Hopwood 2; Glatfelter 1; Hemphill 3; Morales 1; Manahan 2; Holloway 1; Velasco 2.

Blocks (7): Dodge 1; Miller 2; Manahan 4.

COMING UP

Jan. 23: @ Resurrection Christian.
Jan. 27: @ Brush.



Indian Brody Hopwood, left, swoops to the bucket and Koby Meulhausen, right, drives hard to the baseline against Wiggins.



STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout

Strasburg's Nick Glatfelter elevates over a Wiggins defender for 2 points Jan. 13.

Ed Frasier



Edwin (Ed) Earl Frasier passed away Jan. 4, 2026, at the age of 89. A longtime resident of Eastern Colorado, Ed is remembered for his kind heart, humility, and unwavering work ethic.

Ed proudly served his country in the United States Army as a member of the 101st Airborne Division and was stationed at Fort Campbell, Ky. His military service reflected the values that defined his life — dedication, perseverance, and quiet strength.

One of Ed’s greatest accomplishments was building a home for his family south of Byers, Colo., a place filled with love, hard work, and lifelong memories. But above all else, Ed was most proud of being a grandpa. Whether riding his tractor, working outside, or spending time with those he loved, he found joy in the simple, meaningful moments of life. His familiar and cheerful “You betcha” will forever be remembered by those who knew him.

Ed was born in Byers, Colo., to Harold and Wilma Frasier and was part of a family of 12 children.

Ed is survived by his wife, Cynthia Joan (Williams) Frasier; his daughter Renee Neumann (Bryan Fleenor) and her children Bri (Scott) Andrews, Krissy (Sean) Benallo, and Tiff Neumann and grandchildren Kylee, Kam, Beau, and Emma; and his daughter Shiela (Todd) Carlmark, and her children Devin (Kendra) and Trystyn, and grandchild Champ.

A military service honoring Ed’s life was held Jan. 21, 2026, in Grand Junction, Colo.

Ed’s life was defined by service, family, and quiet integrity. His legacy of kindness, strength, and devotion will continue through the generations he leaves behind.



CARL STEITZ/The I-70 Scout

Byers' Matthew Cichos battles for a rebound against a pair of Denver Christian players during the Bulldogs' 4-point victory Jan. 13.

BB BYERS

FROM PAGE 11

really well. And they got great teammates that understand how to set screens and when to find them.”

As for the game, Kerns noted that both teams are well-coached with many good athletes, which resulted in the close contest. He added that he expects the Thunder to at least make the Sweet 16 in Class 3A.

“That’s a good quality win for us,” he said.

He likened the victory to his team’s performance in a loss to Wiggins — which he views as similar in talent to Denver Christian — in the Bulldogs’ previous game.

“We dropped the ball against Wiggins, let them back in the game,” Kerns said. “We were able to take care of business in this one.”

The game was close throughout with the lead seesawing from 1-4 points for the Bulldogs and 1-2 for Denver Christian. Byers led 17-14, 39-35 and 53-50 after each of the first three quarters and finally started pulling ahead in the fourth, eventually leading by 7 points, 66-59, with seven seconds remaining.

“I just told my kids to get out of the way and let a kid shoot a three so we didn’t commit some dumb foul,” Kerns said.

The Thunder player hit the three to account for the final margin.

The game was closely called, so foul trouble and free-throw shooting were also factors with the teams combining for 47 attempts.

Sophomore Conrad Cichos and junior Devin Mohatt both sat for extended periods of time, and senior guard Quincy Eacret picked up his second foul in the second quarter and did not return until the third.

The teams combined for 47 free-throw attempts.

“That hasn’t really been the norm in high school basketball this year,” Kerns said. “The norm’s been a lot closer, like 15 free throws per team or less.”

Byers made 18-of-23 attempts (78%) and the Thunder 15-of-24 (62.5%) — perhaps the difference in the game.

“If we shoot around 50 percent like we have a couple of other times this year, we would have lost,” Kerns added. “It helps to have the right guys there, standing at the line.”

Eacret hit 7-of-7 attempts from the stripe.

“He’s probably, borderline, the top



CARL STEITZ/The I-70 Scout

Byers' Quincy Eacret scores 2 against Denver Christian Jan. 13 en route to eclipsing the 1,000-point mark for his high school career.

free throw shooter I’ve ever had here, so you get him to the line, as opposed to maybe somebody else that’s a little bit not as accurate,” Kerns said.

In addition to 8 points, Cichos grabbed nine rebounds, recorded two steals, and blocked one shot to lead Byers in all three categories. His freshman brother, Matthew Cichos, also pulled down nine boards, and junior Gabe Price dished out four assists.

Byers was slated to play Genoa-Hugo Jan. 16 but the game was postponed by the day’s high winds that closed I-70. The cancellation was the third for the Bulldogs this year with the Elbert game postponed until today because of an emergency involving two missing girls and the Simla game delayed by snow until Jan. 28.

“The only thing I got to say is I’m tired of getting games canceled,” Kerns concluded.

The Bulldogs travel to Flagler Friday, Jan. 23.

SCORE BY QUARTERS

	1	2	3	4	F
Byers	17	22	14	13	66
Wiggins	14	21	15	12	62

BYERS @ DENVER CHRISTIAN

Points (66): Eacret 23; Maes 23; C. Cichos 8; M. Cichos 4; Ebert 3; Linnebur 3; Mohatt 2.
Rebounds (41): C. Cichos 9; M. Cichos 9; Mohatt 7; Price 5; Ebert 4; Maes 3; Linnebur 2; Eacret 1; Garry 1.
Assists (12): Price 4; Maes 3; Eacret 1; C. Cichos 1; Linnebur 1; M. Cichos 1; Ebert 1.
Steals (7): C. Cichos 2; Maes 1; Price 1; Ebert 1; Eacret 1; Mohatt 1.

BYERS SCHEDULE

Jan. 21: Elbert.
Jan. 23: @ Flagler.
Jan. 24: Callian.
Jan. 28: @ Simla.

Bennett boys, girls combine for 4-0 week on home hardwood

Tigers hold off Weld Central, maul Frontier Saints

by **Steven Vetter**
Managing Editor

BENNETT — The Bennett Tigers set new season-high scoring marks in back-to-back home games last week to pull their overall record with-in a game of .500.

After a wire-to-wire 78-70 win over neighboring Weld Central Jan. 13 the Tigers demolished the visiting Saints of Jefferson 90-14 Jan. 15. The Tigers' previous game-high for points was 71 over Mitchell during the opening three-day weekend of the season at the Thunder Throwdown in Lamar Dec. 4-6.

"To do that twice in the same week was really good to see," said first-year head coach Andrew Thornton of his squad's season-high offensive outputs. "We've changed a few things up, getting things ironed out and starting to get some rhythm. Hopefully seeing the ball go through the hole a lot carries through the rest of the season."

WELD CENTRAL

Tuesday night, the hosts scored the first 7 points against the Rebels and never relinquished the lead. After a 19-13 first quarter in favor of Bennett, the visitors closed the gap to 23-20 with 5:48 left in the second quarter, but an 11-4 run over the next four-plus minutes put the Tigers up 34-24; at halftime Bennett had a 40-29 advantage.

"Defensively, luckily, we started out real aggressive and built the lead in the first half," Thornton said. "We are running the court a whole lot



Tiger Juan Santoyo looks to split a Weld Central double-team on his way to the bucket Jan. 13.

better with more people finding the ball and getting it up the court. We gave ourselves a lot of great scoring opportunities with our defense."

The Tiger advantage remained 8 points or more throughout the third quarter, which ended with a 56-47 Tiger lead. The Rebels closed the gap to 6 points several times in the fourth, including 74-68 with 1:15 left, but could get no closer.

"I don't know if we got tired, got complacent, or what exactly happened in the second half but the boys, I think, realize that how we played that first half is how we have to play for four quarters," Thornton said. "But still played pretty well and got the win."

As a team, Bennett shot 36%

from the field but did that on 75 shots. The Tigers went 6-of-18 from the three-point arc and were 18-of-30 from the free-throw line. Thornton's troops accumulated 17 assists on 27 made buckets with the guard trio of seniors Austin Stiers and Juan Santoyo and junior Owen Hawes combining for 12.

"A better job of finishing — not great yet but still quite a bit better — and we did a much better job of driving, getting into the lane and getting to the free-throw line," Thornton said. "Still have to capitalize more on those opportunities but seeing strides in the right direction."

Stiers and Hawes ac-
SEE BB BENNETT
PAGE 14



Lady Tiger Aileen Duran, left, looks to fire a contested running jumper over against Weld Central Jan. 13, while teammate Josie Ladd bides her time against her Lady Rebel defender.



ALYSSA STEM0/For The Scout

Orange-clad ladies dominate twice

by **Steven Vetter**
Managing Editor

BENNETT — The Bennett Lady Tigers moved to 9-3 on the hardwood and stayed safely in the 4A playoff index after outscoring last week's pair of visiting opponents 107-23.

The troops of head coach Mike Rios defeated Weld Central 43-11 Jan. 13 and Jefferson 64-12 two days later. The Tiger defense held both opponents to four single-digit scoring quarters, including a 10-0 third-quarter shutout that was part of a 23-2 second half against the Lady Rebels Tuesday night.

"Controlled things, especially defensively, from start to finish," Rios said about the pair of victories.

While the Bennett defense

was stingy both nights, the offense struggled more against Weld Central, especially early, with the Lady Tigers only having a 12-5 lead after the first quarter and ahead 20-9 at halftime.

While Bennett made a third (6-of-18) of its three-pointers against Weld Central, it was only 9-of-31 (31%) from two-point range and 7-of-13 (54%) from the free-throw line.

The duo of sophomore Josie Ladd and junior Emilee Venneberg accounted for all but 5 of Tuesday's points with 21 and 17, respectively. Ladd ended the game one rebound short of a double-double with nine.

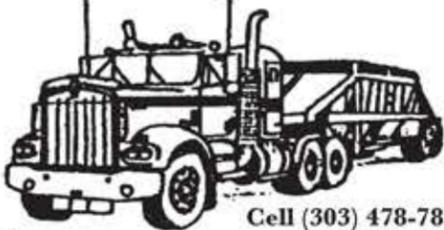
Weld Central committed 30-plus turnovers with Bennett recording 28 steals,

SEE GB BENNETT
PAGE 14

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Karen Tangeman



Karen Kay (Guy) Tangeman was born in Deer Trail, Colo., Feb. 9, 1950, to Loren (Jake) and Imogene (Greenstreet) Guy. Karen went home to be with the Lord on Dec. 27, 2025, with her children by her side.

Karen was part of a pioneering family on the I-70 Corridor; born in Deer Trail, living in Leader, grade school in Bennett, moving to and graduating from Strasburg in 1968.

Karen married Lee Tangeman on Oct. 24, 1970, when they eloped to Las Vegas. In May 1986 Latisha Ann was born, and Patrick Lynn was born in March 1988. In October 2013, Karen was promoted to "Grandma Karen" when the neighbors had a son, Jaxon Wilbur.

Karen was well known across the corridor for her service and faithfulness to many organizations in which several she served as treasurer and/or secretary. Karen served on the Comanche Crossing Historical Society, Hometown Days Committee, Old Timers Association, and the Strasburg Food Bank before it closed.

Karen was organist or pianist at many weddings and funerals along with playing with her sister Kathy for years at both Strasburg Presbyterian Church and Byers Community Church. Karen was an ordained elder serving both Strasburg and Byers churches, choir director along with organist and pianist at Byers Community Church.

Karen worked for 30+ years at IREA before retiring in 2012. Known as "The REA Lady" reading meters in the small towns with great stories to share.

She is survived by her two children, Latisha and Patrick; brother-in-law Bernard Rarick; several nieces and nephews; many cousins; and her "baby" Jaxon Wilbur.

Karen is preceded in death by her husband, Lee, of 53 years; her parents, Jake and Imogene Guy; her sister and brother-in-law Kathy and Chuck Owens; her brother and sister-in-law Lynn and Laurel Tangeman; sister-in-law Sandy Rarick; and sister and brother-in-law Sue and John Jones.

Family graveside services were held Jan. 5 on the two-year anniversary of the passing of Lee. A memorial service will be held at a later date. Memorial contributions can be made to Byers Community Church; Comanche Crossing Historical Society; Old Timers Association; and/or Strasburg Hometown Days. Contributions can be sent to P.O. Box 532, Strasburg CO 80136.

GB BENNETT

FROM PAGE 13

led by Ladd and fellow sophomore Aileen Duran with seven apiece. "Our post players controlled the paint, limiting Weld Central's top scorers," Rios added, "and protected the rim as part of a complete team defensive effort."

SCORE BY QUARTERS

	1	2	3	4	F
Weld Central	4	5	0	2	11
Bennett	12	8	10	13	43

WELD CENTRAL @ BENNETT

Points (43): Aileen Duran 4; Mattie Robledo 1; Josie Ladd 21; Emilee Venneberg 17.
Rebounds (34): Duran 7; Mya Robledo 4; Emma Jordan 3; Madelyn Bavouset 7; Ladd 9; Venneberg 4.
Assists (10): Duran 2; Ma. Robledo 3; My Robledo 2; Ladd 2; Venneberg 1.
Steals (28): Duran 7; Ma. Robledo 3; My Robledo 4; Jordan 2; Bavouset 2; Ladd 7; Venneberg 3.
Blocks (5): Duran 1; My Robledo 2; Ladd 2.

Thursday night saw eight Lady Tigers score and a trio reaching double-digits — Ladd with 19 and Venneberg and sophomore Mattie Robledo with 13 apiece. As team, Bennett shot 28-of-61 (46%) from the field, including 5-of-20 from three-point range, and 3-of-5 at the free-throw line.

"Better balanced scoring to go along with our suffocating defense," Rios said. "Saw more balls go through the basket."

Of the hosts' 36 rebounds, 20 were on the offensive end. Junior Madelyn Bavouset crashed the glass for a game-high 10 rebounds, eight offensive.

Bennett turned Jefferson over 40 times, including 30 steals. Venneberg was the top pick-pocket for the victors with nine thefts, followed by Robledo and Ladd with seven each.

After last week's victories, Bennett remained solidly in the 4A postseason picture but dropped a spot to No. 12 in the Colorado High School Activities Association's rankings for playoff berths and seeding. The playoffs take the top 32 teams but the Frontier



ALYSSA STEMPO/For The Scout

Lady Tiger Emilee Venneberg looks down the court for an open teammate on a fast break against Weld Central.

League champion will receive an automatic berth.

SCORE BY QUARTERS

	1	2	3	4	F
Jefferson	5	1	3	3	12
Bennett	23	16	15	10	64

JEFFERSON @ BENNETT

Points (64): Duran 6; Ma. Robledo 13; Beatrix Burck 2; My Robledo 2; Jordan 2; Bavouset 7; Ladd 19; Venneberg 13.
Rebounds (36): Duran 2; My Robledo 5; Jordan 3; Bavouset 10; Ladd 8; Venneberg 8.
Assists (18): Duran 2; Ma. Robledo 3; My Robledo 5; Ladd 4; Venneberg 4.
Steals (30): Duran 4; Ma. Robledo 7; My Robledo 2; Jordan 1; Ladd 7; Venneberg 9.
Blocks (2): Duran 2.

COMING UP

Jan. 22: @ Arrupe Jesuit
 Jan. 27: Englewood



Tigers Carter Jarman (4), left, and Alfredo Duran (23) move towards the bucket against Weld Central at home Jan. 13.

BB BENNETT

FROM PAGE 13

counted for 55% of the Tigers' scoring with 30 and 13 points, respectively, but seven others also got into the scoring column.

"A lot better job of finding the open guy and spreading the ball around," Thornton noted.

Stiers was one rebound short of a double-double, recording nine of the Tigers' 38 boards; 14 rebounds were on the offensive end of the court.

Defensively, Hawes recorded four of his squad's six steals while four Tigers recorded a blocked shot.

SCORE BY QUARTERS

	1	2	3	4	F
Weld Central	13	16	18	23	70
Bennett	19	21	16	22	78

WELD CENTRAL @ BENNETT

Points (78): Austin Stiers 30; Carter Jarman 5; Avant Dickens 7; Juan Santoyo 9; Owen Hawes 13; Daniel Rodriguez 2; Alfredo Duran 6; Brayden Schmalz 4; Elias Pulido 2.
Rebounds (38): Stiers 9; Jarman 3; Dickens 5; Santoyo 5; Hawes 6; Rodriguez 2; Duran 2; Schmalz 6.
Assists (17): Stiers 3; Dickens 1; Santoyo 4; Hawes 5; Rodriguez 1; Duran 2; Pulido 1.
Steals (6): Stiers 1; Jarman 1; Hawes 4.
Blocks (4): Dickens 1; Hawes 1; Duran 1; Schmalz 1.

JEFFERSON

After the 3A Frontier League Saints opened Thursday's contest with a banked-in three-pointer, Bennett scored the next 28 points en route to a 34-5 lead after the first quarter. At halftime the score was 52-9.

The second half, including a 14-0 fourth-quarter shutout by the hosts, was played under the mercy-rule running clock.

"Watching a little bit of tape on them, they weren't a good shooting team but when that first shot went in the way it did, it was like 'Is it going to be one of those nights' but, in the end, we did what we are supposed to do and got the job done," Thornton said. "We pulled the starters after the first quarter. The whole bench had gotten in by two minutes left in the first half and the third team was in for the entire fourth."

As a team, Bennett shot 43-of-76 (57%) from the field, including 41-of-71 from two-point range, and went 3-of-9 at the free-throw line. The upward trend in the team's assist rate continued as the Tigers dished out 20 dimes. On the glass, Bennett recorded 36 boards, including 18 offensive.

A dozen Tigers scratched the scoring column with four reaching double-digits — Stiers 19, senior Alfredo Duran 13, junior Elias Pulido 12, and Santoyo 11. Santoyo and Pulido tied for the team-high in rebounds with seven.

On defense, Bennett forced 31 Saints turnovers, including nine Tigers accumulating 25 steals.

The pair of victories pulled the Tigers to 6-7 overall. In 4A Frontier League play, Bennett stayed 1-1. Despite the two wins, the orange-and-black did not move off the No. 40 spot in the Colorado High School Activities Association index for determining the 32-team state playoff bracket.

"Hopefully our improved play continues and we start to climb the rankings to get a little bit closer to our goal of making the playoffs," Thornton said.

SCORE BY QUARTERS

	1	2	3	4	F
Jefferson	5	4	7	0	14
Bennett	34	18	24	14	90

JEFFERSON @ BENNETT

Points (90): Stiers 19; Jarman 6; Dickens 9; Santoyo 11; Hawes 2; Evan Garner 8; Rodriguez 2; Ricardo Loya 2; Duran 13; Schmalz 4; Pulido 12; Salvador Corado 2.
Rebounds (36): Stiers 3; Jarman 2; Dickens 3; Santoyo 7; Garner 1; MacFroman 3; Rodriguez 4; Duran 1; Schmalz 4; Pulido 7; Corado 1.
Assists (20): Stiers 2; Jarman 1; Dickens 2; Santoyo 3; Hawes 4; Rodriguez 2; Loya 1; Duran 3; Schmalz 1; Corado 1.
Steals (25): Stiers 3; Jarman 3; Dickens 5; Santoyo 2; Hawes 2; Garner 2; Rodriguez 4; Duran 3; Schmalz 1.

COMING UP

Jan. 22: @ Arrupe Jesuit
 Jan. 27: Englewood
 Jan. 29: @ Middle Park

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CARL STEITZ/For The Scout

Lady Bulldog Leyla Saylor streaks down the sideline while keeping the dribble inbounds against Denver Christian Jan. 13.

Byers girls fall to 3A No. 1

by Steven Vetter
Managing Editor

BYERS — The Byers girls dropped to 4-4 after visiting 3A top-ranked Denver Christian outscored its hosts 73-47 Jan. 13.

After staying within shouting distance, 14-11, over the first eight minutes, Byers' errors snowballed as they fell behind 37-18 at halftime. While the Thunder extended the lead in the second half, the Bulldogs made a better accounting of themselves with 27 points.

"First, third and fourth quarters were OK, sometimes pretty solid, but still just passing the ball to the wrong team too many times," said Bulldog head coach Chris Cary. "A lot better effort than our first game back from break (against Wiggins), but still had 34 turnovers that led to at least 34 points. If we cut them in half, the final score is much more respectable."

While the field goal percentages were almost identical — 39% for Denver Christian compared to 38% for Byers — the victors hoisted up 70 shots compared to only 45 for the Bulldogs. In addition to the excessive turnovers, Byers also allowed 17 offensive rebounds by the Thunder.

According to Cary, his squad is struggling to fill vacancies left when projected sophomore starters Joclynn Rector and Ainsley Sauer were lost before the season started with knee injuries suffered during regional volleyball.

"Just not quite as fast or quick throughout the roster as we might have been at full strength," Cary said. "Probably a matter of getting more creative as coaches and the kids realizing they have to get a little better."

Sophomore Leyla Saylor paced Byers with 12 points, while junior guard Madi Olsen had team-high assists with four. Saylor and Olsen tied for the team lead in steals with three apiece.

On defense, Byers struggled with the Thunder duo of senior Natalie Bohannon and freshman Tenley Fuller, who scored 23 and 22 points, respectively.

Fuller also completed an unusual triple-double with 11 rebounds and 13 steals.

The .500 Lady Bulldogs concluded last week No. 13 in the playoff rankings from the Colorado High School Activities Association.

Byers has three early season games to make up as Genoa-Hugo/Karval



CARL STEITZ/For The Scout

Byers' Sydney Smith puts up a contested layup against Denver Christian.

didn't make the anticipated trip to Byers Jan. 16 because of the I-70 road closures brought on by winds up to 75 mph; at press time, no makeup date with the Pirates had been scheduled.

The green-and-white will make up their originally scheduled Dec. 16 home game with Elbert today, while the weather-delayed Jan. 9 game at 2A No. 1-ranked Simla will take place Wednesday, Jan. 28. The undefeated Cubs gave Denver Christian its only loss so far this season, 48-39 on Dec. 12.

"Three postponed games and all three had nothing to do with the weather or circumstances on our end, which is a little odd and frustrating, because there will be a ton of back-to-backs with not a lot of practice time," Cary said. "We have to adapt and overcome."

SCORE BY QUARTERS

	1	2	3	4	F
Denver Christian	14	23	17	19	73
Byers	11	9	12	15	47

DENVER CHRISTIAN @ BYERS

Points (47): Madi Olsen 8; Danica Lancaster 6; Kaci Harris 2; Abi Green 4; Leyla Saylor 12; Sydney Smith 5; Cossette Kerns 2; Taiya Eymann 8.
Rebounds (29): Olsen 5; Grace Shelley 1; Lancaster 2; Harris 2; Green 2; Saylor 7; Smith 6; Kerns 2; Eymann 2.
Assists (14): Olsen 4; Shelley 1; Green 3; Saylor 2; Kerns 1; Eymann 3.
Steals (9): Olsen 3; Lancaster 2; Saylor 3; Eymann 1.
Blocks (5): Olsen 1; Lancaster 1; Saylor 1; Smith 1; Kerns 1.

BYERS SCHEDULE

Jan. 23: @ Flagler.
Jan. 24: Calhan.
Jan. 28: @ Simla.
Jan. 29: @ Arickaree.

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THE NOT-SO DUSTY PAGES

20 YEARS AGO JAN. 24, 2006

I-70 Corridor schools were awaiting word Jan. 20 as to how they could help a fellow East Central BOCES institution that was partially ravaged by an early morning fire.

Woodlin School suffered severe fire and smoke damage during the night of Jan. 19.

The entire school, located close to Woodrow east of Highway 71, closed down during the investigation into the fire's cause.

"The preschool classroom was destroyed, the kindergarten next door has extensive heat and water damage. The entire school has extensive smoke damage," said Floyd Beard, East Central BOCES executive director.

15 YEARS AGO JAN. 25, 2011

BENNETT — Corridor school districts are among the beneficiaries of an almost \$395,000 federal grant for technology improvements.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service announced Jan. 20 that East Central BOCES will receive \$394,486 in federal funds to help finance improvements to distance learning and two-way education programs. The announcement was made during a ceremony at Bennett High School.

In addition, RUS Administrator Jonathan Adelstein said a \$483,909 technology grant was awarded to a portion of the Pikes Peak BOCES — Ellicott, Calhan, Big Sandy, Hanover, Edison, Miami-Yoder and Cripple Creek school districts.

The East Central BOCES, which also raised over \$201,000 in matching funds, will use the grant money to upgrade its VNET videoconferencing/distance learning network, which encompasses 17 member school districts.

10 YEARS AGO JAN. 26, 2016

BYERS — A local legal dispute has become the basis of a federal lawsuit filed against the Colorado Secretary of State challenging the constitutionality of how the state's campaign finance laws are enforced.

Strasburg resident Tammy Holland is the plaintiff in *Holland v. (Secretary of State Wayne W.) Williams*, filed Jan. 21 by The Institute for Justice, a Virginia-based non-profit, public-interest law firm.

The suit asks the court to hold that Colorado's private enforcement system of the state's campaign-finance laws violates the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

THOMPSON V. HOLLAND

In the local issue to be decided by a judge within the next few weeks, Byers School officials filed complaints last September and October against Holland alleging campaign and political finance violations.

At issue is an ad Holland placed in *The I-70 Scout* Sept. 8 and 15 preceding the Byers School Board election in November. Holland doesn't view the ad as "political," but the complaint disputes that assertion.

"The purpose of the ads was simply to draw attention to the election and encourage community members to educate themselves about all candidates and with the options for themselves," Holland said. "At no point in the ads did I endorse any candidates."

Holland, whose son previously attended Byers School, is a vocal critic of Common Core curriculum and standardized testing and has spoken out in front of the Byers School Board on those issues.

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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 19

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is Wednesday, Jan. 21, the 21st day of 2026. There are 344 days left in the year.

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHT

On Jan. 21, 2020, the U.S. reported its first known case of the 2019 novel coronavirus circulating in China, saying a Washington state resident who had returned the previous week from the outbreak's epicenter

was hospitalized near Seattle.

ALSO ON THIS DATE:

In 1793, during the French Revolution, King Louis XVI, condemned for treason, was executed by guillotine.

In 1861, Jefferson Davis of Mississippi resigned his U.S. Senate seat after his state and others seceded from the Union. He would later be

elected president of the Confederacy shortly before the Civil War began.

In 1924, Russian revolutionary Vladimir Lenin died at age 53, setting off a bloody power struggle that would lead to the rise of Soviet dictator Josef Stalin.

In 1950, former State Department official Alger Hiss, accused of being part of a Communist spy ring,

was found guilty in New York of lying to a grand jury.

In 1977, on his first day in office, President Jimmy Carter pardoned almost all Vietnam War draft evaders.

In 1985, Galaxy Airlines Flight 203 crashed in a field shortly after takeoff from Reno, Nev., killing all but one of the 71 people aboard. The survivor was a 17-year-old boy who was thrown clear of the aircraft and

found conscious and still in his seat.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAYS

Golf Hall of Famer Jack Nicklaus is 86. Opera singer Plácido Domingo is 85. Singer-songwriter Billy Ocean is 76. Actor-director Robby Benson is 70. Actor Geena Davis is 70. Basketball Hall of Famer Haakeem Olajuwon is 63.

— Associated Press

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 - *The only NFL team with perfect season
 - Plant-based laxative
 - Symphony member
 - "No ___ for you!"
 - No gains without them
 - Retired, abbr.
 - Field worker
 - Bohemian
 - Not Miss or Ms
 - Poker amount
- DOWN**
- Bro to bro
 - Speedy steed
 - Chuck Berry's "___ Over Beethoven"
 - Rainbow color
 - *Santa Clara's ___ Stadium, Super Bowl LX venue
 - Beside, archaic
 - Titanic's frozen enemy
 - *Team with most Super Bowl appearances
 - Fencing weapon
 - Charitable contributions
 - Hi-___
 - Garden shelter
 - Unhealthy atmosphere

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- Little hills
- P in m.p.g.
- Mark Twain to Samuel Clemens
- Lively
- Vampire of Greek mythology
- *One of two teams to win while hosting Super Bowl
- Long fishing line
- Like haunted house
- What the defense does?
- High school dressy affair
- Romanian money
- *Super Bowl LX halftime show headliner (2 words)
- Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young: "___ Your Children"
- Egyptian boy king, for short
- Long jump
- I to Greeks, pl.
- Rob Marshall's 2005 movie "Memoirs of a ___"
- On the wagon
- Land parcels
- *Shoulder pads and cleats
- "Put a lid ___"
- College dwelling
- High part of day
- Edible fat
- Facial site
- *Charlie Puth and Brandi Carlile, ___ game stars

ANSWERS ON PAGE 19

HOROSCOPE

An Honest Conjunction

When Oscar Wilde wrote, "The truth is rarely pure and never simple," he was likely penning a masterpiece on a typical multifaceted day, under stars that were not so closely knit together in the cosmic fabric as this solar conjunction to Mercury. Today offers an anomaly: pure, simple facts that will continue to mean exactly what they seem to mean in perpetuity.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). There are always pros and cons to consider. For instance, taller people have farther to fall, the richer have more to lose and the powerful few at the top are vulnerable to being conquered by the power of many at the bottom. You'll look at all sides of an issue today.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Your work will get the attention it deserves. You may not know exactly what to make of the feedback, but things are still settling in. For now, it's very good just to get the exposure.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You honor someone by giving them a gift that shows you were listening to who they are, what they like and what they need. Bonus: You're also paying attention to who they were and where they're headed. Witnessing means more than you could know.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Today feels like a pop quiz from the universe. The lesson arrives as if guided by fate. Something you experienced or learned in the past becomes relevant again, and you can apply it here. Trust that you have the skills, insight and perspective to ace this.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Some people play every game like it is a long game, and those are the ones you want on your side. The gracious and the generous may lose a play or two, but they always win in the end. The real prize is integrity.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). The ability to read a room comes to those who have been in many rooms and been many people, too. You'll do your best with it today and keep getting better with time and experience.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). No, you're not making it up. The things filling your day are actually necessary to your current role. Although, you might consider whether your ideal role is something else entirely, and thus worthy of a different routine.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Playfulness happens when there is room for it. If a person can be playful, even when the situation is serious, it's because their psyche is expansive, their emotional range as wide as a field. This is who you are today.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). What if the thing you've been avoiding is exactly the thing that changes everything for the better? Instead of seeing it as a chore, see it as a gamble. Once upon a time, something you almost didn't do opened a world to you, and it's about to happen again.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Intensity is so easy for you to create, wield and deal with. That's why you're fascinated by restraint. You observe, and life opens to you. You press or pry, and it closes. What matters will surface in its own time.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You're in a friendly mood today. The more inclusive you are, the more people you'll know. The more people you know, the easier it is to connect with the person who will help you solve a problem.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Knowing what's good for you and getting more of it is wonderful. What's less wonderful is finding out that what you like isn't all that good for you. Luckily, in today's case, substitutions abound.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Jan. 21). Welcome to your Year of the Evolving Love Story. People, places and projects receive your enthusiasm and heart, and wonderful feelings boomerang back to you, sending you sailing on clouds. More highlights: You'll lead where you once followed. You'll cash in on what's been growing in value for years. A problem is fixed once and for all, freeing your time and energy. Aries and Sagittarius adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 17, 32, 20, 18 and 25.

— Horoscopes by Holiday

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FROM PAGE 11

DSST: Elevate and 2A St. John Paul the Great.

The Patriot League will be split into Plains and Peaks divisions. Strasburg will be in the Patriot Plains along with familiar opposition — Brush, Frontier Academy, Highland (2A), Platte Valley, Sterling, Valley, Weld Central and Wiggins (2A).

The 1A/2A Union Pacific League won't change with 1A Deer Trail, Flagler, Genoa-Hugo/Karval and Stratton still playing 2A Byers, Burlington and Limon.

SOFTBALL

Similar to their volleyball counterparts, the third-year Bennett Lady Tigers softball program will move to the Pioneer League. In addition to former Frontier foes Alameda, Arvada, Englewood (4A), Fort Lupton and Jefferson, the newly formed conference is expected to include Forge Christian, Jefferson Academy, Peak to Peak and The Academy.

The Patriot Plains is also a new league for softball with Strasburg to face Brush, Platte Valley, Sterling, Valley and Weld Central in conference play.

Both Bennett and Strasburg remain in 3A softball.

BOYS SOCCER

After playing in the 2A classification for the past couple of seasons, the Bennett Tigers boys soccer team, who won a first-round game for the first time since the program started in 2007, jump back up to the 3A ranks in the Pioneer League.

Conference opposition include Alameda, Arrupe Jesuit, Arvada (2A), DSST: Elevate, Englewood, Fort Lupton, Jefferson, St. John Paul the Great, and The Pinnacle.

CROSS COUNTRY

After competing in 4A the past couple of seasons, Bennett drops back down to 3A in cross country and will

join Strasburg in competing in Region 5 for state-qualifying. Other 3A Region 5 schools are Banning Lewis Academy, Colorado Springs Christian, DSST: Aurora Science & Technology, DSST: Cedar; Elizabeth, Englewood, Jefferson, KIPP Denver Collegiate, Manitou Springs, Manual, Mitchell, and STEM School Highlands Ranch.

Byers will remain in 2A and is slated to compete in Region 2 with Addenbrooke Classical Academy, Arma Dei Academy, Ascent Classical Academy, Burlington, Chesterton Academy, Denver Academy, Denver Academy of Torah, Denver Jewish Day, Denver Waldorf, Front Range Christian, Golden View Classical Academy, Kiowa, Lotus School for Excellence, Peyton, Sheridan, SkyView Academy and St. John Paul the Great.

BOYS GOLF

After the last two season in 2A, including an individual state champion in 2024, Strasburg's golf program bumps back up to 3A but will remain in the Patriot League with Berthoud, Brush, Eaton, Fort Morgan (4A), Frontier Academy, Liberty Common, Resurrection Christian, Sterling, Weld Central, Wellington and Windsor Charter Academy.

UNIFIED BOWLING

Strasburg will remain in 4A in unified bowling over the next two seasons.

OTHER MEETING PARTICULARS

Other significant items to be discussed and voted on by the 75-member Legislative Council include:

- clarification on how enrollment data, particularly the new 1.5 multiplier for private schools, will be used to classify program;
- stabilize the amount of teams who qualify for the playoffs; and
- a proposal to change basketball splits from what have been approved by CLOC.

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NOTICES

Deer Trail School District 26J Resolution to Declare a Board Vacancy

WHEREAS, Colorado Revised Statute section 22-31-129(1)(h) provides that a vacancy occurs in a school director office whenever person who was duly elected or appointed and resigns from the Board of Education.

WHEREAS, Steve Musser has resigned from the Board of Education.

Be it resolved that, in accordance with state law, the Board declares a vacancy in this school director office;

Be it further resolved that, in accordance with state law, the Board will fill the vacancy by appointment within 60 days in accordance with the following procedure:

- Interested persons are invited to send a letter to the Board with a statement of interest and qualifications by **January 28, 2026**. Letter can be mailed to the school attention Hayley Whitehead or given to Hayley Whitehead in the Main Office.
- The Board will interview prospective candidates on **February 2, 2026**, at a public meeting.
- To be eligible for appointment, a candidate must be a registered elector of the school district, 18 years of age, a U.S. citizen and never been convicted of a sexual offense against a child.
- The appointee will serve until the next regular school board biennial election in November 2027.

The above resolution was approved by the Deer Trail 26J Board of Education on the 12th day of January, 2026.

Notice of Vacancy published in *The I-70 Scout* on Wednesday, Jan. 21, 2026, and the *Eastern Colorado News* on Friday, Jan. 23, 2026.

SHOOTING SUSPECT

FROM PAGE 1

was scheduled in front of an Adams County District Court judge Jan. 20.

While the district attorney has charged Padilla-Garcia as an adult, no booking information was available from an online search of the Adams County Sheriff's website.

INCIDENT BACKGROUND

Just before 2 a.m. Jan. 11, sheriff's deputies and investigators were dispatched to a report of a shooting at a residence north of 96th Ave and Strasburg Road. Upon arrival at 9720 Defoe St., deputies located one adult male with gunshot wounds who was later pronounced deceased. The decedent was identified by the Adams County Coroner's Office as Luis Angelo Juarez, 19, of Commerce City.

Three additional individuals with gunshot wounds were located and treated at local hospitals. The ages, gender and health status of the wounded trio have not been released.

Whether there are any ties between the victim and/or suspects with any of the I-70 Corridor school districts are uncertain.

The shootings occurred during a reported heavily attended "warehouse party" that included a per-person cover charge and invited guests to "BYOB."

The Community & Economic Development Department is investigating the property owners and the location where the party occurred.

"The property [on] Defoe Street is zoned Agricultural-3. Event centers can be conditionally permitted in the A-3 district. There are no permits for an event center on this property. Code compliance doesn't have any open violation cases at this location at this time," a county spokesperson originally said Jan. 13. "The Community & Economic Development team has started a violation case. Code compliance is doing their very best to make contact with the owner to discuss this issue."

In reply to a Jan. 16 follow-up inquiry from *The I-70 Scout* about the property investigation, the spokesperson added that an update was unavailable because "Code Compliance has not yet been able to make contact with the owner."

Hudson prison contracted to become state's newest ICE detention center

by Chase Woodruff
Colorado Newline

President Donald Trump's administration contracted last month with The GEO Group to operate a dormant prison in Hudson as an immigrant detention center for at least six months, according to documents obtained by the American Civil Liberties Union of Colorado.

The documents, released by the ACLU Jan. 8 after a Freedom of Information Act request, are the clearest indication yet that federal immigration authorities have prioritized reopening the facility in Hudson, located about 35 miles northwest of Bennett, as they ramp up detention capacity in Colorado in pursuit of Trump's mass deportation plans.

The dormant Big Horn Correctional Facility, formerly known as the Hudson Correctional Facility, is a 1,200-bed prison that operated for a span of just five years after its 2009 opening. An Immigration & Customs Enforcement contract for "comprehensive detention services" at the facility was issued to The GEO Group Dec. 1 but the amount and terms of the contract are redacted in the documents.

The Department of Homeland Security did not respond to inquiries about the released documents or when the Hudson facility might reopen. The documents also contain a previous \$39 million contract for The GEO Group to operate the facility for the six-month period beginning in April of last year, but the prison remained empty.

ACLU advocates criticized the government's heavy redactions of the released documents, with Tim Macdonald, the ACLU of Colorado's legal director, demanding "more transparency into how (ICE officials) plan to spend hundreds of millions of dollars to imprison more people who have not been convicted of any crime."

In his second term, Trump has pledged to carry out the "largest domestic deportation operation in American history," aiming to remove all of the estimated 12 million immi-

grants in the country without permanent legal status, regardless of how long they have been in the country, the legal status of their family members, or whether they have criminal records.

Colorado is currently home to only one ICE detention center, an Aurora facility also operated by The GEO Group. The Hudson facility is one of six potential new sites for ICE detention under consideration in Colorado, a list that also includes the dormant Huerfano County Correctional Center in Walsenburg and the Southern Ute Indian Adult Detention Center in Ignacio.

The three new facilities would expand ICE's Colorado footprint by a total of 2,560 additional beds, tripling its detention capacity in the state.

The latest records obtained by the ACLU also contain a document known as a "Justification for Other Than Full and Open Competition," or JOFOC, which is required when the federal government awards a contract without a competitive bidding process — but the 98-page file is completely redacted.

In August, following the passage of \$45 billion in funding for expanded immigration detention in Republicans' spending and tax cut law, GEO Group chairman George Zoley spoke during an earnings call about the "attractive opportunity for investors" presented by "the unprecedented growth opportunities we anticipate will materialize over the balance of this year and next year."

"The documents we received from ICE fail to answer fundamental questions about the agency's planned expansion for the Denver field office," Scott Medlock, a senior staff attorney with the Colorado ACLU, said in a statement. "With Congress allocating unprecedented resources and funding to ICE and DHS, the public deserves to know how the federal government intends to use this infusion of money."

This story was made available via the *Colorado News Collaborative*. Learn more at <https://colabnews.co>.



The Hudson Correctional Facility, pictured on Sept. 4, has been dormant since 2014.

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CHUCK WAGON

Crispy 'Beef' Tacos

by **Alexa Soto**
Voracious

"Taco night" for many across the United States consists of an Americanized idea of Mexican food: ground beef cooked with a packaged seasoning mix, taco shells, lettuce, tomato and sour cream.

Let's just say that, if you're reading this and have enjoyed a similar meal, you will be blown out of the water by this authentic version from my cookbook "Plantas: Modern Vegan Recipes for Traditional Mexican Cooking."

These tacos were a favorite of mine as a kid. I remember watching my Tía Chela making them, and they felt like such a treat. The secret here is using salsa to season your meat, rather than dried herbs and spices. It creates much juicier, deeper flavor.



CRISPY 'BEEF' TACOS

Makes 12 tacos

FILLING INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons neutral oil, such as avocado oil
- 1/2 medium white onion, diced small
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 large carrots, peeled and diced small
- 2 Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and diced small
- 1/2 cup low-sodium vegetable broth
- 1 (12-ounce) package plant-based ground meat (such as Impossible or Beyond Meat)
- 1/4 teaspoon sea salt

SALSA INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon neutral oil, such as avocado oil
- 2 ripe Roma tomatoes
- 1/4 medium white onion
- 1 serrano or jalapeño pepper, stemmed and seeded
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled
- 1/4 cup low-sodium vegetable broth
- 1/4 bunch cilantro
- 1/4 teaspoon sea salt

TACOS INGREDIENTS

- 12 corn tortillas, store-bought or homemade
- 6 to 8 tablespoons neutral high-heat oil, such as avocado oil
- Guacasalsa (guacamole mixed with salsa verde), for serving

DIRECTIONS

1. To make the filling, heat the oil in a large sauté pan over medium-low heat. Add the onion and sauté for

2 minutes, then add the garlic, carrots, and potatoes and sauté for 4 minutes. Turn the heat down to low and add the broth. Cover and steam for 10-12 minutes, until the vegetables are fork-tender. Add the ground meat and cook, using a spatula to break up any large clumps, 7-10 minutes, until browned. Season with salt.

2. Meanwhile, make the salsa. Heat the oil in a large skillet or sauté pan over medium heat. Add the whole tomatoes, onion quarter, serrano or jalapeño pepper, and garlic cloves and cook 2-4 minutes on each side, until blackened and charred (the garlic might char after just 2-3 minutes). Transfer the contents of the pan to a blender. Add the broth, cilantro and salt and blend on high until smooth.

3. Add the salsa to the meat and vegetable mixture and stir to combine. Cook 10-12 minutes. Taste and add more salt to your liking.

4. To make the tacos, heat a medium skillet or comal over high heat. Add a tortilla and cook for 30-40 seconds on each side, then transfer to a tortilla holder or wrap in a kitchen towel. Repeat to heat the remaining tortillas.

5. Add 2 tablespoons of the picadillo mixture to one half of each tortilla and fold to close. They should stay closed as you fry them, but use toothpicks if necessary.

6. Heat the oil in a large, deep sauté pan over medium heat. Working in batches, add a few tacos and fry for 2 minutes on each side, or until golden brown. Using a spatula, transfer the tacos to a plate lined with a paper towel.

7. Serve with salsa and guacasalsa.

LUNCH MENUS

BYERS

Thursday, Jan. 22: Chicken alfredo, bread sticks.

Friday, Jan. 23: Cheese pizza, garden salad.

Monday, Jan. 26: Boneless buffalo wings, biscuit.

Tuesday, Jan. 27: Cheeseburger, french fries.

Wednesday, Jan. 28: Fajitas, corn bread.

DEER TRAIL

Thursday, Jan. 22: Nachos, corn, broccoli.

Monday, Jan 26: Drumstick, potatoes with gravy, green beans.

Tuesday, Jan 27: Beef tacos, beans and corn.

Wednesday, Jan 28: Corn dogs, broccoli and carrots, chips.

STRASBURG

Thursday, Jan. 22: Mozzarella cheese sticks.

Friday, Jan. 23: Hot dogs.

Tuesday, Jan. 27: Burgers.

Wednesday, Jan. 28: Macaroni and cheese, popcorn chicken.

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Thursday, Jan. 22: Sloppy Joe mac, coleslaw.

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SUBMITTED PHOTO

High winds closed eastbound I-70 at Airpark Road midday and afternoon Jan. 16, particularly to semis and other high-profile and lightweight vehicles. The resulting backup also impacted the westbound lane of the frontage road in front of Fox Ridge Farms.

WIND IMPACTS

FROM PAGE 1

POWER OUTAGES

While Xcel Energy had implemented planned power outages for wild-fire prevention in northern Colorado, particularly portions of Larimer and Weld counties, a number of unplanned outages occurred, including areas west of a line delineated by Manila Road in Adams, Arapahoe and Elbert counties.

According to company outage reports, approximately 700 customers lost power intermittently during the day on Friday with more extended interruptions lasting 3-5 hours in the afternoon.

Officials with CORE Electric Cooperative's Bennett branch did report significant issues during the high wind alert, which included red flag warnings because of increased fire danger.

"We monitored the windy conditions and were ready to respond if any incidents occurred to the weather but mostly quiet," said CORE's Bennett Branch Manager Robert Kiess. "Saw about the neighboring [Xcel] outage

to the west but nothing here."

Friday's outages farther north and west included 21,000 Xcel customers and another 5,000 Poudre Valley Electric Cooperative members.

OTHER IMPACTS

The windstorm also caused the Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment to issue an air quality health advisory for the plains, noting that significant blowing dust that reduces visibility to less than 10 miles could impact people with health conditions, older adults and children.

Although the weather is expected to mellow out Saturday along the foothills and Front Range, Eastern Plains communities will remain under a red flag warning for high winds and low humidity until 5 p.m., according to the National Weather Service.

Top eastern plains wind speed reports included 80 mph near Towner in Kiowa County, 78 mph near Burlington, 75 mph in Limon and 72 at Agate.



ISAAC MANAUGH/The I-70 Scout

Strong winds up to 60 mph whip a heavy layer of dirt from Quint Valley Golf Course westward across Bradbury Krebs Road (South County Road 173) west of Byers Jan. 16.

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