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Code Changes, Fireworks, Ore Cart extends to North Golden

1 message

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Dear Neighbors,

Our first city council meeting of the year had us seat our new district reps, Lisa Vitry and Patty Evans. You can read about them on the [city council page](#). I've tried to ease their entre onto the city council with insights gained in my first years. Please welcome them if you see them around town.

[February 5th, check back to this link](#) to see what Boards and Commissions are seeking new members.

Coming Code Changes! - Our second full meeting of the year had a ton of consent items, from partnering on water and waste issues in emergency situations, to an overall emergency action plan with a ton of partners, to code changes for non-conforming properties, to first reading on changes to [code to encourage more affordable housing](#). That last one is probably the most contentious. Years ago I was against a proposal to put in 56 affordable units on Ford and 24th while on planning commission. I opposed it partly because they had to go "off-site" to meet the parking requirements, at the high school. Eventually 44 units were built (don't quote me on the numbers), but they were limited to the amount of parking they could put on site based on our current rules of parking spots per bedroom. The latest proposal is to require, for affordable units, only 1 spot *per dwelling unit*, not per bedroom. Given surface parking spots cost north of \$30K and structured parking is \$80K, requiring more parking can basically make or break the ability to build a unit at all, let alone make a profit. Some cities are proposing eliminating parking minimums completely. Golden is discussing reducing them to 1 spot per affordable unit, which could be up to 3 bedrooms. You can read more about it [here](#). Second reading will in February.

Another important item we approved, which may seem minor, but is really important to me, was the changes to [our city charter to make it more gender neutral](#). Why care if we say councilman versus councilor? Because of the subtle bias that gets repeated every time someone uses the wrong title. I believe that it

creates division and separation that is not good for communications, collaboration and inclusion. Inclusivity is better for collaboration and reaching agreements that account for more diversity of views. Underlined text above links to more.

We gave direction to staff to not have fireworks on July 4th. I hear from a lot of people about the desire to get rid of fireworks based on fire danger, noise, lack of consistency, attraction of people hanging out and drinking late into the evening etc. Those conversations are not in the public record, so people think we pulled a fast one by not having fireworks even though a plurality of a survey (48%) wanted fireworks versus a majority (the remainder) who did not or wanted something else. Just to be clear, the survey was a piece of the information, but not the entirety of how the decision was made. I'm having my doubts about surveys that are opt-in only and I'm not happy with how many people know about, and are engaged on communications with the city. With no demographic data, to include residency, we have NO idea if the survey was valid. Frankly, that is why I send this newsletter; to help people stay a bit more informed. As I said during discussion, going one more year on fireworks when the writing was on the wall to get rid of them was not going to prevent people from being upset. Underlined text above links to more.

New Ore Cart Gold Route Serves North Golden: A new route for the Ore Cart Gold route started serving riders in north Golden, with the formal public launch scheduled for next week. The new route connects the Mines Campus and Downtown Golden with the Iowa Street commercial area, Canyon Gate apartments, the Golden Community Center, and residential areas along Washington and Ford Streets. Shuttles will continue to arrive every 10-15 minutes and operate Monday – Friday: 7 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. and Saturday: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. The route and stop locations were developed using the 2023 Transit Suitability Analysis and ridership data from the recent Ore Cart Iron Route pilot which showed strong transit demand. Visit guidinggolden.com/transit for more information about the new Gold Route. City staff will have preliminary ridership data available at the February 13 City Council study session. Underlined text above links to more.

City Council had an offsite meeting at the Golden Hotel. With an outside facilitator, 6 of us (Rob Reed was out of town) and some city staff discussed a slew of items. Among them: communication guidelines, civility, community outreach, updates on CSM and dorms, Community Marketing, Senior Services, Arts and Culture, Right of Way (ROW) and Food Trucks, Ulysses Fields, Quality of Life Issues (noise, traffic), Sustainability, and our Strategic Action Plan. Mostly we discussed *how* to proceed in more detail on these topics. For example, do we want to form a sub-committee to work on it, a study session, or just move on? But just to cut down on rumors or mystery, I think there will be no changes on ROW or Food Trucks this year, nor big changes on Events. Due to budget cycles and such what I expect you may see is some more strategic discussion around the above items and more changes in 2025. A summary of the meeting will come out soon and I will share that when I can. I hope you'll see some changes in city email

addresses, more ward meetings, and hopefully more civility all the way around.

The Museum is looking for volunteers to be subs at the front desk. This is the perfect opportunity for someone who isn't ready to commit to a permanent schedule but would like to volunteer. They are looking for someone who is open to filling shifts weekly on a temporary basis and to fill absences. Complete a [volunteer application](#) or contact Kathleen Eaton at (303) 277-8713 or keaton@goldenhistory.org with questions.

Quick Hits and Things I've been reading - Underlined text links to more.

[Genetics helps explain our tribal nature](#) - I try and fail all the time to not "demonize" my opponents. I also try not to call them "enemies". It's super hard though because I'm a creature of habit and of my genes and filters etc. I'm in good company in this struggle, yours! I will continue to work on this myself.

[There have never real been halcyon days](#). An article from the Washington Post suggesting we read history! Think things are bad now? They have usually been worse. I try to keep a "realistic" attitude. Another article from the New York Times caught my attention too. [How do you think the economy is doing?](#) It may depend on where you get your information from.



[Find delight](#) - It's not going to bang you over the head, but find delight in what you

can. A friend sent me a nice holiday card with a picture from the great sand dunes. It was fractal in nature (which is redundant). This sweet potato skin struck me as fractal too. Delight!



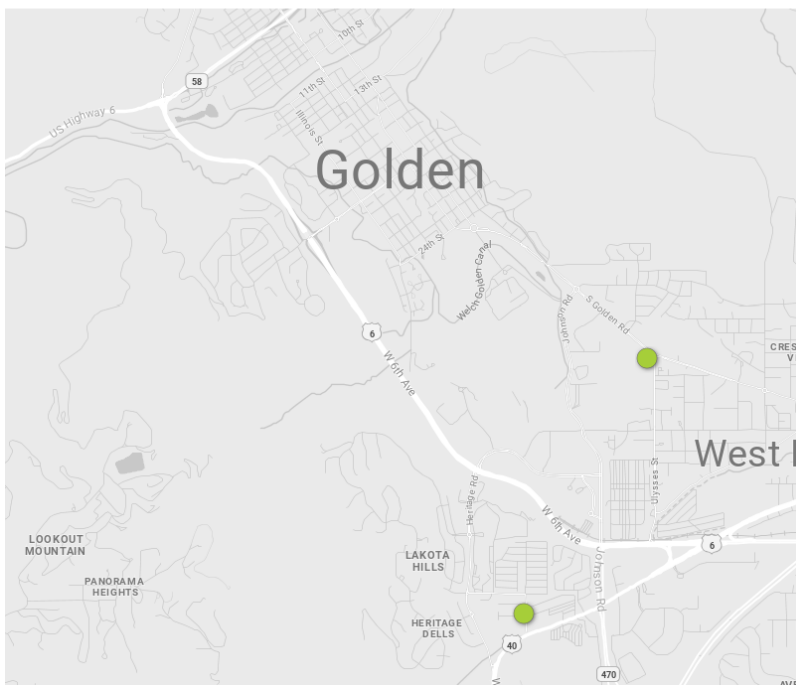
Stunning photographs capture starlings migrating through Europe

Søren Solkær

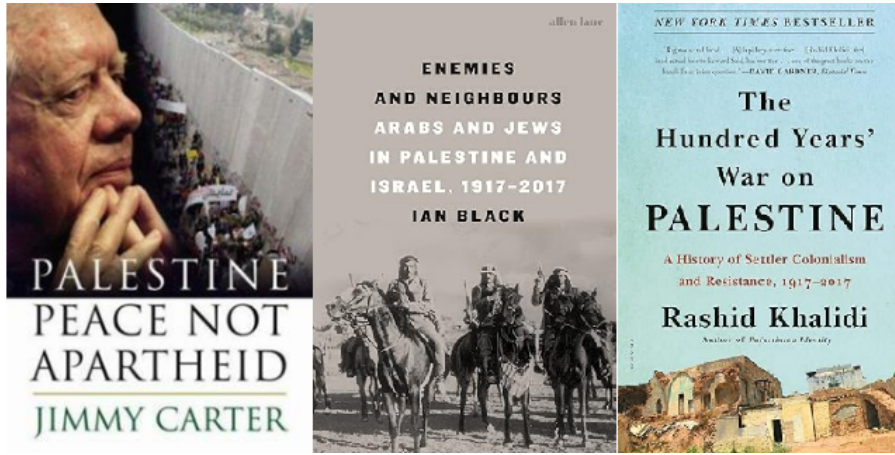
Starling Murmurations - Red wing blackbirds and starlings tend to fly together. I've never seen anything like this in person. Beautiful.



HOME CONTRIBUTORS RESOURCE



Golden's two new outdoor air quality monitors are up and running. The monitors measure fine inhalable particles, which come from a variety of sources (vehicles, wildfires, dust, etc.) and are posting real time data about the current air quality. The monitors were installed through a partnership with Jeffco and are among the first ever public monitors in the county. Check out the real-time data which will be used to increase awareness and in school curriculum. I'm working with staff and the county to get more monitors for Golden.



The War in Israel - is disturbing on many levels. My book club decided to learn a bit more about it and chose as our book 100 Years War on Palestine by Khalidi. But I also read the other two books in the graphic above. Even just understanding some terms like "the green line", occupied territories, East and West Jerusalem, the West Bank, "The [British] Mandate", "the nakba", 1948, 1967, 1973, Camp David, Oslo, how Jordan and Lebanon play into things...so much I thought I knew, but did not.

Jefferson County has its own newsletter too. Sign up from this link

If you have input for the city council, please use councilcomments@cityofgolden.net. I initiated a change to have the replies we saw as city councilors published, and they are now online.

Always feel free to reach me at my website, set up a meeting. Or, let's run, walk or bike together if you'd like and just have a chat!

Peace,

Don

Feel free to forward this to friends or neighbors who may like to get more information. To join the list fill out the contact form at cameronforgolden.org



Join me and save lives by giving blood (or platelets or plasma). Here's a referral code SaveLife-0814-Z you can add to your appointment, so we know the impact we are both making for hospital patients. Go to vitalant.org or call 1-877-25-VITAL to get started.

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