

FIRST DRAFT

A TALE OF TWO TRAINS



COURTESY OF THE EAGLE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The head-on collision of a freight train and a passenger train on the night of Jan. 15, 1909 killed 26 people. In this photo, the engine for the passenger train is on the right, and one of the two engines pulling the freight train is on the left. The train cars in which most of the passengers were killed may have already been removed.

Collision near Dotsero in January 1909 killed scores of people

When two Denver & Rio Grande Railroad trains collided on the night of Jan. 15, 1909, near the east entrance to Glenwood Canyon, 26 people died, and blame for the wreck quickly fell upon a Glenwood Springs railroad engineer driving one of the trains. Three locomotive engines were involved, one pulling a westbound passenger train and two powering an eastbound freight. "The three monster engines telescoped with the impact, and when they came to a standstill they resembled one huge piece of twisted iron and steel," said a story on the front page of The Daily Sentinel the next day.

train headed east out of Glenwood Springs, with two locomotives pulling it. W.H. Jeffries was the engineer, and he died later of injuries he suffered in the crash.



BOB SILBERNAGEL

When Train No. 5 reached Wolcott on its westbound journey, the crew received a directive from a railroad dispatcher. Olson was to pull the passenger train onto a siding at Dotsero and wait there until 9:55 p.m., allowing the eastbound freight, Train No. 66, to pass. A second directive ordered him to pull over at Gypsum and allow another freight to pass, but that directive was out of sequence, and may have created additional confusion.

The article added gruesome details: "Eight of the passengers in the chair car were decapitated as though by a guillotine," it said. "The bodies of the dead are so mutilated that it will require many hours to effect their identification." Several Grand Junction residents were among the passengers, the paper reported, but all of them apparently survived. The wreck wasn't the worst in Colorado's history. That occurred five years earlier near Pueblo, when almost 100 people were killed in a collision at Eden, Colorado. Still, the Dotsero collision was among the deadliest in the state's history.

When it reached Dotsero, Train No. 5 continued on. "Without stopping at Dotsero, or diminishing the speed of the train ... and collided with No. 66" at 9:47 p.m., a quarter mile west of Dotsero, said a report by the Colorado State Railroad Commission.

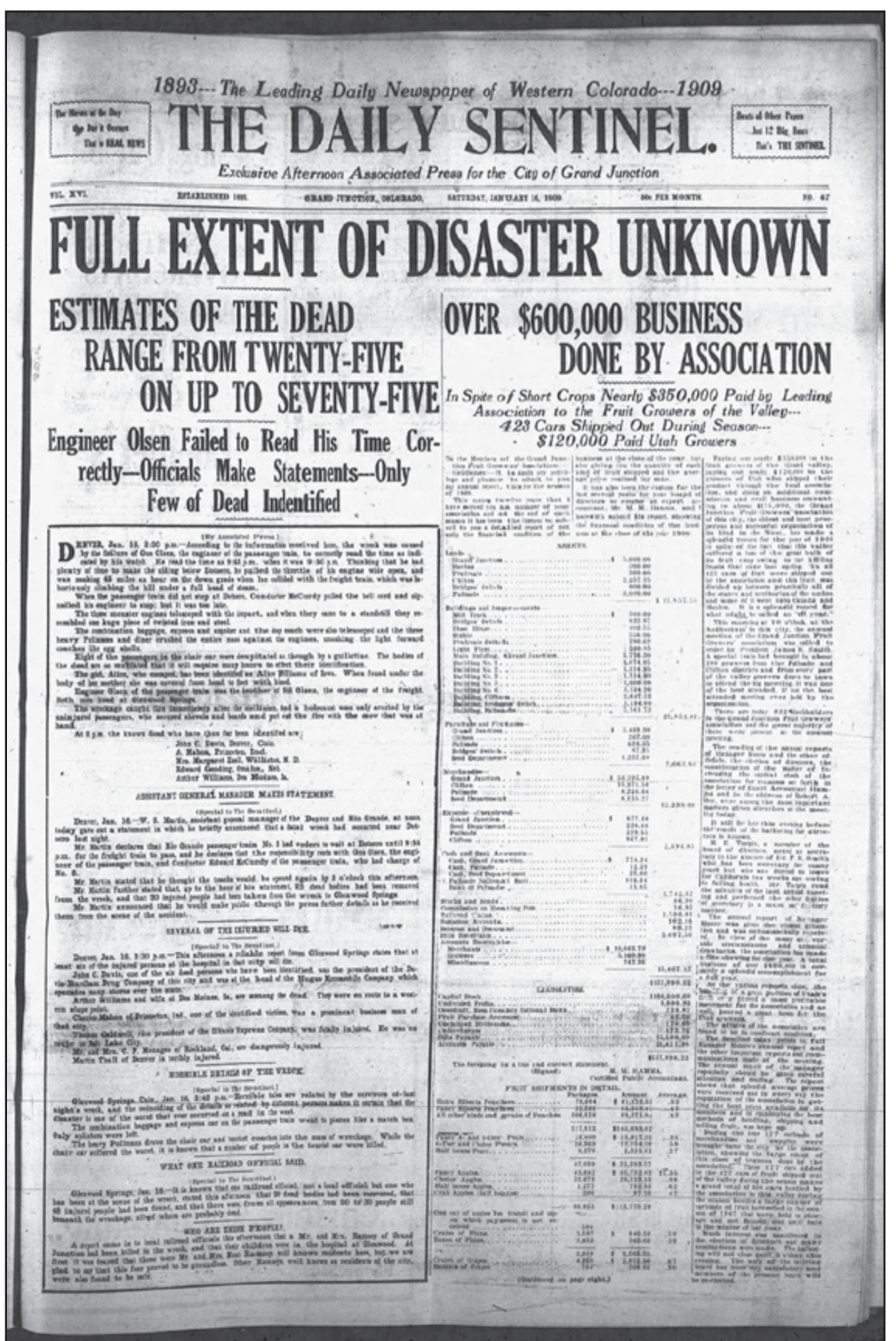
Twenty-one people were killed immediately and 35 were injured. Five of the injured died within a week of the accident. A number of crewmen jumped from both trains just before the collision.

Surviving passengers in the sleeping and dining cars immediately tried to help the injured and dying. Bodies were laid out in the snow. A doctor on board set up a makeshift hospital in the dining car, and treated injured as best he could. A coroner's jury, empaneled in Redcliff, Colo., ten days after the collision held Engineer Olson entirely responsible for the wreck, and didn't name Conductor Albert McCurdy.

A Jan. 25, 1909, article in the Sentinel said the jury verdict "held that Engineer Gus Olsen is responsible for the disaster." The article added that "Conductor McCurdy ... while not officially exonerated, was not mentioned in the verdict."

The State Railroad Commission said both men were to blame for the crash. Olson was deemed responsible for the wreck, but no criminal charges were filed against him. And he never publicly stated his version of what occurred on that cold night.

Train No. 5 was the westbound passenger train piloted by Olson. It included a steam locomotive, a coal car, baggage car, smoking car, chair car with seats facing each other, a number of Pullman sleeper cars and a dining car. It carried approximately 75 passengers, plus crew members.



The front page of the Jan. 16 edition of The Daily Sentinel proclaimed the horror of the train disaster, and listed the names of some of the known survivors.

Western Colorado PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING AND GENERAL ELECTION

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting and General Election of the landowners of the Orchard Mesa Irrigation District is called and will be convened at the Palisade Gymnasium (Behind new Community Care Clinic) 711 Iowa Ave, Palisade, CO at 1:00 P.M. on January 9, 2025. The purpose of the meeting is (1) Election of 2 Board Members from the areas West of Sink Creek (position held by Phil Patton), At Large (position held by Trent Cunningham); (2) Any other annual meeting business. Registration of voters will begin at 12:30 P.M. The business shall be transacted immediately following at 1:00 P.M. It is urged that you attend in person. Any questions about eligibility to vote should be resolved prior to the meeting by inquiring at 668 38 Road, Palisade, Colorado or by calling (970) 464-7885. Reminder: Pursuant to Article III, Section 4 of the OMD bylaws, as amended, no proxy shall be valid unless it is received for review and certification at the district office at 668 38 Road, Palisade, Colorado 81526 no later than 1:00 p.m. on January 6, 2025 (72 hours prior to the scheduled beginning of the meeting at which the proxy is to be exercised). If that deadline falls on a Saturday, Sunday, legal holiday, or other day when the district office is closed, proxies must be received for review and certification at the district office before 1:00 p.m. on the preceding business day. This action taken by the Board of Directors Roblee Talbott, President Published: December 14, 21, 28, 2024, January 4, 2025. COL-100523

Cottonwoods Detention Facility & The Compton Drain - Invitation for Bids

The City of Fruita is accepting sealed bids for the Cottonwood Detention Facility & Compton Drain Project. This project consists of creating an area that can safely and efficiently manage water flow from the Compton Drain and other storm drains, ensuring easy maintenance to prevent flooding, overgrowth, erosion, and fire risks to the area and nearby private properties. Each bid shall be submitted in electronic format through Electronic the Rocky Mountain E-Purchasing System (RMEPS), at the following link <https://www.tandirect.com/colorado>. This site offers both "free" and "paying" registration options which allow for full access of the City's documents and for electronic submission of proposals. (Note: "free" registration may take up to 24 hours to process. Please plan accordingly). A non-mandatory, pre-bid meeting with prospective Bidders will be held on Thursday, January 16, 2025, at 2:00 PM located at the corner of, Fremont Street and Windsor Park in Fruita. A copy of the Invitation for Bids can also be found on the City's website at www.fruita.org/rfps. Proposals are due by 2:30 p.m. (MDT) on Monday, January 27, 2025.

/s/ Mackenzie Erickson, Procurement and Contracts Specialist Published: January 4, 11, 2025. COL-100637

NOTICE OF FINAL PAYMENT

Please be advised that the Mesa County Board of Commissioners has received notice that the work has been completed on the Cape Seal Phase 1 project. The contractor, Rocky Mountain Pavement, of Mesa County is requesting final payment. This notice is to advise anyone with a lien to contact Mesa County Engineering Division, on or before February 3rd, 2025.

Mesa County Board of Commissioners Published: January 4, 8, 2025. COL-100634

PUBLIC NOTICE OF PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME

In the Matter of the Petition of: Tristin James Athey For a Change of Name to: Tristin James Bird Case No. 24C1474

Public Notice is given on 16/12/24 that a Petition for a Name Change of a Minor Child has been filed with the Mesa County Combined Courts. The Petition requests that the name of Tristin James Athey be changed to Tristin James Bird.

By: /s/ Ann Brigham, Clerk of Court Published: December 21, 28, 2024, January 4, 2025. COL-100567

NOTICE OF VESTED RIGHTS

Pursuant to C.R.S. §24-68-101 et seq. and Section §11.1 of the 2020 Mesa County Land Development Code a site-specific development plan has been approved by the Mesa County Planning Division for the following projects and shall result in a vested property right for a period of three years from January 4, 2025. PRO2024-0266 Aleyeska Fisheries Site Plan PRO2024-0044 Silver Oak Subdivision Final Plan Published: January 4, 2025. COL-100641

2004 Ford Explorer Tan
2004 Ford Explorer Tan
1FMZU62K24UB85815
NorthStar Towing
2105 H Rd
Grand Jct. CO 81505
970.497.9130
Published: January 4, 2025. COL-100643

PUBLIC HEARING

The Grand Junction Planning Commission will hold a public hearing at 5:30 PM on Tuesday, January 14, 2025, to consider the item(s) below. Persons may review information, watch presentations, and provide comments online at www.GJSpeaks.org starting at 5 p.m. on January 7, 2025. Options for attending and submitting public comment to Planning Commission are: (1) Attend the meeting at City Hall, 250 N 5th Street, (2) Provide comment in advance at www.GJSpeaks.org by January 13, 2025, at 5:30pm, (3) Comment by phone. Dial (970) 609-9688 and the four-digit code listed under each item below, or (4) Attend the meeting virtually. For information about participation in the meeting for individuals with hearing, speech, or visual impairments, please call 970-244-1430 or e-mail comdev@gjcity.org with your contact information. Register for the meeting online: bit.ly/GJ-PC-01-14-25 (Case-sensitive)

VAC-2024-148 Amaretto Creek Easement Vacation
Consider a request by Amaretto Creek Communities LLC to vacate a 15-foot public utility easement on 1.89 acres in a MU-2 (Mixed Use - Corridor) zone.
Applicant: Robert Jones II
Location: 1530 NORTH AVE
Phone-In Comments: 6736

SUB-2020-662 Goose Downs Subdivision Plat Extension
Consider a request by River City Consultants on behalf of Terry DeHerrera (owner) to extend for 1 year, the plat recording deadline for the first phase of Goose Downs Subdivision, 14 of 53 lots in an R-4 (Residential - 4 dwelling units acre) zone district.
Applicant: Terry DeHerrera
Location: 359 29 5/8 RD
Phone-In Comments: 1177

AUDIENCIA PÚBLICA

La Comisión de Planificación de Grand Junction llevará a cabo una audiencia pública a las 5:30 PM el 14 de Enero de 2025 para considerar los elementos a continuación. Las personas pueden participar en una audiencia pública en línea revisando información, viendo presentaciones y proporcionando comentarios en www.GJSpeaks.org a partir de las 5 p.m. el 7 de Enero de 2025. Las opciones para asistir y enviar comentarios públicos a la Comisión de Planificación son: (1) Asistir a la reunión en el Ayuntamiento, 250 N 5th Street, (2) Proporcionar comentarios por adelantado en www.GJSpeaks.org antes del 13 de Enero de 2025 a las 5:30 pm, (3) Comente por teléfono. Marque al (970) 609-9688 y el código de cuatro dígitos que se enumera debajo de cada elemento a continuación, o (4) Asista a la reunión virtualmente.

Para obtener información sobre la participación en la reunión para personas con discapacidades auditivas, del habla o visuales, llame al 970-244-1430 ó envíe un correo electrónico a comdev@gjcity.org con su información de contacto. Regístrese para la reunión en línea: bit.ly/GJ-PC-01-14-25 (Distingue mayúsculas y minúsculas)

VAC-2024-148 Amaretto Creek Easement Vacation
Considere una solicitud de Amaretto Creek Communities LLC para desalojar una servidumbre de servicios públicos de 15 pies en 1.89 acres en un distrito de zona MU-2 (Uso mixto - Corredor).
Solicitante: Robert Jones II
Ubicación: 1530 NORTH AVE
Comentarios telefónicos: 6736

SUB-2020-662 Goose Downs Subdivision Plat Extension
Considere una solicitud de River City Consultants en nombre de Terry DeHerrera (propietario) para extender por 1 año la fecha límite de registro de planos para la primera fase de la Subdivisión Goose Downs, 14 de 53 lotes en un R-4 (Residencial - 4 unidades de vivienda/ acre) distrito de zona.
Solicitante: Terry DeHerrera
Ubicación: 359 29 5/8 RD
Comentarios telefónicos: 1177

Notice of Final Settlement

Notice is hereby given that final settlement will be made on the 21st day of January 2025 on a contract dated June 27, 2024, between the City of Fruita and Oldcastle SW Group, Inc dba United Companies for 16 Rd. Improvements. All persons, companies or corporations that have furnished labor, materials or other supplies or services used by United Companies under and in connection with the said contract and whose claim has not been paid by the Contractor shall file, with the City of Fruita, 325 E. Aspen, Fruita, Colorado, a verified statement of the amount due and unpaid on account of such claim prior to January 21, 2025, the date of final settlement. Failure on the part of the claimant to file such settlement will relieve the owner for any or all liability for such claim.

/s/ MacKenzie Erickson, Contracts and Procurement Specialist

Published: January 4, 8, 2025. COL-100642

NOTICE OF FINAL PAYMENT

Please be advised that the Mesa County Board of Commissioners has received notice that the work has been completed on the Cape Seal Phase 2 project. The contractor, Rocky Mountain Pavement, of Mesa County is requesting final payment. This notice is to advise anyone with a lien to contact Mesa County Engineering Division, on or before February 3rd, 2025.

Mesa County Board of Commissioners Published: January 4, 8, 2025. COL-100635

PUBLIC NOTICE OF PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME

In the Matter of the Petition of: Jaxon Jay Athey For a Change of Name to: Jaxon Jay Bird Case No. 24C1475

Public Notice is given on 17/12/24 that a Petition for a Name Change of a Minor Child has been filed with the Mesa County Combined Courts. The Petition requests that the name of Jaxon Jay Athey be changed to Jaxon Jay Bird.

By: /s/ Jason Martinez, Clerk of Court Published: December 21, 28, 2024, January 4, 2025. COL-100572

Public Notice Estate of John David Sigrst, Deceased

Case No.: 24PR30228

All Persons having claims against the above-named estate are required to present them to the Personal Representative or to the District Court of Mesa County, Colorado on or before 5-5-25, or said claims may be forever barred.

John C. Sigrst And Samantha Cline Personal Representative c/o Arle R. Mielkus, Esq. 744 Horizon Court #300 Grand Junction, CO 81506 Published: January 4, 11, 18, 2025. COL-100636

Notice to Creditors

William A Laird, Deceased Case No.: 2024PR176

All Persons having claims against the above-named estate are required to present them to the Personal Representative or to the District Court of Mesa County, Colorado on or before 05/01/2025, or said claims may be forever barred.

Danny L Laird Personal Representative 9725 Trillium Drive Rogers, Arkansas 72756 Published: December 21, 28, 2024, January 4, 2025. COL-100557

Angel Gabriel Reyes PUBLIC NOTICE OF PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME

In the Matter of the Petition of: Gabriela Reyes Ventura For Minor Child: Angel Gabriel Lopez-Reyes Case No. 24C1423

Public Notice is given on 11/29/24 that a Petition for a Name Change of a minor child has been filed with the Mesa County Court. The Petition requests that the name of Angel Gabriel Lopez-Reyes be changed to Angel Gabriel Reyes.

By: /s/ Jason Martinez, Clerk of Court/Deputy Clerk Published: January 4, 11, 18, 2025. COL-100639

Notice to Creditors by Publication

Estate of Geri Dickenson, aka Geri B. Dickenson, aka Geri Beth Dickenson, Deceased Case No.: 2024PR30389

All Persons having claims against the above-named estate are required to present them to the Personal Representative or to the District Court of Mesa County, Colorado on or before April 20, 2025, or said claims may be forever barred.

Robert R. Dodson Personal Representative c/o Chris Mahre & Associates 1525 Poplar Drive Grand Junction, CO 81505 Published: December 21, 28, 2024, January 4, 2025. COL-100566

RAILWAY HORROR BLOTS OUT THREE SCORE LIVES

Denver & Rio Grande Headquarters Admit List of Fatalities Will Exceed 25--Survivors Who Reach Glenwood Say That Fully 70 Are Dead

Denver, Jan. 16.—Headquarters of the D. & R. G. road here, in a statement issued, say the dead in the Glenwood wreck will exceed 25. It is stated 20 bodies have been recovered. Thirty-five are known to have been injured.

Glenwood Springs, Colo., Jan. 16.—Twenty-five are known to be dead and at least 30 injured in the collision last night at Dotsero, between a westbound Denver & Rio Grande passenger and an eastbound freight.

Dotsero is 20 miles away. Wires are down and there are no details. The freight was taking a siding and had almost cleared the main track when the passenger struck it. The chair car was cut in two, and the tourist car was telescoped.

Eighteen bodies have been removed. Nobody in the Pullman was injured. Relief has been sent from here.

It is believed the dead will reach 25 to 50, and 30 are supposed to be buried in the debris. Railroad officials say responsibility rests on the passenger crew, which was trying to "steal" a siding. Others blame the freight crew, charging they had orders to wait for the passenger

WWW.COLORADOHISTORICNEWSPAPERS.ORG

Newspapers around the state, such as the Pueblo Sun, also blared the news of Dotsero wreck. But Pueblo, like a number of other papers, overstated how many people were killed.

COLLISION: Continued from page 1B

blame, in a report it issued at the end of 1911. "The responsibility for this accident rests on the train crew of Train No. 5 of January 15, 1909; Gus Olsen, Engineer; and A. McCurdy, Conductor in charge," the commission report concluded.

McCurdy, unlike Olson, testified at the coroner's inquest. He said he had personally received the order from the dispatcher in Wolcott to have the train wait on the siding at Dotsero.

McCurdy also said Olson was late in blowing the train whistle announcing Train No. 5's approach to Dotsero. When McCurdy realized they were zipping past the Dotsero siding at roughly 40 miles per hour, he ordered the brakeman to set the emergency brake. That slowed Train No. 5 to about 20 mph, McCurdy said, but it was too late to prevent the collision.

Because of a long curve in the rail line west of Dotsero, the crew of the freight train couldn't see the oncoming passenger train until it was too late to halt.

Why didn't Olson stop the train at Dotsero? He refused to tell his side of the story, either before the coroner's jury or in any public forum. That led others to speculate.

Brakeman R.F. Roberts suggested "Olsen may have read his watch wrong, or he may have misread the time on the order."

Later, railroad men who weren't present during the crash said Olson may have fallen asleep at the throttle, just as the train reached Dotsero. "He may have been asleep for only a minute or two, but that was sufficient to cause the accident," said a Denver newspaper.

By late January, Olson was in Grand Junction, preparing to leave for California. He was still recovering from his physical injuries and was nearing a nervous breakdown.

But when he walked in downtown Grand Junction, "He was warmly greeted, because the people here feel he was mistreated in every way in connection with the wreck, and the investigation which held him responsible was simply farcical," one news article said.

After he left Colorado, Olson there was little mention of him again in news articles.

However, the accident at Dotsero did result in a formal recommendation from the State Railroad Commission to the Colorado Legislature in 1910. The Commission wanted the state to require all railroads to adopt what was known as the signaling block system to prevent head-on collisions.

Under the system, railroad lines are divided into a series of sections

or "blocks," and only one train is allowed to occupy a block at a time. Consequently, trains were expected to have time to stop before getting too close to another train on the same set of tracks.

Some railroads in Colorado already utilized the block system prior to 1909 crash, but the D&RG and others weren't among them.

"The strong arm of the law is needed to stimulate those companies which have not taken action or which have made progress so slowly that they are chargeable with neglect of duty in this regard," the Railroad Commission stated.

The D&RG didn't fully adopt the block system until 1927, nearly two decades too late for victims of the Dotsero disaster.

Sources: "Dotsero Wreck," Biennial Report of the State Railroad Commission of Colorado from January 1, 1909, to January 1, 1911; "Recommendations for Legislation," Colorado State Railroad Commission accident report for 1909; "Death at Dotsero," by Kathy Heicher, *Vail Valley Magazine*, Winter 2025; "Time Machine Tuesday: The Dotsero Train Wreck," by Amy Zimmer, *Colorado Virtual Library*, Jan. 15, 2019; historic newspaper articles at www.newspapers.com and www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org.

Bob Silbernagel's email is bobsilbernagel@gmail.com.

HOROSCOPES HOLIDAY MATHIS

Today's birthday (Jan. 4). The available options haven't always been conducive to living life your way, but that turns around. This year features opportunities you didn't have back there. With cleverness, heart and hard work, you'll leverage them into a lifestyle that fits. More highlights: you'll journey with a group. A special relationship emerges cinematic. An investment pays you in three ways.

Aries (March 21-April 19). It's not small gestures reveal so much as who picks up the check. And if it's your turn or your place, should you offer anyway? How you navigate these inherently awkward moments won't go unnoticed.

Taurus (April 20-May 20). You've given too much and now it's time to pull back and assess to find where the line for "too little" should be drawn. This pause is essential to recalibrate and determine what feels fair and sustainable for your energy and efforts.

Gemini (May 21-June 21). You've no desire to direct anyone else's chaos; managing your own is plenty. This graceful boundary frees you to focus on making good choices while respecting the autonomy of others — a balance that ensures peace and mutual respect.

Cancer (June 22-July 22). No need to call out the question or send a request. No need to hold out your hand and wait to connect with a handshake, the funds or a key. You are the key unlocking your own fate. You are the answer. You are the resource you will meet.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22). Fear is an inevitable part of life for everyone, but for anyone willfully trying to improve and grow, it is even more of a presence. Your aim is not to avoid it but to get more comfortable with its company. Once acknowledged, it never stays around too long.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Dating profiles, resumes and the like reflect who a person thinks they are, not necessarily who they really are. Reputation speaks to who other people think a person is. You'll find out for yourself with the real experience, and have much to compare and contrast it with.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). With too much time staring at screens, it's easy to lose track of the vitality of life. Your body is part of the nature it moves through, which is much easier to grasp when your body is actually moving through a natural environment.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You're serious about what you're doing without taking yourself too seriously. In fact, you don't think of yourself at all because as you become immersed in the task, you lose track of what "self" even means.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). If pure love is without contradictions, it's rarely seen in the relationships of human beings where contradictions abound. You don't mind a bit today because there's beauty in the messiness. In fact, the paradox might be the best part.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Being open to what life offers doesn't mean you have to leave your future to chance. Cultivate a specific vision you can lean into. Don't worry, it will free you with its limits. With both spontaneity and intentionality, you'll experience the fullness of life.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Relationships demand an investment of time, energy and resources, and these elements directly affect how love can grow. You'll make an effort to find time for someone amid the busyness of your life. Goals, locations and other practicalities will align.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20). Every person brings with them a certain demand on your time, emotional bandwidth and mental focus. Some people need constant reassurance, while others can navigate independently. Today's energy exchange will inform your compatibility.

TODAY IN HISTORY Saturday, Jan. 4

Today is Saturday, Jan. 4, the fourth day of 2025. There are 361 days left in the year.

Today in history:
On Jan. 4, 2007, Nancy Pelosi was elected the first female speaker of the House as Democrats took control of Congress.

Also on this date:
In 1853, New Yorker Solomon Northrup regained his freedom after being kidnapped in Washington, D.C., and forced into slavery in 1841; he would later tell his story in his memoir, "Twelve Years a Slave."

In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson delivered his State of the Union address in which he outlined the goals of his "Great Society" initiative.

In 1974, President Richard Nixon refused to hand over tape recordings and documents subpoenaed by the Senate Watergate Committee.

In 1999, Europe's new currency, the euro, got off to a strong start on its first trading day, rising against the dollar on world currency markets.

In 2006, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon suffered a significant stroke; his official powers were transferred to his deputy, Ehud Olmert. (Sharon remained in a coma until his death in January 2014.)

In 2010, the Burj Khalifa, the tallest structure in the world, opened in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

BEST OF BRIDGE

Resent results for the Grand Slam Bridge Club:

■ Dec. 23 results, Position 1, **Janet Smalley** and **Nancy Hackett**; Position 2, **Dot Hoskins** and **Shari Aggson**; Position 3, **Michelle Gossage** and **Aaron Gossage**.

■ Dec. 30 results, Rank A, **Connie Moffatt** and **Jan Selch**; Rank C, **Tim Gossage** and **Michelle Gossage**.

Meetings are at 12:15 p.m. Monday, at First Congregational United Church of Christ, 1425 N. Fifth St. Info: sharon-7nt@gmail.com, text/call 970-216-8807, Bridgewebs.com/grandslamgij.

Want your photo on the **You Saw It** page?
Email your high-resolution photos to yousawit@gsentinel.com.
Include names of those pictured and who took the photo.