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# Data dilemma

As flock camera use surges, state lawmakers question who is watching the watchers

BY **MARISSA VENTRELLI**  
The Gazette

Lawmakers from both parties representing districts across the state have heard the same concerns from their constituents: they want to know who's watching them, what information they have, and how that information is

being used.

In Loveland last summer, the police department admitted to giving the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives access to its Flock Safety account, which helps track license plates.

According to reports, an ATF agent used the account

to conduct searches in the national law enforcement database, listing "ICE" as the reason.

Loveland Police Chief Tim Doran defended the department's decision, saying he was "mystified" as to what his department had done wrong. "Mystified," said Sen. Janice

Marchman, a Loveland Democrat. "And those are the people who are surveilling and advancing surveillance in our communities. He's mystified why this is an issue."

Automatic license plate readers like Flock's have been at the center of controversy in Colorado for the past several

years, particularly in Denver.

The city ended its contract with Flock earlier this year following residents' concerns about mass surveillance and accusations that its database would be used for immigration enforcement. The city has since approved a one-year contract with Flock competi-

tor Axon for 50 new cameras. Flock has denied claims that its technology has been used unconstitutionally against citizens.

According to the company's website, Flocks' license plate reader cameras provide re-

SEE FLOCK • PAGE 4



JERILEE BENNETT, THE GAZETTE

Gusty winds had Manitou Springs graduates holding onto their caps before taking the stage to get their diplomas at their graduation Sunday. Dark skies loomed over the graduation, but rain held off until right after the hat toss. Manitou Springs is one of the few high schools that still holds its graduation ceremonies outdoors.

## House approves measure for tracking veteran suicides

BY **MARY SHINN**  
The Gazette

The House on Friday passed a measure that would better track veteran suicides on Department of Veterans Affairs campuses as part of a larger bill.

Rep. Jason Crow, D-Aurora, sponsored the measure that would set aside \$500,000 to create a working group to improve the

data collection and analysis of deaths by suicide and attempted suicides on VA property.

Between October 2017 and September 2019, 55 veterans took their lives on VA campuses, according to a Government Accountability Office report.

In 2023, 6,398 veterans

SEE VETERANS • PAGE 4

## Celebrate Colorado's birthday with record doughnut dunk

BY **MARY SHINN**  
The Gazette

While cakes are perhaps more traditional, visitors celebrating Colorado's 150th birthday on Pikes Peak this summer will mark the milestone with doughnuts instead — perhaps a record-breaking number of doughnuts dunked in coffee simultaneously.

"We are going to at-

tempt a Guinness World Record on Aug. 1," said Sarah Braun, the city of Colorado Springs' interim manager of Pikes Peak-America's Mountain.

Pikes Peak hopes to attract 250 attendees who will all simultaneously dunk their doughnuts in coffee to break the re-

SEE DOUGHNUTS • PAGE 7

## CC president: Nation's 250th birthday should inspire class of 2026

BY **O'DELL ISAAC**  
The Gazette

In her first commencement speech after the "interim" tag was removed from her title, Colorado College President Manya Whitaker stood before nearly 500 graduates-in-waiting at Ed Robson Arena and issued a challenge.

The U.S. is celebrating its 250th birthday this year, Whitaker said, and the

opening chapter of its next 250 years will be written, in part, by members of CC's class of 2026.

"Two hundred fifty years is a testament, and it is also a reckoning," said Whitaker, who served as interim president for a year before she was appointed Colorado College's 15th president in June.

SEE GRADUATES • PAGE 7



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