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The I-70 Scout

Volume 32, Number 6

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

Wednesday, January 7, 2026

Thieves busy in Byers on New Year's Eve

by **Steven Vetter**
Managing Editor

BYERS — While no suspects have been contacted or arrests made at press time last weekend, reports of thieves lurking around Byers on New Year's Eve appear to have some teeth.

Multiple local social media postings on Dec. 31 and Jan. 1 urged residents, particularly in Byers and Deer Trail, to be on the lookout for a pair of suspicious vehicles.

"Confirmed that these two mini-van drivers stole multiple extension ladders in an alley in Byers," said a Jan. 1 Facebook post, including pictures of red and silver vehicles in the area. "The homeowner has confirmed and the footage shows the entire incident. Keep your eyes open folks this happened at 11:44 a.m. on [Dec. 31]."

When *The I-70 Scout* asked the Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office about any reports of



FACEBOOK SCREENSHOTS

Drivers of a pair of minivans were reportedly stealing ladders from at least one alley in Byers during midday New Year's Eve.

New Year's vandalism, a department spokesperson said yes.

"We did have a phone call come in to dispatch on Dec. 31 around 9:30 p.m. about a theft in Byers that happened just before noon that day from someone who stated that four of his ladders were taken from his alley way," said Ginger Delgado, public information officer for the

sheriff's office. "The reporting party said they were driving a truck and he had video. Our dispatcher advised him to file a police report online."

Other online or other received reports of thieves ransacking garages and back of houses in other alleys in Byers and Deer Trail were not corroborated at press time on Sunday.

"No rampant theft ring that

I'm aware of or can see in our system," Delgado added.

When additional patrol units assigned to unincorporated Arapahoe County east of Gun Club Road will come to fruition was unknown last week but the additions should expedite responses to calls along the I-70 Corridor.

Over the next four years, the sheriff's office plans to add 40 new deputies to unincorporated

areas across the county. The approved 2026 budget includes 10 new unincorporated patrol units, including four designated for areas east of E-470. The additional patrol units are expected to be split in half between day and night shifts.

How the additional patrol units will be distributed across the county after this year is uncertain.



'there arose
such a clatter'

ISAAC MANAUGH/The I-70 Scout

Well-known local photographer Carl Steitz reads " 'Twas the Night Before Christmas" to enthusiastic youngsters during Christmas with the High Plains Music Ensemble and Friends Dec. 20 at the Bennett High School Performing Arts Center. **SEE PAGE 12.**

AdCo commissioners approve third attempt at area wedding venue

by **Steven Vetter**
Managing Editor

BRIGHTON — Third time the charm?

That's the question that Adams County Commissioners appeared to answer "yes" to during a December public hearing for a request for reclassification of a barn from an agriculture structure into a public event center near Watkins.

The board of commissioners voted 3-0 Dec. 9 in favor of a conditional use permit (CUP) for the GCSA Event Center, a 13,200 square-foot barn in the 6500 block of Imboden Road northeast of Watkins.

The most recent request, including a 5-1 approval recommendation from the county planning commission Nov. 13, was approved by commissioners with eight conditions precedent and 14 other conditions, including operating requirements.

The recent approval is for a maximum crowd allowance of 782 people inside the building, which is located on a 10-acre portion of a larger 39-acre parcel. The event center site includes a parking lot, landscaping and stormwater detention.

"The CUP shall only allow the subject use to occur within the acreage identified within the site plan (approx. 10 acres)," county staff said during its report. "Any expansion of the area used by the subject use within the larger lot, which is approximately 39 acres, shall require an amendment to the CUP prior to any such expansion."

Staff added that previous concerns, including from the Adams County Sheriff's Office,

**SEE EVENT CENTER OK'D
PAGE 4**

COMMUNITY CORRAL

Family center's annual mtg, boutique planned in January

BYERS — The Family Resource Center of the Eastern Plains will hold its annual board meeting starting at 6 p.m., Monday, Jan. 19, at the center at 228 W. Front St., Byers.

The meeting is open to the public. Participation is encouraged.

The January monthly open boutique will run from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 24.

Visitors should enter through the front door to register before they shop for their little ones from a selection of baby to size 6 clothing, shoes, coats, diapers and more.

For more information, call (303)822-9368.

Free monthly lunch on tap for local veterans, seniors

BENNETT — Free lunches for I-70 Corridor military veterans and senior citizens age 65 and older will resume in January.

The next meal, served by a group of local volunteers, is scheduled at 12 p.m., Friday, Jan. 16. Veterans and seniors from all along the I-70 Corridor are invited.

The meals are usually served on the second Friday of each month at the Bennett VFW Hall.

For more information, call Flora Goodnight at (303)549-2589.

Byers Legion Post 160 seeks new members and new ideas

BYERS — American Legion Post 160 in Byers wants to expand its membership and its outreach into the community.

All military personnel are eligible for the American Legion. Sons, grandsons and great-grandsons can join the Sons of the Legion; the Auxiliary welcomes spouses, daughters and granddaughters.

The post is asking Legion members, active duty military, and retired veterans to provide feedback on building a productive post that supports veterans and the community in sustaining Byers' ideals and unique culture.

"We want to see our Legion Hall ... providing a locale where we can meet

Holiday decor comes down



Patrick Klein with the Strasburg Lighting Crew removes a giant candy cane from a power pole during takedown festivities throughout town Jan. 3.

and foster the culture of our farm town culture," a release states.

For more information, call Cmdr. Dale Ness at (303)594-6501 or financial advisor Teresa Seggerman at (303)253-1475, or e-mail to Byers160@outlook.com.

Senior excursion to U.S. Mint planned by Burg Parks & Rec

STRASBURG — The bus leaves at 10 a.m., Thursday, Jan. 22, on a senior excursion to the U.S. Mint.

The cost is \$5. Lunch is additional. Advanced reservations are required due to limited seating.

To RSVP, call the rec center at (303)622-4260.

The bus will depart from the Strasburg Recreation Center, 1932 Burton St. The excursion is hosted by the Strasburg Parks & Recreation District and Mountain View Fellowship.

Senior excursion destined for museum at Fort Collins

STRASBURG — The bus leaves at 10 a.m., Thursday, Feb. 19, on a senior excursion to the Fort Collins Museum of Discovery.

The cost is \$20. Lunch is additional. Advanced reservations are required

due to limited seating. To RSVP, call the rec center at (303)622-4260.

The bus will depart from the Strasburg Recreation Center, 1932 Burton St. The excursion is co-hosted by the Strasburg Parks & Recreation District and Mountain View Fellowship.

Economic development group plans rural health care review

STRASBURG — The Regional Economic Advancement Partnership will meet from 12-1:30 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 8, at CORE Electric, 1092 Cedar St., Bennett.

Speakers will be Ginger Williams, Associate CSU Professor of Rural Health, Boettcher Foundation Fellowship; Dr. Kevin Stansbury, CEO Lincoln Health; Tisha Jackson, owner of Reflective Wellness Mind & Body in Aurora; and Jake Nemmers, representative for Sen. John Hickenlooper.

Lunch will be available beginning at 11:30 a.m. Cost is \$18. To purchase lunch, RSVP by Friday, Jan. 2.

Ag & Food Lab presentation slated for biz org luncheon

BYERS — The I-70 Corridor Chamber of Commerce will host its month-

ly Lunch & Learn from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 21, at May Farms, Byers.

Representatives from the Ag & Food Lab in Denver will speak, and May Farms will sponsor lunch.

For more information and to RSVP for lunch, call (720)731-1954 or e-mail to officei70ccoc@gmail.com by Friday, Jan. 16. Space is limited.

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 lighting and ground scenes to be placed on the first Saturday of December.

The improvements include replacement of old lights, LED bulbs and garland.

Checks can be mailed to P.O. Box 14, Strasburg, CO 80136.

Bennett meeting planned on road bond, annexation

BENNETT — The Town of Bennett will host a public meeting for input on the future of roads and growth from 5:30-7 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 21, at the Bennett Community Center.

This meeting will center on a road bond proposal under consideration by the Board of Trustees in terms of maintenance and improvement of Bennett's transportation infrastructure.

Representatives from the Colorado Department of Transportation will attend to provide insight into regional transportation coordination and state-level considerations.

In addition, the town planners will discuss the annexation process within the Town of Bennett and how annexations fit within the town's 2021 Comprehensive Plan.

The community center is located at 1100 E. Colfax Ave.

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CARL STEITZ/For The Scout

F&M Bank's Bennett branch hosted the grand finale conclusion to a silent auction fundraiser Dec. 11 to assist with renovations to the Byers American Legion Hall. From left photo, F&M's Colorado President Ivy Craig, left, oversees the counting of the money once final bids were turned in; Lilli Woods, 5, and Ruby Lancaster, 9, enjoy the holiday props before getting photographed by Memory Lane Photo Booth; and Greg Cowell writes down a bid on one of the approximately 65 items offered during the auction. The total goal is \$20,000 to help with four primary projects at the Legion Hall — a collapsed wall, HVAC renovations, and both interior and exterior improvements.



STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout



CARL STEITZ/For The Scout

ARAPAHOE COUNTY



All County offices will be closed **Monday, Jan. 19** in observance of the Martin Luther King Jr. Day holiday.



ARAPAHOE COUNTY
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How to Shop a Seed Catalog

Shopping a seed catalog can be overwhelming. Learn about what to buy and how much you will need for your vegetable garden. This free information session will be held at Eloise May Library on Jan 10, 9–10 a.m.

Register now at https://bit.ly/CSU_SeedCatalog



Road and Bridge crews ready for snow

Arapahoe County typically gets between 60–90 inches of snow every winter and Road and Bridge is at the ready. Find info on the County's snow plan, routes, and property-owner responsibilities at www.arapahoeco.gov/snow.

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EVENT CENTER OK'D

FROM PAGE 1

have been mostly addressed and that any issuing of the permit won't occur until all issues have been appropriately addressed. "[Members of the sheriff's office] have met with the applicants and [conducted] a recent site visit, and concerns were assuaged," staff said.

According to a memo from the Adams County Community & Economic Development Department, "The building owners have indicated they want to use the existing accessory structure as a wedding event center."

Among the 31 public notices to all property owners and occupants within a mile of the site, only one comment against the project was received. The dissenting landowner said that people attending events at the location mistake their home as the event center's driveway and that event-goers are many times driving drunk.

Last month's approval occurred five years since the barn was first constructed as an agriculture structure only in 2020.

In 2021, the owner received a code violation for using the barn as an event center and, as a result, a CUP application was filed for about one-third of the building as an event center on six acres. During that CUP process and staff review of the request,

the property owners received another code violation for continuing to use the barn for an event center without an approved CUP.

During an Aug. 2, 2022, public hearing commissioners conditionally approved the applicant's request for the event center, including the requirement of fulfilling six conditions precedent before proceeding. The applicants met one of six conditions precedent and, after one year, the permit expired.

The current CUP process has also been lengthy because of multiple delays that occurred throughout 2025.

"This case has been continued by the Planning Commission three times to allow the applicant more time to resolve public safety concerns," the staff report added. "During this time, the applicants have made significant progress in resolving those concerns, though several items remain outstanding. The public safety concerns have mostly been resolved and conditions of approval have been recommended to address the ones outstanding."

Among the precedents is No. 6 mandating the applicant receive preliminary acceptance for public improvements from the Public Work Depart-

ment, including additions to a portion of the main roadway.

"Improvements to Imboden Road are required to ensure safety, which include turn lanes and access that meet county standards; these construction plans have been approved," the staff report said.

Among the 14 conditions of approval are:

- The conditional use permit is valid for three years, expiring on Dec. 9, 2028;
- All event parking located on the 10-acre site with parking lot and driving lanes made of a county-approved surface, such as recycled asphalt;
- at least two security guards on duty during all events;
- warming kitchen but no food preparation on site;
- event hours limited TO 12-10 p.m.;
- maximum one-time occupancy maximum of 782 people; and
- adherence to state and county liquor licensing requirements.

Commissioners Emma Pinter, Lynn Baca and Julie Duran Mullica voted for the CUP request while Commissioners Steve O'Dorisio and Kathy Henson were absent.

The Gift Shop



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Semiquincentennial coin designs unveiled

by Alex Murphy
KUNC

The U.S. Mint recently unveiled new designs for coins to celebrate the nation's 250th anniversary.

The coins will be released next year as part of the Semiquincentennial Circulating Coin Program.

The unique coins include new artwork on both sides of the dime, five new quarter designs, and a half-dollar. To celebrate the anniversary, each coin will have the dates 1776 and 2026.

"The designs on these historic coins depict the story of America's journey toward a 'more perfect union,' and celebrate America's defining ideals of liberty," said Acting Mint Director Kristie McNally in a press release. "We hope to offer each American the opportunity to hold our nation's sto-

ried 250 years of history in the palms of their hands as we Connect America through Coins."

The plan for the temporary redesign was approved by President Trump during his first term as part of the Circulating Collectible Coin Redesign Act of 2020.

Four different places mint coins in the United States with the majority coming from Philadelphia and Denver. Coins are also produced in San Francisco and at West Point, N.Y.

Earlier this year, the federal government decided to eliminate the penny. The decision had bipartisan support, including from Colorado Gov. Jared Polis, who explained that the expense of creating a penny no longer made sense financially.

Officials with the U.S. Mint say next year's anniversary coins will come at no added expense to taxpayers.

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Adams County names new CFO

BRIGHTON — A woman with more than two decades of executive financial leadership experience in Colorado's public sector has been appointed as Adams County's finance leader.

Bettina Schneider was recently named Chief Financial Officer by the Adams County Board of Commissioners. According to a release, her career has been dedicated to strengthening financial stewardship, operational accountability, and the delivery of essential public services.

"Bettina's experience in public finance and proven record of leadership make her a great addition to our team," said Commissioner Lynn Baca, board chair. "Her experience leading large organizations through financial and operational challenges will be invaluable as Adams County continues to strengthen transparent and responsible financial practices for our residents."

Tremendous growth caused the county to elevate the previous Budget & Finance Director position to a CFO to best align with the current needs of the organization's size and complexity.

"Bettina's expertise and incredible wealth of knowledge will bring increased financial stability and economic resilience to Adams County," said County Manager Dionne Stroter. "As our county continues to grow in population, we face a critical need to ensure our county's services are responsive to needs while remaining fiscally responsible. With a strong leader like Bettina, we are ensuring we are in the best place possible to navigate these challenges."

Throughout her career, Schneider has held key leadership roles in government. She began her career at the Colorado Office of the State Auditor before joining the Department of Health Care Policy & Financing



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Bettina Schneider will serve as Chief Financial Officer for Adams County.

(HCPF) as a budget analyst. Her public service journey includes leadership positions at the Denver Health & Hospital Authority and the Governor's Office of State Planning & Budgeting.

Schneider was later appointed as CFO and Deputy Executive Director for Denver Human Services and most recently served as Chief Financial Officer for HCPF.

"Strong financial stewardship is the foundation for delivering high-quality services," Schneider said.

Raised in Montana, Schneider earned both her bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Montana. She is a Fulbright Scholar to Austria and a Lean Six Sigma Black Belt. Outside of work, she enjoys traveling, time outdoors, ultra trail running, and the company of her two rescued German Shepherds.

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Beef grower: White House policy making tough job even tougher

by Lucas Brady Woods
KUNC

Turnkey Cattle Company is nestled in Colorado's northeastern plains just outside of Greeley. The family owned-and-operated ranch raises calves for local, all-natural beef.

"The Western way of life is – it's solid, it's family, it's all about community," said Turnkey owner Chad Sanger as he looked out over one of his pastures. "I just think that's what the majority of this country is lacking."

But Sanger said it's increasingly tough for small operations like his to grow and thrive. Cattle and land are getting harder for ranchers to afford, especially when they're competing with big corporate producers and foreign imports.

"There is no incentive to stay in this industry or start in this industry, because you can't buy the ground. If you buy the ground, it won't pencil," Sanger said.

Sanger and other Colorado ranchers say some decisions from the White House are creating uncertainty for American beef producers, and it's



Chad Sanger, 50, sits on the fence of cattle pen at his ranch, Turnkey Cattle Company, at Greeley Dec. 2. Sanger said Trump administration's decisions around beef imports frustrate him.

hurting their businesses.

Sanger said he supports President Trump and many of the administration's policies. But he was frustrated by the president's announcement in October that the U.S. would quadruple the amount of beef it imports from Argentina.

"Why the producers and ranchers

are so upset about that is, you're going to say that on national television, on the one payday that ranchers get a year," Sanger said.

Ranchers and industry advocates said the decision to buy more Argentinian beef was particularly damaging because the announcement came during the one time of year when local

ranchers sell their cattle.

"These ranchers, they take their calf crop to market and they get one check for the entire year," said Erin Spaur, executive vice president of the Colorado Cattlemen's Association, the main trade group for state ranchers. "When these market disruptions happen during this time, where all these calves are going to market, it really affects those producers on the ground."

Spaur said the price of a calf dropped hundreds of dollars in the days following Trump's announcement.

Then, last month, the Trump administration also announced it would reverse beef tariffs imposed earlier in the year. That should be good news for American beef producers, but Spaur said the change came too late in the season to have a positive impact for ranchers anytime soon.

"There's a whole fluctuation of prices that have happened since these comments took place originally," Spaur said. "We're seeing just kind of a shock wave through the market system. It's really bad timing."

In a statement, White House spokesperson Anna Kelly said the move to expand imports from Argentina is intended to lower beef prices for consumers.

"President Trump pledged to protect America's ranchers and deliver economic relief for everyday Americans," Kelly said. "The administration is accomplishing both by expanding beef imports from Argentina to lower consumer prices in the short term while rolling out a new U.S. Department of Agriculture initiative that will support ranchers and expand cattle herd sizes to keep prices lower in the long term."

The cattle population in the U.S. is at a 75-year low, according to the USDA. The agency's multi-step plan to grow domestic herds was announced in October. It proposes to open new grazing land, streamline permitting, and revise standards for compensating ranchers for natural disasters and predation.

Shrinking domestic cattle herds, combined with high demand for beef in the U.S., are driving many of the pressures ranchers are facing, including high prices and increasing foreign imports, said Colorado State University livestock researcher Nathan DeLay.

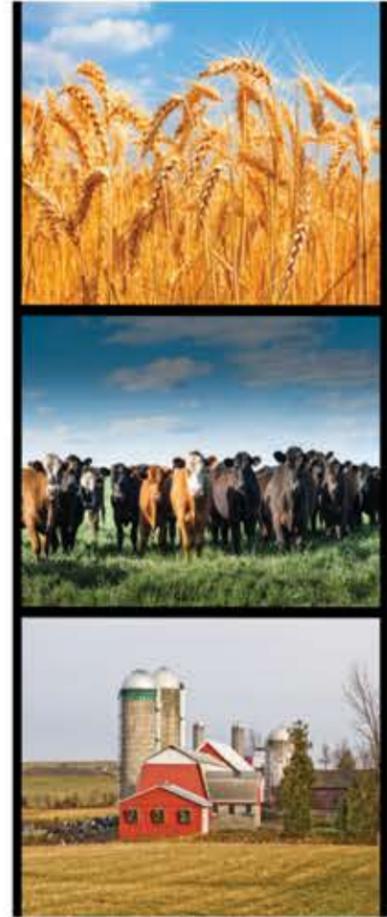
"We've had years of persistent drought that has forced ranchers to liquidate their herds. It's led to this really small herd size," DeLay said. "We have a very constrained supply situation, which leads to higher prices."

With fewer cows to go around, DeLay said ranchers often feed their animals for longer and grow them bigger, which costs them more money and resources.

Back at Turnkey Cattle Company on the Eastern Plains, Chad Sanger said he hopes American herds will rebound.

"The thing is, there's nothing that the government's going to do to change the price of beef until we get our herd built back up," Sanger said.

If that doesn't happen, Sanger said he's worried local, family-run ranches like his would struggle to survive.



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Olympic wrestler visits 'Burg



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

The Strasburg girls and boys wrestling teams likely came away with several new moves in their arsenal to start the new year after six-time world champion, two-time U.S. Olympian and Olympic silver medalist Adeline Gray made a visit to the Indians' practice Dec. 30. Gray, a finalist in the 76kg freestyle match in the Tokyo Olympics in August 2021, conducted a technique clinic for the Indians, both boys and girls. From left photo, Gray takes a moment to speak to the group of exuberant student-athletes and, after the clinic, Gray, center, takes a moment to pose for a photo with both the boys and girls teams. For coverage of last weekend's resumption of the wrestling schedule for all three local schools, see the Jan. 9 edition of the *Eastern Colorado News*.

LIBRARY NEWS

ANYTHINK BENNETT LIBRARY

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

Teen Hangout: Kids ages 13-18 can hang out, play games, and enjoy snacks with your friends in the library. There will be gaming consoles, board games, crafts, and other fun activities available. 3:30-6 p.m., every Tuesday through January.

Tech Takeaway: A new tech topic will be explored by adults each month in an ongoing series. This month tips and tricks to optimize your phone's performance will be addressed.

The class will conclude with a question-and-answer session. Questions should be submitted in advance, if possible.

Space is limited; registration encouraged for Q&A. 6-7 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 8.

Rummikub, Refreshments & More: Adults gather on the second Friday of each month to drink coffee, eat snacks and play Rummikub. Other card and board games available. 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m., Friday, Jan. 9.

Yoga in the Stacks: Adults can practice poses that focus on alignment, stability and flexibility with Bennett yoga instructor Scott Noble. Mats provided. All skill levels welcome. Space limited; registration required. To sign up, visit Anythinklibraries.org. 10:30-11:30 a.m., Saturday, Jan. 10.

Tarot club: Adults can learn about the tarot and do readings for other participants to practice their skills in

a beginner-friendly workshop. 2-3:30 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 10.

Teen Advisory Board: Kids ages 12-17 can attend regular meetings to take an active leadership role in planning and implementing library programs and events. They can also use their voices to advocate for youth services in Bennett. 4:45-6 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 21.

KELVER LIBRARY

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

Cozy Cocoa & Mugs workshop: Tweens and teens can design their own mugs and hot chocolate mix, then enjoy hot beverages. All supplies provided, including dairy-free, gluten-free and vegan options. 3:30-4:30 p.m., Thursday, Jan 15.

Little Makers Club: Children ages 0-5 and their families will participate winter-themed activities. Free crafts, toddler-friendly snacks, and a goody bag provided. 10-11:30 a.m., Friday, Jan. 9.

Adult book club: "The Seed Keeper" by Diane Wilson. 6-7 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 13.

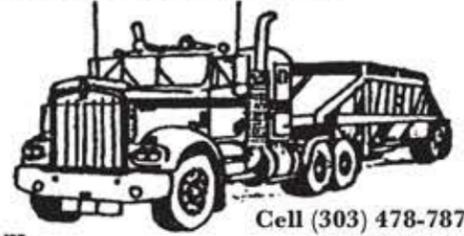
DAVIES LIBRARY

128 Second Ave., Deer Trail
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www.arapahoelibraries.org

Wacky Wednesday: Teens can drop in for snacks, games, cool tech and creative crafts. New activity each month. Ages 12-18. 4-5:30 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 14.

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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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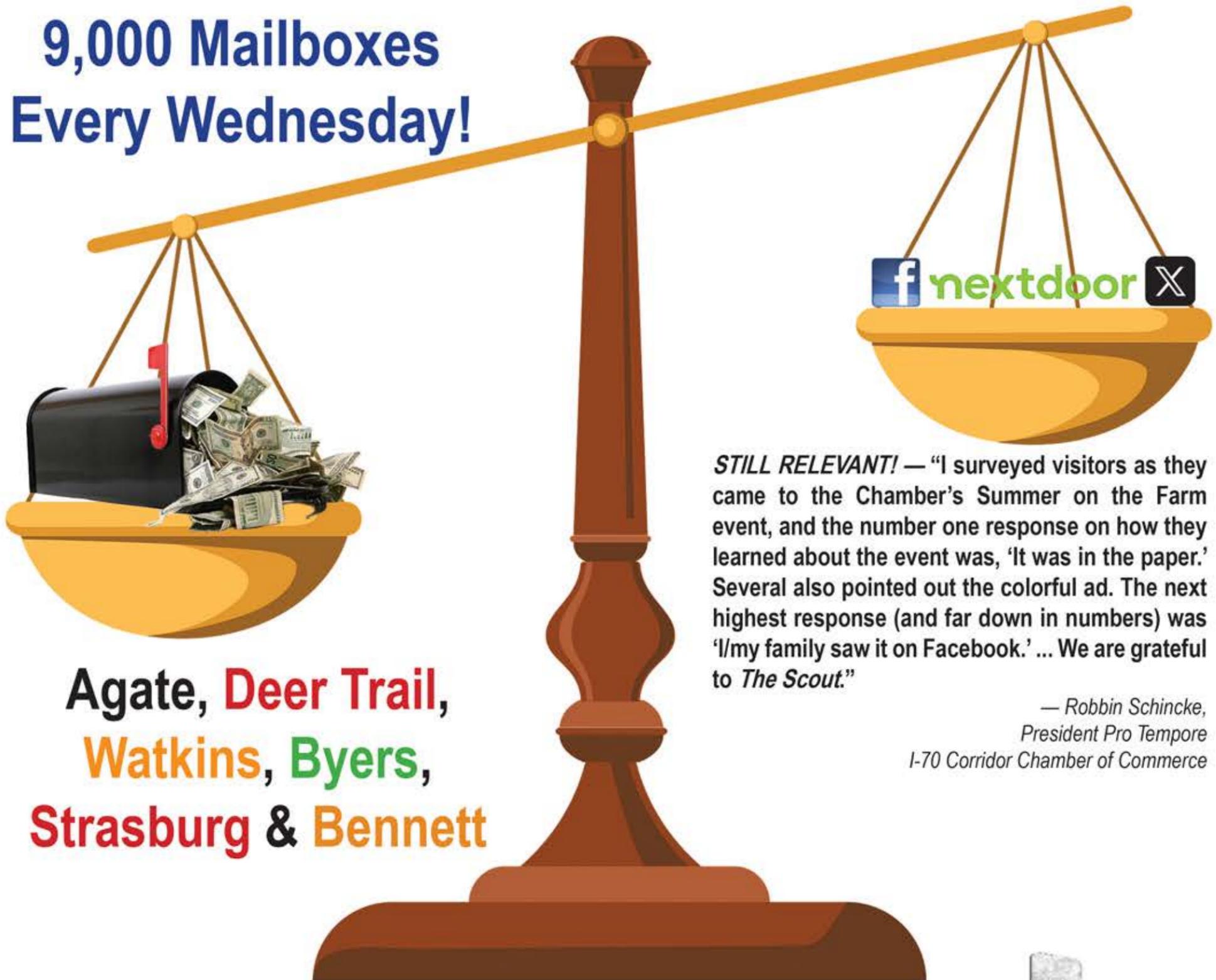


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NASA via AP

This image provided by NASA shows the Perseverance Mars rover taking a selfie, which consists of 62 individual images in July 2024.

New findings by NASA Mars rover provide strongest evidence yet of ancient life on the Red Planet

by Marcia Dunn
Associated Press Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — NASA's Mars rover Perseverance has uncovered rocks in a dry river channel that may hold potential signs of ancient microscopic life, scientists reported early in September.

They stressed that in-depth analysis is needed of the sample gathered there by Perseverance — ideally in labs on Earth — before reaching any conclusions.

While acknowledging the latest analysis “certainly is not the final answer,” NASA's science mission chief Nicky Fox said it's “the closest we've actually come to discovering ancient life on Mars.”

Roaming Mars since 2021, the rover cannot directly detect life, past or present. Instead, it carries a drill to penetrate rocks and tubes to hold the samples gathered from places judged most suitable for hosting life billions of years ago. The samples are awaiting retrieval to Earth — an ambitious plan that's on hold as NASA seeks cheaper, quicker options.

Calling it an “exciting discovery,” a pair of scientists who were not involved in the study — SETI Institute's Janice Bishop and the University of Massachusetts Amherst's Mario Par-

ente — were quick to point out that non-biological processes could be responsible.

“That's part of the reason why we can't go so far as to say, ‘A-ha, this is proof positive of life,’” lead researcher Joel Hurowitz of Stony Brook University told The Associated Press. “All we can say is one of the possible explanations is microbial life, but there could be other ways to make this set of features that we see.”

Either way, Hurowitz said it's the best, most compelling candidate yet in the rover's search for potential signs of long-ago life. It was the 25th sample gathered; the tally through Sept. 10 is up to 30. The findings appeared in the journal *Nature*.

“It would be amazing to be able to demonstrate conclusively that these features were formed by something that was alive on another planet billions of years ago, right?” Hurowitz said. But even if that's not the case, it's “a valuable lesson in all of the ways that nature can conspire to fool us.”

Collected last summer, the sample is from reddish, clay-rich mudstones in Neretva Vallis, a river channel that once carried water into Jezero Crater. This outcrop of sedimentary rock, known as the Bright Angel forma-

SEE LIFE ON MARS?

PAGE 10

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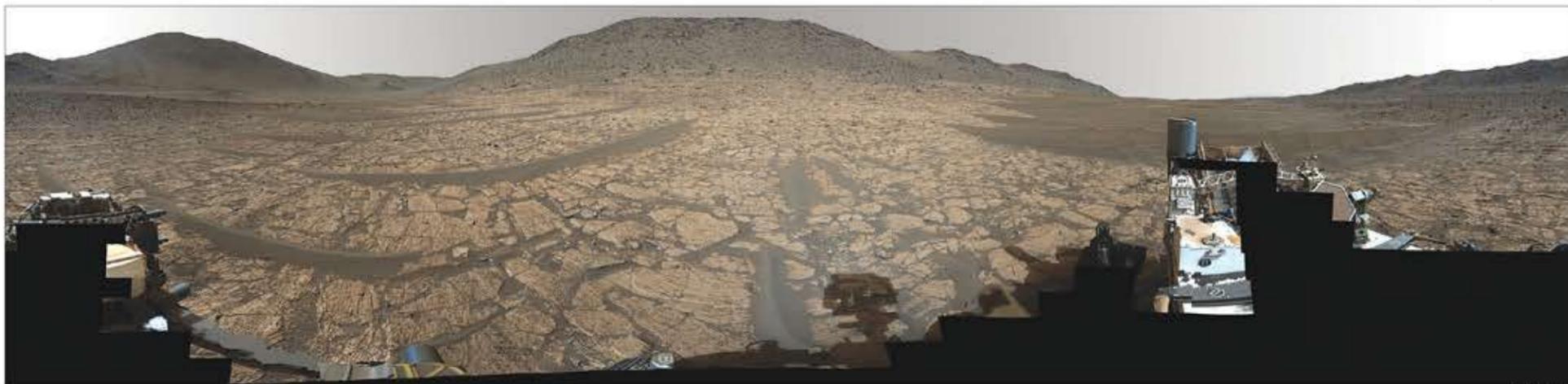
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This image provided by NASA shows the 360-degree view of a region on Mars called "Bright Angel," captured in June 2024 by NASA's Perseverance Mars rover. The photo consists of 346 individual images that were stitched together after their return to Earth.

LIFE ON MARS? FROM PAGE 9

tion, was surveyed by Perseverance's science instruments before the drill came out.

Along with organic carbon, a building block of life, Hurowitz and his team found minuscule specks, dubbed poppy seeds and leopard spots, that were enriched with iron phosphate and iron sulfide. On Earth, these chemical compounds are the byproducts when microorganisms chomp down on organic matter.

"There is no evidence of microbes on Mars today but, if any had been present on ancient Mars, they too might have reduced sulfate minerals to form

sulfides in such a lake at Jezero Crater," Bishop and Parente wrote in an accompanying editorial.

There's no evidence of present-day life on Mars, but NASA over the decades has sent spacecraft to Mars in search of past watery environments that might have supported life way back when.

When Perseverance launched in 2020, NASA expected the samples back on Earth by the early 2030s. But that date slipped into the 2040s as costs swelled to \$11 billion, stalling the retrieval effort.

Until the samples are transported off of Mars by robotic spacecraft or astronauts, scientists will

have to rely on Earthly stand-ins and lab experiments to evaluate the feasibility of ancient Martian life, according to Hurowitz.

NASA's acting Administrator Sean Duffy said budgets and timing will dictate how best to proceed, and even raised the possibility of sending sophisticated equipment to Mars to analyze the samples on the red planet. "All options are on the table."

Ten of the titanium sample tubes gathered by Perseverance were placed on the Martian surface a few years ago as a backup to the rest aboard the rover, all part of NASA's still fuzzy return mission.

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Will nuclear ever be an option for DIA energy needs?

Airport CEO says it remains at least 15 years out. Some think it should never be an option.

by **Allen Best**
Big Pivots

In case he didn't get the message in August, Phil Washington, the chief executive at Denver International Airport, was reminded repeatedly at a meeting in Denver Nov. 18 that many people distrust nuclear technology.

The meeting at Green Valley Ranch was the last of four community meetings as DIA explains why it will put out a request for information in January about how to expand its electrical supply. More than 100 people attended to hear Washington, some to ask pointed questions and air grievances.

An audience half to two-thirds smaller had been at the Westin hotel adjacent to the airport two weeks before. There, he had laid out DIA's case somewhat differently. Washington said DIA expects that existing electrical demand of 45 megawatts will grow to 300 to 400 megawatts during the next two decades. At Green Valley Ranch, Washington described growth in individual sectors without specifying total growth in demand.

More markedly different was how Washington explained DIA's relationship with its current supplier, Xcel Energy. At the previous meeting, he said several times that the airport is not confident that its "current electrical supplier" will be able to deliver the electricity it needs. In this meeting, he described DIA's work to ensure "redundancy" as necessary to have adequate supplies.

At the Nov. 18 meeting, Washington made no mention about lack of confidence in Xcel. Instead, he made a point of saying that what DIA does might occur in tandem with Xcel's plans.

"We're not excluding anyone," he said of Xcel.

Still, questions hung in the air, and Jeff Ackermann, a Denver resident and former chair of the Colorado Public Utilities Commission, asked them: "Are you planning to own your own generation? Are you planning to sell (the electricity)? Do you see yourself as a utility? What is your relationship with Xcel? Do you see yourself being part of the franchise? These are the questions of interest."

Washington replied: "We don't know what we want to be yet. We have to get information. We have to digest the information and determine where that leads us. What we're talking about is a long-term plan that we can put in place for the airport for 20, 25, to 30 years that is the blueprint, the plan we want to leave our successors. So I am not ready to stand here and say we will be totally energy independent. But that could be an outcome."

Ackermann had also advised Washington and his team to "set aside the issue of nuclear and put it in a different room and come back to it in five years."

Washington replied that he and his team know that small modular reactors won't happen soon.

"We know the technology won't be ready for the next 15 years or so. We know that," he said. "But we will have the information."

For many listeners, Washington's assurance that DIA will just gather information was unsatisfactory. If DIA already knows that the technology of small modular reactors falls short, then why try to get the information



Denver International Airport CEO Phil Washington talks to neighboring residents during one of four public meetings concerning future power requirements and resources that might be necessary to meet those demands.

now? asked a woman. She also mentioned the absence of an adequate solution for nuclear waste anywhere in the world.

Mayra Gonzales expressed concerns about impacts to water and, more broadly, health concerns. Many others fretted about impacts to health of whatever DIA does. They want their health to be a priority in the decision-making process.

"We are not breaking ground on a small modular reactor," Washington answered. "We are simply gathering information and then coming back with our plans."

The neighborhood is an isthmus of Denver, the municipality, located along Peña Boulevard and near DIA. Green Valley and Reunion, a neighborhood in Commerce City, are those most proximate to the airport.

Seemingly central to the conversation was Green Valley's representative on the Denver City Council, Stacie Gilmore, who sat in the middle of the room. In early August, DIA issued a request for proposals for a small modular reactor. Gilmore then raised questions that forced the airport to shelve the request.

Gilmore may have been responsible for the presence of Alan Salazar, the chief executive of Denver Water, who

was among the first of several dozen people to speak.

Salazar said that sometimes water utilities confine themselves to thinking about how to deliver water but assume it's somebody else's problem to worry about energy. Climate change and scarcity now require energy and water planners to be in the same room.

"I wanted to be here at the front end of the conversation to assure you that the utility that you rely on, Denver Water, is part of this conversation. Wants to be part of the conversation.

Wants to know what these alternatives might look like, so we can help determine the impacts on water usage and water security," he said.

Salazar credited Washington with thinking ahead, as water utilities must, for 25, 50 and 100 years.

Then Salazar veered his comments to data centers.

"You've heard about artificial intelligence and the way that may change our economy. You've heard conversations about data centers. The demand for electricity is exponentially higher going forward than it has been at least in my lifetime," he said. "Where are those data centers going to be built?"

"I don't want to turn this into a data center conversation, because that's a whole other topic, but I am concerned that we look to the future in a way that is sustainable, that is consistent with what nature can."

Still unanswered exactly is how much of DIA's projected growth in demand for electricity will be for airport operations and how much might be needed for uses on land controlled by the airport. DIA has 53 square miles, second only to an airport in the Middle East.

As for passenger traffic, DIA ranks sixth worldwide. Traffic has grown far more rapidly than projected at the airport's opening in 1993, and Washington pointed to growth in non-passenger traffic as a reason for expanded electrical needs. Being part of Denver, it also has a goal of carbon neutrality.

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CARL STEITZ/For The Scout

The annual Christmas with the High Plains Music Ensemble concert occurred Dec. 20 at the Bennett High School Performing Arts Complex. From left, trumpeter Kylie Bronk plays her part; Andy Garcia and daughter Josie, who turned 8 two days prior to the show, lead an auditorium-wide sing-along; and saxophonists Danny Bertram, left, and Ayden Reynolds show off their skills while appropriately adorned in Christmas headwear.



CARL STEITZ/The I-70 Scout



ISAAC MANAUGH/The I-70 Scout



ISAAC MANAUGH/For The Scout

From left to right, director Kurt Elliott leads the musical troupe; Juliana Garcia-Cuyun plays her flute in partial elf attire; and percussionist Katelynn Swallow clashes her cymbals.

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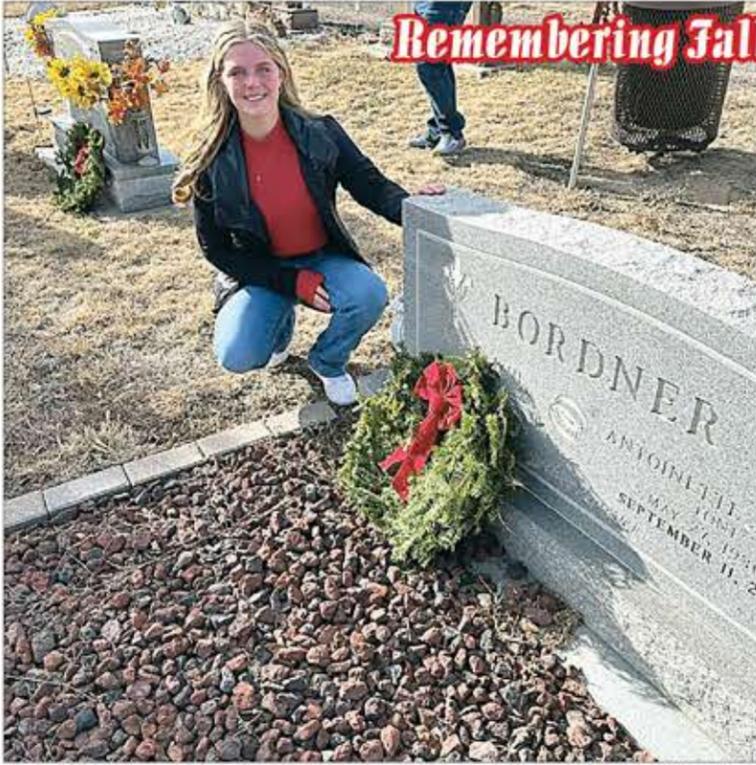
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NANCY BARDEN/For The Scout



CARL STEITZ/For The Scout

The 2025 Wreaths Across America event was held Dec. 13 at more than 5,400 cemeteries across the United States, including at Mount View Cemetery in Bennett and Byers Cemetery. The Bennett event was organized and hosted by Bennett High School freshman Macy Meyer while a contingent of Strasburg High School Honor Society students participated in the Byers event. From left photo, Meyer kneels down to lean a wreath on the headstone of her great grandfather, and Strasburg senior Collin Jones, in red shirt, reads a quote about the day of remembrance in front of a throng of veterans and other well-wishers. Wreaths Across America's goal is to place a wreath on every fallen hero's grave, honoring their service and teaching younger generations about the sacrifices that have occurred for freedom. The next date for the annual event is set for Dec.19, 2026.



ISAAC MANAUGH/For The I-70 Scout

In what has become an annual holiday tradition on the south side of I-70 near Watkins, an extensive rural holiday light display adorns the night sky at Prosper Farms.

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THE NOT-SO DUSTY PAGES

20 YEARS AGO JAN. 10, 2006

Representatives for Nuszer Kopatz presented an updated version of the Town of Watkins Comprehensive Plan Jan. 4 in a regular meeting of the town's planning commission.

Minor changes have been made to the comprehensive plan, but the presentation by Principal Director of Business Development Michael Ermisch and Project Planner Victor Villarreal emphasized the slow, controlled development dictated by the plan.

"It's important to realize that the development for the next couple of years will be relatively slow. People have to go through their zoning, approvals and annexation," Ermisch said. "Sky Ranch, for instance, is going to be 2½ years into the process before they even break ground. So to think that we will have even 1,500 units built by 2010 is far-fetched at best."

Ermisch comforted commissioners, concerned with the prospect of 500 dwellings built on a 35-acre parcel, by discussing the realities of market-driven development. The Watkins Landowners for Responsible Growth (WLRG) would be the first to agree, he added.

15 YEARS AGO JAN. 11, 2011

WASHINGTON, D.C.— With Republicans taking over the U.S. House of Representatives, President Barack Obama's administration is bracing for a contentious battle regarding repeal of last year's health care regulations.

In fact, the new House unleashed its first attack Dec. 6 when it announced that a vote on repealing "ObamaCare," HR2, will occur Jan. 12.

"We know congressional and House Republican leaders are looking at repealing the Affordable Care Act, but that is a bad idea for America," said Health & Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius during a Jan. 5 press conference. "What we're seeing is the new law is giving more freedom and more choices. Citizens don't have to worry about losing coverage, it's freeing Americans with preexisting conditions, and freeing business owners from skyrocketing costs."

Repeal would take away all those freedoms and shift power back to insurance companies."

Sebelius said congressional budget office statistics indicate repeal of last year's health care package would result in 32 million citizens nationwide denied health care coverage and another trillion dollars added to the federal deficit.

In Colorado, projections indicate that over 18,500 young adults would lose insurance coverage after being removed from their parents' health plans before the age of 26; 2.8 million with private coverage would likely have lifetime limits for coverage placed on them; and approximately 575,000 senior citizens on Medicare would be forced to pay a co-pay for preventive procedures.

10 YEARS AGO JAN. 12, 2016

BENNETT —An anticipated boom in student enrollment the next few years has Bennett School officials investigating ways to circumvent overcrowding and provide a more stable learning environment.

While additional facilities could be called for further down the road, the most pressing issue appears to be better utilizing existing space and possibly shifting the makeup of the three schools. According to growth estimates, current classroom capacities could be pushed to their limits between 2018 and 2020.

During a Jan. 6 facilities master plan meeting, Bennett School Board members toured individual buildings and got a first-hand account of where modifications could be made. A total of eight secondary classrooms are currently vacant.

The north high school wing is currently the most underutilized with five unused classrooms. It was also noted that the building's hallways are drab and uninspiring, requiring paint; however, the spaces used as storage are what brought the most attention to board members.

"I'm overwhelmed with the clutter in the unused rooms," stated director Nancy Barden as the group walked through the room formerly used for shop class.

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SOLUTION ON PAGE 18

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is Wednesday, Jan. 7, the seventh day of 2026. There are 358 days left in the year.

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHT

On Jan. 7, 2015, masked gunmen stormed the Paris offices of *Charlie Hebdo*, a French newspaper that had caricatured the Prophet Muhammad, methodically killing 12 people, including the editor, before escaping.

ALSO ON THIS DATE

In 1610, astronomer Galileo Galilei observed three of Jupiter's moons for the first time and a fourth days later.

In 1955, Marian Anderson became the first African American to sing with the Metropolitan Opera in New York, in Verdi's "Un Ballo in Maschera."

In 1979, Vietnamese forces captured the Cambodian capital of Phnom

Penh, overthrowing the communist Khmer Rouge government whose brutal policies are blamed for the deaths of 1.7 million people, including the killing of thousands of Vietnamese villagers in cross-border raids.

In 1999, President Bill Clinton's Senate impeachment trial began on grounds of perjury to a grand jury and obstruction of justice. The Republican-controlled House voted in Oc-

tober 1998 to start proceedings after months of controversy over Clinton's relationship with White House intern Monica Lewinsky, with whom he denied having a sexual relationship. The Senate acquitted Clinton on Feb. 12, falling far short of the 67 votes needed to convict on each charge.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAYS

Musician Kenny Loggins is 78. Ac-

tor David Caruso is 70. TV journalist Katie Couric is 69. Republican Sen. John Thune of South Dakota is 65. Republican Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky is 63. Republican Actor Nicolas Cage is 62. Actor Jeremy Renner is 55. Country singer-musician John Rich is 52. Formula 1 driver Lewis Hamilton is 41. NFL quarterback Lamar Jackson is 29. Actor Marcus Scribner is 26.

—Associated Press

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 - Rough, as in voice
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 - Go for the bronze?
 - Poem of lament
 - Grammy nominee Bad Bunny's first language
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 - Cowboy's cry of joy
 - Big attraction
 - Spring holiday honoree
 - Live bait
 - Daytime moth
 - Puerto follower
 - Finger move
 - Colonnade
 - Invitation letters
 - "Zip it"
 - Trash bag brand
 - Polar helper
 - *Lady Gaga's nominated album
 - *Tyler of CHROMAKOPIA, with The
 - Prejudiced one
 - Busy one
 - Do penance
 - Approves
 - Make a mistake
 - Sans- font
 - "I, Claudius" role
 - Jack and Jill did this
 - Changes to a manuscript
- DOWN**
- Parentheses, e.g.
 - "Star Trek" speed
 - Away from port
 - Not be frugal
 - What TikTokers are often doing
 - This and that
 - Legal grp.
 - Door holder
 - Mix together
 - Away from wind
 - Leo or Libra, e.g.
 - *Wonder's "Songs in the ___ of Life," Album of Year (1977)
 - Where bats are?
 - Eurasian goat-like antelope

CROSSWORD

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68										70	
71						72					73

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- Middle-earth dweller
 - Pelican or albatross, e.g.
 - Person in an ad
 - One of Florida Keys
 - Health food pioneer of liquid aminos fame
 - *Nominated "Drop Dead Years" comedian Bill ___
 - Swerves
 - Sound units
 - Synagogue scroll
 - Zing or pizzazz
 - *Justin Bieber's nominated song
 - Fabled fliers
 - Red one, send somebody over!
 - Unalienable ones are in the Declaration of Independence
 - Draft pick
 - Give satisfaction
 - Spot for prehistoric fly
 - Doomed
 - *MCA, Ad-Rock and ___ D, Grammy-winning Beastie Boys
 - Culture-growing turf
 - Walk-the-dog toy
 - What concerning and discernable have in common
 - *Nine-time Grammy-nominated Amos
 - Fonzie's comeback: "Sit ___"
 - Whistle blowers
 - *Iver of SABLE, FABLE fame
 - Historical period

ANSWERS ON PAGE 20

HOROSCOPE

Cosmic Conjunction, the Sequel

Yesterday, Venus was in conjunction with the sun, and now Mars gets the attention. We're reminded that we don't always get to choose who we're around, which is why when we do have a choice, we should take advantage of it. Today, the company will be more important than the circumstance. Better to weather the storm with a friend than bask in the sunshine with an enemy.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Ideas will click into place, blueprint-style, giving you a future you're excited about. The vibe is "totally doable." Wrap one project and the support for the next pops up automatically, like the system is refreshing itself for you.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You'll be made aware that you're not where you want to be in terms of performance. Maybe it's good enough for the others on your team, but you think you can do better, so it's not good enough for you. Keep putting in the practice. You'll get there.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You contain multitudes, but multitudes can't be taken in all at once. Offer one thread of yourself today. It invites people in instead of leaving them unsure where to begin.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Your recollection may not be 100% factual, but that's just the nature of memory in general. At least your recollections will be kind and positive, so happy stories will get better over time and sad stories will lose their sting.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Daunting tasks need doing. They look complicated, heavy or painfully boring, but they're usually quicker than they appear, and the psychic lift afterward is delicious. Jump in, get it done and enjoy the freedom that follows.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). If a choice feels impossible, zoom out. Instead of, "Which one is right?" try, "Which one would future-me thank me for?" Decisions get easier when you let identity lead. Your future self has better taste than you think.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Sometimes you just don't trust others to give you the right

help, or you fear the hidden costs. Sometimes you simply like doing things alone. You're like a creature whose needs shift with the seasons, and the right care will come.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Some of the choices are too big, too hot, too cold, and suddenly, you're in the Goldilocks challenge of doing what's just right. What Goldilocks didn't get right was falling asleep on the job. Don't get too comfortable, and you'll be fine.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Although no one else can stop you, you'll be wise to stop yourself every so often. Take breaks! Good, healthy pacing allows you to avoid the burnout that could prevent you from collecting your prize at the finish line.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Your thoughts will move in straight lines, and everything else will support your purposefulness. It's all getting straight to the point now. People will literally step aside because no one dares get between you and your target.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You're hungry for glamour and bright, creative minds to riff with. If the world isn't serving it up, curate your own scene. Throw a gathering, join one or even start a little salon. The vibe you're after is waiting to be conjured.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). There's a prize for winning, but honestly, it's not the only reward. It may not even be the best reward, as life has a way of doling out "participation prizes" that are more valuable than the big trophy.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Jan. 7). Celebrate your Year of Bold Receiving. You've given so much; now life gives back. Supporters show up, networks widen, and an exciting opportunity arrives because someone can't stop singing your praises. Love energizes you. Money matters stabilize and then improve. More highlights: a bucket-list event, confidence in your voice and a mentor who truly sees your potential. Cancer and Leo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 7, 18, 20, 34 and 48.

—Horoscopes by Holiday



JEFF BAEMEN/AP Photo

Astrid Rubens demonstrates the elasticity of homemade slime in her kitchen in St. Paul, Minn., in 2017.

Slime, Battleship, Trivial Pursuit named to Nat'l Toy Hall of Fame

by Carolyn Thompson
Associated Press

Slime, that gooey, sticky and often-homemade plaything, was enshrined into the National Toy Hall of Fame on Thursday along with perennial bestselling games Battleship and Trivial Pursuit.

Each year, the Hall of Fame recognizes toys that have inspired creative play across generations, culling its finalists from among thousands of nominees sent in online. Voting by the public and a panel of experts decides which playthings will be inducted.

Milton Bradley's Battleship, a strategy game that challenges players to strike an opponent's warships, and Trivial Pursuit, which tests players' knowledge in categories like geography and sports, have each sold more than 100 million copies over several decades, according to the Hall of Fame.

Battleship started as a pencil-and-paper game in the 1930s, but Milton Bradley's 1967 plastic edition with fold-up stations and model ships made it a hit with the public. Its popularity crested when Universal Pictures and Hasbro, which now owns Milton Bradley, released the 2012 movie, "Battleship," loosely based on the game. Battleship was also among the first board games to be computerized in 1979, according to the Hall of Fame, and now there are numerous, electronic versions.

Trivial Pursuit lets players compete alone or in teams as they maneu-

ver around a board answering trivia questions in exchange for wedges in a game piece. Canadian journalists Chris Haney and Scott Abbott came up with the game in 1979 and eventually sold the rights to Hasbro. Frequently updated, specialty versions have emerged for young players, baby boomers and other segments and an online daily quiz keeps players engaged, chief curator Chris Bensch said.

Slime's appeal is more about squish than skill.

Introduced commercially in 1976, Slime has been manufactured under various brand names, but it is even more accessible as a do-it-yourself project. The internet offers a variety of recipes using ingredients like baking soda, glue and contact lens solution.

"Though slime continues to carry icky connotations to slugs and swamps — all part of the fun for some — the toy offers meaningful play," curator Michelle Parnett-Dwyer, adding that it's also used for stress relief and building motor skills.

The honorees will be on permanent display at the Hall of Fame inside The Strong National Museum of Play in Rochester, N.Y.

This year's inductees were voted in over other nominees including the games Catan and Connect Four, the Spirograph drawing device, the "Star Wars" lightsaber, Furby and Tickle Me Elmo. They also beat out classics including scooters, cornhole and snow.



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Shirley Kuzara



Shirley Amanda Kuzara, 78, passed away peacefully on December 17, 2025. Born on September 19, 1947, in Flint, Mich., Shirley was a successful stay at home mom for her five children. She was resourceful and social, always finding ways to integrate into the community.

Shirley moved to Bennett in 1996 and soon became the president of the Young at Heart Senior Club from 2005 through June of 2025. While president, Shirley helped organize events which were hosted by the Young at Heart Senior Club at the local community center. These events were focused on bringing the community together and highlighting the various strengths of the community from beadwork to baking.

In her free time, Shirley enjoyed arts and crafts. She was talented at beadwork and was known for making personalized ornaments and bracelets. One of her greatest beadworks came from a community member who challenged her to make an accurate American flag using beads. She successfully completed this beaded American flag and was willing to accept additional challenges from community members.

The youth of Bennett may affectionately remember Shirley as the "soda lady." She would pass out sodas during Halloween instead of candy, calculating a higher hit with the kids. Later, she transitioned to juices and sodas so stopping at her house for Halloween would be a hit with parents and children alike.

Shirley is survived by her loving family: husband John Kuzara; children Sheila Sell, Michele Kuzara, Keven Kuzara, Tanya Kuzara, and Tammy Kuzara; grandchildren Apollo Stoewer, Arianne Stoewer, Yvonne Sell, Pete Sell, Zachary Kuzara, and Jadin Hildreth; and great grandchildren Chelsea Ticknor, Chloe Stoewer, and James Stoewer.

A private service will be held to honor Shirley Kuzara.



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EYVH MORGAN/The Strong National Museum of Play via AP

This photo from Nov. 5 provided by The Strong National Museum of Play shows the games to be inducted into the National Toy Hall of Fame in Rochester, N.Y.

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CORRIDOR CALENDAR

THURSDAY, JAN. 8
Bennett Parks & Recreation District Board. 5:30 p.m., Bennett Recreation Center.
Bennett Fire Protection District Board. 7 p.m., Administrative Office, 355 Fourth St., Bennett.
Eastern Colorado Honor Band concert. 6:30 p.m., Bennett High School auditorium. Admission \$5 or \$7.

SATURDAY, JAN. 10
Bennett-Watkins Lions Club. 9 a.m. via Zoom. Call Diane at (303)644-3717 for log-on information.

MONDAY, JAN. 12
Food Bank of the Rockies Mobile Pantry. 9-11 a.m., Kelter Library parking lot, 585 S. Main St., Byers. Optional pre-registration at newclient.link2feed.com.
Strasburg School Board. 6 p.m., Strasburg High School Central Services building board room. Zoom participation available. Visit strasburg31j.com for link.
Bingo. 7 p.m., Byers American Legion.
Byers Water & Sanitation District Board. 7 p.m., District Office, 421 S. Sherman St.
Deer Trail Fire Protection District Board. 7 p.m., Deer Trail Firehouse.

TUESDAY, JAN. 13
Food Bank of the Rockies Mobile Pantry. 4-8 p.m. or while supplies last, Hinkley High School, 1250 Chambers Road, Aurora.
Daughters of the American Revolution Sil-

ver Spike Chapter. 6:30 p.m., TBK Bank Committee Room, Strasburg.
Bennett Board of Trustees. Work-study 5:45 p.m. Regular meeting 7 p.m. For a Zoom link, visit bennettco.gov.
Deer Trail Town Board. Work session 6:30 p.m., regular meeting 7 p.m., Town Hall, 555 Second Ave.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 14
Deer Trail Conservation District Board. 1 p.m., Farm Service Agency office, 133 W. Bijou, Byers.
Strasburg Sanitation & Water Board. 7 p.m., TBK Bank conference room, 56641 E. Colfax Ave., Strasburg.

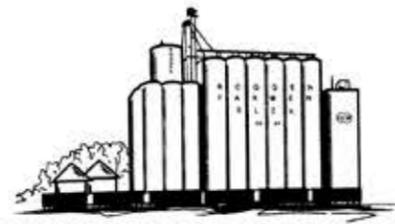
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R	A	S	P	Y		O	B	I		B	E	L	I	E
C	R	E	E	P		T	A	N		E	L	E	G	Y
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For additional information, contact
Machaela Eymann
at (303) 822-5292 x1113.

The I-70 Scout is seeking part-time help processing newspapers Tuesday mornings. Must be 18 or older. Strong hands, ability to stand several hours and computer literacy required. Please apply in person Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., 1522 Main St., Strasburg. Ask for Lu-Anne. 1/7c

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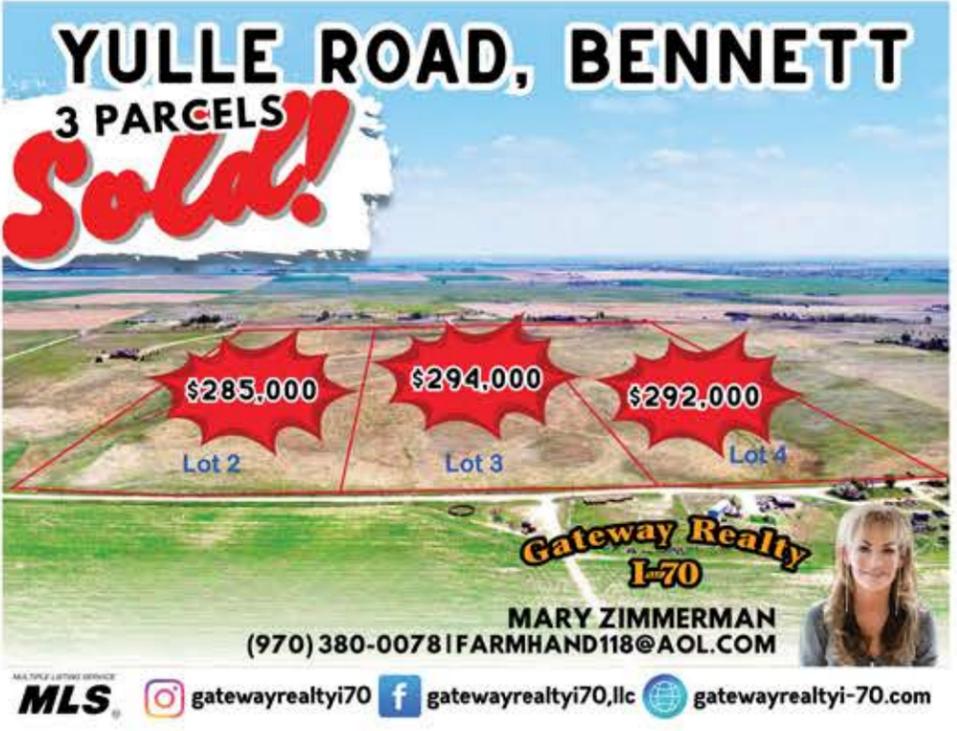
Classified applications can be found at www.byers32j.k12.co.us under the Human Resources tab on the District page.

Applications can be sent to:

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- 470.05 Acres farm land 21 miles E of Byers 1 mi S Hwy 36 \$423,000

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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 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

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CHUCK WAGON

A classic Italian cookbook gets an English edition after years of effort

by **Mark Kennedy**
AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK — As a child growing up in Italy, Lidia Bastianich recalls seeing one particular cookbook in just about everyone's kitchen. It was called "The Talisman of Happiness" and it was often given as a wedding present to couples starting new lives together.

"It has all the basic recipes. And it says the basic thing — that food is a connector, that food is happiness," she says.

The book by Ada Boni — its Italian title is "Il Talismano della Felicità" — was first published in 1929, and became a go-to place to find the recipe for spaghetti carbonara or pork galantine. Its simplicity and accessibility got it compared to "The Joy of Cooking," but it predated Irma S. Rombauer's iconic work.

This fall, the first English edition of the complete work — with nearly 1,700 recipes — arrives on shelves, thanks to years of dogged pursuit by Voracious publisher Michael Szczerban.

THE HUNT IS ON

He first heard about it from Samin Nosrat, author of "Salt Fat Acid Heat," and that, combined with his love of Italy, led him on a more than decade-long journey to get the rights to publish it in English. "Just the poetry of that name — 'The Talisman of Happiness' — it felt timeless and also like it was from so long ago," Szczerban says.

Boni, who died in 1973, was

one of Italy's first food writers, and the seeds of "The Talisman of Happiness" grew from a magazine. She codified and tested dishes that have remained the backbone of Italian cooking and reflect regional differences. There are 10 gnocchi recipes, 12 minestrone and 20 risottos.

"This is a cookbook that's really meant for cooking. It is a book for cooks. It's a book that's intended to be used, not just to sit on a coffee table or on a shelf, but to become yours," Szczerban says.

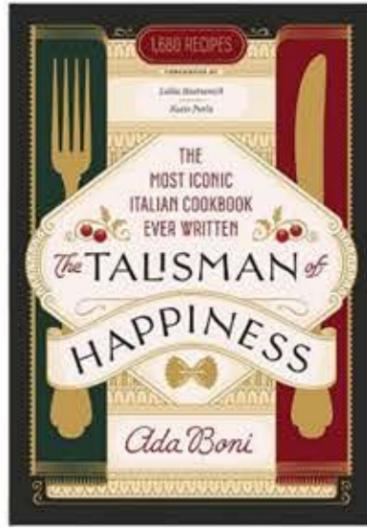
There's no frilly language or stories. Each entry includes ingredients, and the directions are usually just a few paragraphs, telling the home cook to look for the meat to be "done" and the vegetables to be seasoned "to taste."

Unlike recipes from Milk Street, Bon Appetit or America's Test Kitchen, Boni didn't weigh things to the gram or even dictate oven degrees. Her Cod with White Wine only specifies "a few spoons" of wine. Elsewhere, she calls for a "finger of oil" or "a few leaves of rosemary."

"I think that there was a very specific editorial vision for these recipes, which was to give you enough to make it, but not so much that you couldn't make it your own," Szczerban says.

12-YEAR SLEUTHING ADVENTURE

The more Szczerban learned about "The Talisman of Happiness," the more intrigued he became. What at first was an impulse to find a copy for himself grew into something



larger.

"As I began to understand more of what it was — the place that it seemed to have had in Italian history and culture, and then the spread of Italian cooking throughout the world — I thought, 'I don't need just a copy of this. I need to be able to use my position as a publisher to bring this to the rest of the English-language world,'" he says.

The book had been updated regularly in Italy and there had been a few stabs at an English version, but the recipes were changed in order to tailor them to American tastes and heavily abridged.

"Nobody had translated the full beast," Szczerban says.

Szczerban started a sleuthing adventure that took some 12 years — calling random numbers at the Italian publisher with a script created from Google Translate, poring over bankruptcy reports to see who might have inherited the intellectual property rights, and talking to every

Italian book figure and agent he could.

A breakthrough came when he contacted a book packager — like a movie producer, but for books — who knew somebody who knew someone else who maybe could locate a relative. A few months later, they found a great-nephew.

"I think you needed somebody on the ground in Italy to unlock the relationship of trust," Szczerban says.

He decided to use the 1959 Italian edition as the model, tapping eight translators. He removed only recipes that were completely unworkable and sections on Italian etiquette that were dated. The original edition was constantly consulted.

"We wanted it to be Ada's book, still. We weren't trying to modernize it. We were trying to preserve it and to keep it intact," he says. "The word talisman, to me, has such power. I wanted it to be the talisman it was back when it was first published."

Bastianich wrote a forward for the English edition and says it captures the culture, religion, topography and climate of Italy.

"Italians really, really cherish their cultural heritage," she says.

Szczerban has already seen it in effect. For an office potluck, a sales rep who liked the book decided to make Baked Wine Donuts — a sort of shortbread cookie with wine mixed into the flour.

"She's not a baker. She's never seen this thing before. But there was something in-

triguing about it that got her into the kitchen and, I'll tell you, these were amazing," he says. "They turned out the first time, and going out a little bit beyond her comfort zone gave her the confidence to take on the next recipe and the next recipe. To me, that is kind of the magic of a book like this: It can seduce you in some way, but then it gives you something back."

BAKED WINE DONUTS

Makes 36

INGREDIENTS

- 3 1/3 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup olive oil
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 3/4 cup wine
- oil for greasing

DIRECTIONS

Put the flour in a heap and add the oil, sugar, and a glass of light wine, white or red, in the well in the middle. You need a paste that is neither too hard nor too soft. Make it into a ball, let it rest for a few minutes, and then divide it into 4 or 5 pieces.

Take one piece at a time and stretch it over a lightly floured board to make a roll the width of your thumb. Cut this into pieces of about 8 inches and make a donut out of each one, pressing the ends together so that they do not then open. Proceed in the same way until all are used up.

Line up the donuts on a lightly oiled baking sheet, sprinkle them with sugar, and bake them for about 20 minutes in a preheated oven at a good heat.

LUNCH MENUS

AGATE

Thursday, Jan. 8: Turkey, mashed potatoes.

Monday, Jan. 12: Hamburger, potato wedges.

Tuesday, Jan. 13: Popcorn chicken, chips.

Wednesday, Jan. 14: Spaghetti, dinner roll.

BYERS

Thursday, Jan. 8: Hot ham and cheese, tomato soup, pears.

Friday, Jan. 9: Sloppy joe, Tater Tots.

Monday, Jan. 12: Beef tacos, beans & rice.

Tuesday, Jan. 13: Italian Dunkers, garden salad.

Wednesday, Jan. 14: Macho nacho,

corn bread.

DEER TRAIL

Thursday, Jan 8: Grilled cheese and tomato soup, green beans.

Monday, Jan 12:

Tuesday, Jan 13: Soft chicken tacos, salad.

Wednesday, Jan 14: Pasta with meat sauce, yogurt parfait.

STRASBURG

Thursday, Jan. 8: Lasagna roll-ups, garlic bread.

Friday, Jan. 9: Pretzels with cheese.

Tuesday, Jan. 13: Chicken fajitas, refried beans.

Wednesday, Jan. 14: Grilled cheese, tomato soup.

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Thank You Neighbors!

As we reflect on a challenging December, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude to our neighboring school districts, Byers and Bennett, and their communities. During this time of healing in the Strasburg School District — following the loss of a beloved student and supporting one of our own who lost their home in a fire, your kindness and generosity have made a profound impact. Despite the boundaries that separate us, we are truly thankful for your support and compassion. It takes a village to come together in times of hardship and your unwavering assistance has been a beacon of strength for us all. From the bottom of our hearts, THANK YOU for standing with us during this trying time.

With sincere appreciation,
The Strasburg School District

STRASBURG HS GIRLS & BOYS BASKETBALL

THANK YOU

● THANK YOU, FROM THE BOTTOM OF OUR HEARTS ●
ON BEHALF OF THE STRASBURG GIRLS AND BOYS BASKETBALL TEAMS, WE WANT TO EXTEND OUR DEEPEST GRATITUDE TO EVERYONE WHO SUPPORTED THE KEVIN HEMPHILL FOUNDATION GAME.

THE RESPONSE FROM OUR COMMUNITY, LOCAL BUSINESSES, AND FRIENDS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY WAS OVERWHELMING. THIS OUTPOURING OF KINDNESS TRULY EXCEEDED ALL EXPECTATIONS AND WILL PROVIDE MEANINGFUL SUPPORT TO THE HEMPHILL FAMILY DURING A VERY DIFFICULT TIME.

THIS GAME WAS ABOUT MORE THAN BASKETBALL — IT WAS ABOUT COMING TOGETHER, SHOWING COMPASSION, AND STANDING BESIDE A FAMILY WHEN IT MATTERED MOST. EVERY DONATION, MESSAGE OF ENCOURAGEMENT, AND ACT OF GENEROSITY MADE A DIFFERENCE, AND WE ARE INCREDIBLY THANKFUL FOR EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU.

● THANK YOU FOR SHOWING THE TRUE POWER OF COMMUNITY. ●

#StrasburgBasketball #FoundationGame
#TogetherForKevin #StrasburgStrong

SCHOOL BOARD APPRECIATION MONTH

We honor our dedicated school board members for their unwavering commitment and hard work. Their leadership and vision play a vital role in creating a nurturing and enriching environment for our students. We recognize the countless hours they devote, always advocating for the best interests of our students and community.

THANK YOU for your relentless support and efforts.



STRASBURG BOARD OF EDUCATION
Monthly Board Meeting 2nd Monday of Each Month

January Dates of Note!

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6 CLASSES RESUME! HS Basketball Boys @ Peyton Girls vs. St. Mary's (Home)	7 HS Wrestling @ Liberty	8 DAC Mtg., 4:45 p.m. HS BB @ Woodlin Park E. Colo. Honor Band, @ Bennett, 6:30 p.m.	9 HS Wrestling Boys @ Florence	10 HS Wrestling Boys @ Florence Girls @ Severance HS BB @ Wray
11	12 School Board Mtg., 6 p.m. HMS Wrestling @ Wiggins	13 HS Basketball @ Home, Wiggins HMS Girls Basketball @ Limon	14	15 Partners in Education (PIE) Night 6 p.m. HMS Cafeteria	16 HS Wrestling @ Home HMS Wrestling @ Stratton C Girls @ Byers	17 Speech/Debate @ University Cheer @ Roosevelt HS Wrestling @ Mountain Vista
18	19	20 HS Basketball vs Windsor Charter Girls away, Boys home HMS Wrestling @ Burlington HMS Girls @ Wiggins	21 Strasburg Elementary Family Fitness Night	22 FAFSA Sr. Night HMS Girls Kiowa @ Home	23 HS Girls Wrestling @ Douglas County HS Basketball @ Resurrection Christian	24 SHS Knowledge Bowl HS Wrestling Girls @ Douglas County Boys @ Lakewood HMS Girls Basketball @ Home Tourney
25	26 HMS Wrestling Home Tourney BOE Work Session 6 p.m.	27 SHS Blood Drive Gym, 1-4 p.m. HS Basketball Boys @ Brush Girls, Brush @ Home	28 Strasburg High School Career Fair	29 HMS Girls Basketball The Academy @ Home	30 HS Basketball Liberty Common Boys home, Girls Away HS Girls Wrestling @ PLatte Valley	31 HS Girls BB Sky View @ Home Cheer @ Boulder HS Wrestling Boys @ Platte Valley