

FEBRUARY 2026

SEARCH

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Evan and Julia from Douglas County



TUELLER  
PUBLISHING

SEARCH  
**CASTLE  
ROCK**

Search Castle Rock is published by  
Tueller Publishing, LLC

**IDEAS & SUBMISSIONS**  
[contribute@tuellers.com](mailto:contribute@tuellers.com)

№ 266 | **FEBRUARY 2026**

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# 7 Questions

WITH JENNIFER TINSLEY



*Jennifer Tinsley*

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*Jennifer is a licensed insurance agent with a local State Farm Insurance office here in Douglas County. We asked her to answer some of the questions our readers have about insurance to dispel some of the myths and help us love our insurance experience.*

*Why do I have to pay money and don't get anything tangible in return?*

Since tangible means something concrete and definite then insurance is the tangible result of having guaranteed protection from financial devastation in the event of a lawsuit or loss. Insurance can be protecting your assets such as a car or home but it is also protecting your other assets like investments and future income from liability risk.

*I heard claims always get denied first time you submit them. Is that true?*

Most claims are processed and handled upon initial filing. You can help the claims process by following your company's protocol for loss, proper documentation and open communication with the claims representative. If a claim is being declined, it may be due to a lack of understanding what triggers a covered loss. For example, homeowners policies are not designed or priced to cover normal wear and tear that can occur. Coverage is triggered by sudden, accidental physical damage with a specific date of loss. I recommend having a local agent who can help give good information about your coverage before making the decision to file a claim.

*Why is insurance so confusing; it's hard to understand my policy?*

We understand insurance can be confusing so it is important to have a thorough review of your property, assets, and coverage with an insurance professional. Local agents have a vested interest in their community and developing a relationship so you can be properly protected. This can be an advantage over companies that treat insurance like a commodity and do not spend time evaluating your unique situation.

*Why do claims take so long and don't cover what I need?*

Having the proper documentation and making yourself available when your claims representative is reaching out can be very helpful in expediting your claim. If a claim is not covering what you need, then it is important to visit with an insurance professional to determine what you need before the claim occurs.

*Why can't I talk to a real person or I have to wait forever on hold?*

Insurance companies vary in how they are bringing on new clients and servicing their current clients. If you are looking to have easy access to a "real" person, State Farm and a few other companies still support the importance of local agents who service clients on a personal level and are invested in taking care of you.

*Why do my rates climb higher and higher with no added benefits?*

Rates are one part of consideration when finding insurance. Coverage is more important because a policy without proper coverage can result in a much larger financial loss if not properly protected. Insurance companies need to adjust rates to remain solvent in upholding their promise to pay in the event of a loss. Shopping and hopping may actually lead to paying higher rates over time. Companies, like State Farm, reward clients with better rates for staying in the long run. Visiting with your local agent can help you better understand rate changes. You may find that you are actually receiving better coverage.

*How can you trust your agent; they work for the people denying my claim?*

Agents are your friend! An agent is different than a broker. Agents are rewarded for helping you and retaining your business. So taking care of you is their job! If you are struggling with a claim, then I recommend reaching out to your agent for support. Even though they do not process the claim, they can help coordinate communication with claims and create better understanding.

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A broken red heart-shaped lollipop lies on a teal background. The heart is cracked and broken into several pieces, with many small shards of red candy scattered all over the surface. The lollipop stick is white and extends vertically from the bottom of the frame.

## *Lonely Hearts Club*

Not all dating experiences have a  
"happily-ever-after".

Stories as told to Search Castle Rock Staff



Getting to know someone romantically can leave you feeling... drained.  
If you've ever felt like love is a battlefield, have no fear -  
we've all been there.

Sometimes bad dates happen to good people.  
Enjoy a few romantic flops from our favorite people.

You're welcome, and no, we're not sorry for sharing.

---

**"It had been 6 months since my last relationship** and I was on the fence about meeting someone new. My friend convinced me to go on a blind date with his buddy, whom he claimed was perfect for me. Tall, fit, handsome, successful, and a funny guy was the description my friend gave me. At first glance, he fit the bill.

We met him at his house and then drove 40 minutes to a dive bar in Santa Cruz, California. That should have been the first red flag. After a few beers in the first 15 minutes, this guy could not stop talking about himself. I ended up driving us back to his place in his car. He awkwardly tried to hold my hand the whole ride back. Then he wanted me to come inside and meet his roommates. I think I dodged him trying to kiss me 3 times before I bowed out early with the excuse that I wasn't feeling well. Worst date ever!"

- **Denise** did finally find (and marry) her "fit, handsome, and successful" guy, and he's tall-ish.

---

**"First date with a guy and he takes me** to one of those bounce house/obstacle course type places. While we were jumping I looked down and noticed that the crotch seam on my pants was coming apart. I quickly excused myself and went to the front desk to ask for a stapler to fix the tear. They had a stapler, but no staples. The best they could do was some scotch tape. I tried the best I could to close the gap, but the tape basically did nothing at all and the hole grew throughout the night. My date never said if he ever noticed, but we never went out again."

- **Autumn** is now married and carries staples with her everywhere she goes.

**"My own prom was a dream** - beautiful dress, dancing, and my first kiss! However, weeks later, I agreed to attend another as a "pity date" for a friend's shy classmate. The red flags appeared immediately. My dad had to drive me an hour to get there, and then the boy's father drove us to the venue. During the entire ride, my date didn't utter a single word. Nothing.

I spent five hours in a room of strangers, trapped in a "quiet nightmare." I tried making small talk and even suggested dancing, but I was met with total silence while the friend who invited me enjoyed his own night. My first prom gave me a coming-of-age moment; the second taught me the valuable lesson of saying "no."

- **Melissa** is now happily married to the man of her dreams that can carry a conversation.

---

**"My worst date was my first date.** I asked a girl I liked to a school dance, and at first, she wanted to go with me. But then a new guy moved to town after she agreed to go with me to the dance. I heard he sent her flowers and that she liked him, so I politely asked her if she now wanted to go with him to the dance. She said she still wanted to go with me. So we went. During the dance people kept asking her where the other guy was. She even walked away from me while we were dancing at one point, leaving me alone. My friend and his date asked if I wanted to go home with them but I said no, I would push through to the end. We went to someone's house afterwards and it was super awkward with her and all of her friends who were clearly disappointed that I wasn't the other guy."

- That wasn't true love, but **Dan** is now happily married and his wife never leaves him on the dance floor.



## Winter Vibes

Those long winter months can play havoc with our heads. Stuck inside, patience on its last nerve, sometimes all we need is an outlet. Here are a few suggestions to beat those winter blues.



# 1

### ***Snowshoeing***

Rocky Mountain National Park has various levels of trails that are available for snowshoeing. Also, they offer ranger-led snowshoe walks for beginners on weekends through March 31 on the east side and beginner and intermediate snowshoers through March 11 on the west side. Entrance fees to the park apply, however there is no additional fee for the walks. For more information, visit [www.nps.gov/romo](http://www.nps.gov/romo) and search for snowshoe information.

# 2

### ***Tubing***

A great place to enjoy some exciting, fast-paced tubing with the family is Fraser Tubing Hill, which is located two miles west of Winter Park. They charge \$27 per hour. For more information, they can be reached at 970-726-5954.

3

## *Hot Springs*

Take a trip over to Glenwood Springs and enjoy a dip in their hot springs pool. For more information, call 970-947-2955.



4

## *Hot Tub*

Beat those winter blues without ever leaving your back yard. Visit our friends at Spas of Parker to get a hot tub! Not only will this get you out of the house, the health benefits are amazing. Get more information by going to [www.spasofparker.com](http://www.spasofparker.com)

5

## *Neighborhood*

Let's not forget a great day spent sledding or tubing down the neighborhood hill! Also under this category we have building a snowman, erecting a snow fort, making snow art, etc. This year the kids are able to climb their very own tall mountain of snow in the comfort of their own yard!



6

## *Camping*

For an entire weekend of winter family fun, a great place to visit is the YMCA Snow Mountain Ranch. You can make reservations to stay in a room in a lodge or reserve your own cabin. There are many winter activities to keep you busy during your stay. For more information call 970-887-2152 or visit [www.ymcarockies.org](http://www.ymcarockies.org).



7

## *Ice Skating*

What better way to enjoy the winter air than ice skating! The Rink at the Rock is a great option. For a fun mountain experience, try Evergreen Lake. Get more information at [www.evergreenrecreation.com](http://www.evergreenrecreation.com)

# THE GUIDE

THE BEST PLACES TO DINE IN DOUGLAS COUNTY

In the interest of providing the 50 best dining options in Douglas County, we must be able to personally recommend each listing. The guide is subject to change. If you have a suggestion for inclusion on the list, email us at [contribute@tuellers.com](mailto:contribute@tuellers.com).

## KEY

Based on a typical dinner for one person, excluding drinks, tax or tip.

\$ ..... Under \$15  
\$\$ ..... \$15-\$25  
\$\$\$ ..... Over \$25  
(EC) Editors Choice  
(N) New

## ASIAN FUSION

### DANCING NOODLE

A small, family owned, dine-in and take-out restaurant that serves authentic homestyle Thai food.

**10841 S. Crossroads Dr., Suite 10, Parker**  
303-805-3880 \$\$

### INDOCHINE

A local go-to for quality home-style cuisine. This Parker fixture is known for a fresh, creative menu.

**19751 E Mainstreet, Parker**  
720-851-8559 \$\$

### ITO SUSHI ASIAN BISTRO

Asian fusion restaurant known for quality ingredients and fresh fish daily.

**2240 Mercantile St #100, Castle Rock**  
720-749-6777 \$\$ (N)

### JOHN HOLLY'S

Chinese and Thai dishes that are nothing less than the culinary equivalent of an exotic adventure.

**9232 Park Meadows Dr, Lone Tree**  
303-768-9088 \$\$



### PEGASUS

A local favorite for breakfast and lunch, Pegasus has something for everyone. They have served an eclectic menu in a comfortable setting for the past 31 years. While you're there, go see the giant riverboat roulette wheel behind the bar!

### JUNZ

A favorite sushi place in town with a unique blend of Japanese and French at its very best.

**11211 S. Dransfeldt Rd., Parker**  
720-851-1005 \$\$

## BAKERY/DESSERTS

### LA PETITE CREPERIE

The locals favorite spot to grab made-to-order crepes. Sweet or savory, you can't go wrong. Proudly serving farm to table fresh.

**19751 Mainstreet, Parker**  
720-638-9722 \$ (EC)

### PARIS BAGUETTE

Popular Korean chain that brings expertly crafted baked goods through a warm and welcoming bakery cafe' experience that delivers joy to everyone.

**18374 Cottonwood Dr., Parker**  
720-500-5555 \$ (N)

### POULETTE BAKESHOP

New artisan bakers taking Parker by storm. Order early, they sell out every day!

**19585 Hess Road, Parker**  
303-955-5647 \$ (N)

## BARBEQUE

### BIG JIMS

Don't be fooled by this being a food truck; if you like southern BBQ, this is your place. **Corner of Parker Rd and Longs Way, Parker** \$\$\$

### GQUE BBQ

Award-winning food. Try the wood-smoked ribs, brisket, pork, or garlic potatoes.

**8433 Park Meadows Center Dr., Suite 143B, Lone Tree**  
303-729-2506 \$\$

### HICKORY HOUSE

The Parker tradition. Known for their baby back ribs, but don't miss the pulled pork and barbeque chicken.

**10335 S Parker Rd, Parker**  
303-805-9742 \$\$

### OLD WEST BBQ

A hidden gem with family-friendly pricing. Don't miss out on their breakfast burritos. **107 Wolfensberger Rd., Castle Rock**  
303-660-6340 \$

## BREW PUB

### 20 MILE TAP HOUSE

Best known for their burgers and wings. Make sure to catch Trivia Tuesdays.

**12543 N Hwy 83, Parker**  
303-841-6782 \$\$

### GREAT DIVIDE BREWERY & ROADHOUSE

Destination locale with an informal ambiance offering hearty comfort classics

**215 Wilcox St Suite G, Castle Rock**  
303-955-5788 \$\$ - \$\$\$ (N)

### ROCKYARD BREWING CO.

Douglas County's longest running brew pub. Steaks, burgers, pizza and soup!

**880 Castleton Rd, Castle Rock**  
303-814-9273 \$\$

### TAILGATE TAVERN & GRILL

Your neighborhood tavern for breakfast, lunch or dinner. Sports bar with live music not to miss on the weekends. **19552 E. Mainstreet, Parker** 303-841-7179 \$\$

### THE LIBRARY CO. BAR & KITCHEN

Offering great food & amazing drinks in a relaxed and warm atmosphere. Clear and simple menu options. **3911 Ambrosia St., Suite 101, Castle Rock** 720-389-5986 \$\$

## ITALIAN

### CRANELLI'S

Comfort Italian food in a rustic, cozy, casual family-oriented format. **10047 Park Meadows Dr., Lone Tree** 303-799-3661 \$\$

### DANIELLE'S SCRATCH KITCHEN

Stylish, energetic eatery offering elevated Italian fare with an emphasis on great customer service. **872 Happy Canyon Rd. Suite 100, Castle Rock** 303-524-9788 \$\$\$

### PORTOFINO

Authentic Italian eatery featuring pizza, pasta, calzones and heros. The local "go-to" for fresh Italian. **10920 S Parker Rd, Parker** 303-841-9900 \$\$

### SCILEPPI'S

A modern Italian restaurant focused on family recipes and premium ingredients. **210 Third St., Castle Rock** 303-688-9000 \$\$

### VIA BACI

Neapolitan pizzas join modern Italian fare at this casual eatery featuring a full bar & patio. **10005 Commons St, Lone Tree** 303-790-0828 \$\$

## MEXICAN

### ADRIANNA'S

Intimate Mexican eatery for authentic cuisine in a relaxed ambiance. Great for parties. **7272 E Hwy 86, Franktown** 303-663-7800 \$\$

### CASA MARIACHI

Unassuming local joint serving up straight-forward Mexican plates. **9771 S Parker Rd, Parker** 720-842-5105 \$\$

### LA LOMA

Upscale-rustic atmosphere known for traditional Mexican meals. **6361 Promenade Pkw, Castle Rock** 303-632-9900 \$\$ (N)

### LAS POTRANCES

Casual Mexican restaurant full of real Mexican culture, Mexican Food, Fresh Drinks, and Friendly Hospitality. **19600 Solar Cir, Parker** 303-840-0325 \$\$ (N)

### LOS DOS POTRILLOS

Elegant family-owned eatery. There's a combo dish to please everyone. **6370 Promenade Pkwy., Castle Rock** 720-769-5474 \$\$

### LOS VOLCANES

Don't miss the Carnitas! And bring your appetite for the large portions. **10471 S. Parker Rd., Parker** 303-841-0160 \$\$

## NEW AMERICAN

### CASTLE CAFE

Set in a former 1890s hotel. Plating hearty American fare like pan-fried chicken & burgers. **403 Wilcox St, Castle Rock** 303-814-2233 \$\$

### VALERIE'S BREWHOUSE

Uniquely fun sports bar with a creative menu of brats and dogs. **971 Park St., Castle Rock** 303-660-2399 \$

### CRAVE

A favorite gourmet burger joint. Imaginative menu with amazing handcrafted shakes. **3982 Limelight Ave, Castle Rock** 303-814-2829 \$\$

### DOUG'S DAY DINER

American breakfast cafe where everything is made from scratch. **18595 Mainstreet, Parker** 720-476-7162 \$\$

### MANNA

A casual sit-down destination with a menu that reflects Colorado's growing season. **2350 Meadows Blvd., Castle Rock** 720-455-3664 \$

### PARKER GARAGE

The Parker landmark located right downtown offers a locally-sourced menu. Great service and large portions. **19420 Mainstreet, Parker** 720-389-8105 \$\$ (EC)

### PEGASUS

A local favorite for breakfast or lunch. American, Greek or Mexican dishes. **313 Jerry St., Castle Rock** 303-688-6746 \$\$

### RORY'S

Comfort food and baked goods at their finest. Don't see it on the menu? Ask for it! **11020 S Pikes Peak Dr., Parker** 720-708-2889 \$\$

### SIERRA

High-end, wood-fired kitchen with a warm ambiance, preparing select American dishes. **10680 Cabela Dr., Lone Tree** 303-662-8800 \$\$

### TRIBE AT RIVERWALK

Upscale, yet casual dining experience with a one-of-a-kind menu. Don't miss the brunch. **115 Wilcox Street, Castle Rock** 303-362-0904 \$\$\$ (N)

### WEST MAIN TAPROOM

A modern and open venue that boasts thoughtful and honest cuisine. A haven for the gluten-free crowd. **18595 Mainstreet, Parker** 720-826-3689 \$\$

## PIZZA

### ANTONIO'S

A traditional family-style Italian pizza restaurant with a Brooklyn flair. **12947 S Parker Rd., Parker** 720-851-5300 \$

### ARTISAN

Delicious Neapolitan-style pizza that makes each dish an individual work of art! And don't forget dessert. **12311 Pine Bluffs Way, Parker** 303-840-0518 \$

### COLORADOUGH

A refreshing take on made-from-scratch pizza. So fresh they don't even have a freezer! **17860 Cottonwood Dr., Parker** 303-386-3333 \$\$

### LIL' RICCI'S

New York pizzas & other red sauce staples in a low-key setting. Can't miss the garlic knots. **16526 Keystone Blvd, Parker** 303-220-7422 \$\$

### PARRY'S

NY-style pizza, wings, & casual Italian eats, in kid-friendly quarters. **5650 Allen Way, Castle Rock** 303-814-8686 \$\$





## STEAKHOUSE

### DUKE'S

Rustic restaurant featuring beef & seafood dishes, plus a sports tavern with an Irish vibe.

**363 Village Square Lane,  
Castle Pines**  
303-814-2487 \$\$\$

### FOGO DE CHAO

Upscale Brazilian steakhouse with all-you-can-eat meat carved tableside. Guaraná is a must, and try the Creme de Papaya. **8419 Park Meadows Center Dr., Lone Tree**

303-481-4001 \$\$\$ (EC)

### PERRY'S

Chops, seafood, wine, & cocktails served in an upscale setting with a lounge & live jazz. **8433 Park Meadows Center Dr., Lone Tree**

303-792-2571 \$\$\$

### TEXAS ROADHOUSE

Texas-themed steakhouse with a great menu and wonderful atmosphere.

**11205 S. Parker Rd,  
Parker**  
303-805-5848 \$\$

### TRAPPER'S CHOP HOUSE

Upscale hideaway local favorite featuring their signature Volcanic Hot Rock sear-it-yourself experience.

**19308 Cottonwood Dr.,  
Parker**  
303-248-2132 \$\$\$

## UNIQUE

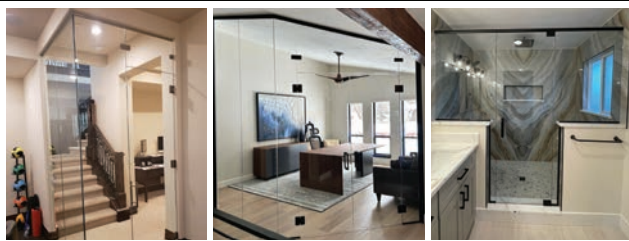
### VISTAVINO MODERN

Quaint Tuscan grill made fresh from local fare. Every dish is a winner!

**611 Wilcox St., Castle Rock**  
303-814-2487 \$\$



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## Kindergarten Registration is Open!

Kindergarten Registration is Open in the Douglas County School District! If your child will be 5-years-old by October 1, 2026, now is the time to register them for Kindergarten.

Simply visit [www.dcsdk12.org/kindergarten](http://www.dcsdk12.org/kindergarten) to get started. If your child currently attends a DCSD preschool, they will automatically be registered for Kindergarten.

### DCSD Kindergarten Offers:

- Structured, Rigorous, Play-Based Curriculum
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- Authentic Learning Experiences
- Balanced Beginnings  
(staggered transition which builds stronger teacher/student relationships and eases the transition into school for students)

For more information: [www.dcsdk12.org/kindergarten](http://www.dcsdk12.org/kindergarten)

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