



INSIDE >>

4-H, MDA campers come together for some fun **PAGE 7**

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Plan offers roadmap of Idaho Springs future

BY IAN NELIGH
Courant Editor

Nearly a dozen members of the public previewed the proposed land-use portion of the revised Idaho Springs comprehensive plan during a town hall meeting on June 28.

Community development planner Alan Tiefenbach said the land-use portion of

the plan tells the city how it's supposed to grow and what kind of uses are appropriate in what areas, and it was time for it to be updated.

"It is sort of the roadmap for what the city is going to look like in the next 20 years," Tiefenbach said.

Tiefenbach said the city's old comprehensive plan didn't have much of a

land-use element.

"That tends to be difficult when you get a land-use proposal for anything, and I have no guide to look at to determine what the city's position is or what our vision is," Tiefenbach said.

Tiefenbach added it will ultimately act as a guide for consistent decision making. "So that things aren't done willy-nilly.

(Instead) there's some kind of consistent rulebook in the way that we do things," Tiefenbach said.

The draft plan will go to the city's planning board to weigh in on this Wednesday, and it will be discussed at a future city council meeting. Tiefenbach said further

Please see **ROADMAP**, Page 16

Constantly overused

County officials plan to tackle the degradation of Mount Bierstadt

BY IAN NELIGH
Courant Editor

Clear Creek County hopes to meet with stakeholders to find a solution to the public's overuse of Mount Bierstadt.

Commissioners met with Forest Service officials on June 27 to create a plan to address the wilderness area's continual degradation. They plan to identify the groups that should be part of the discussion.

"If we let this thing unravel, it is going to get to the point where it'll either have to be closed or people aren't going to have any (reason to) go," said Brian Banks, district ranger for the South Platte Ranger District.

County Manager Keith Montag said it was a good idea to assemble a group that could identify solutions.

"We need to have the discussion with the partners," Montag said. "I think the quicker we can get this team or committee together, the faster the county can (take action.)"

The problem

It is estimated that 35,000 people use the popular 14er every year. During the week, as many

as 17 people are on the summit at once, and on the weekend, that increases to 28.

According to the Forest Service, there have been 133 people counted at the summit at one time. The area has 106 designated parking places,



Photos by CHANCEY BUSH | The Courant

TOP: It is estimated that 35,000 people use Mount Bierstadt annually.

ABOVE: Ryan, front, and Torrey Tesch of Highlands Ranch make their way back to the parking lot after reaching the summit of Mount Bierstadt.

but the site sees as many as 375 to 400 vehicles at peak times.

The popularity is prompting the U.S. Forest Service to consider charging visitors in an effort to limit damage to the environment.

The same concerns have Clear

Creek's commissioners continuing to discuss the creation of a toll or permitting system to control access to Guanella Pass to curtail the damage being done by overuse.

Please see **MOUNT BIERSTADT**, Page 16

Rock House keeping teens busy this summer

BY IAN NELIGH
Courant Editor

Baseball, sailing, horseback riding — the Rock House plans to keep local youth busy with a host of free activities before school starts in August.

"Every week we do something different, so it is pretty cool," said Cheryl Holmberg, director of the Rock House, which offers free mentoring, tutoring, after-school programs and special events throughout the year. But it's essential to provide summer programs for students, she added.

"There isn't that much up here to do for the kids," Holmberg said.

Some of the weekly events include Friday Night Summer Fun from 6 to 9 p.m.

"The first week we went to the rodeo; the second week we played chicken bingo," Holmberg said.

Yes, chicken bingo is a thing. It's a game where participants predict a chicken's natural biological inclinations.

The youths also enjoyed live music, and a host of other events are planned this summer including trips to Water World and Elitch Gardens, camping, fishing and a Colorado Rockies baseball game.

"Wednesday we're taking

Please see **ROCK HOUSE**, Page 16



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