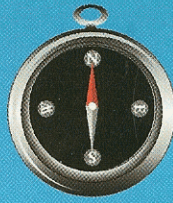
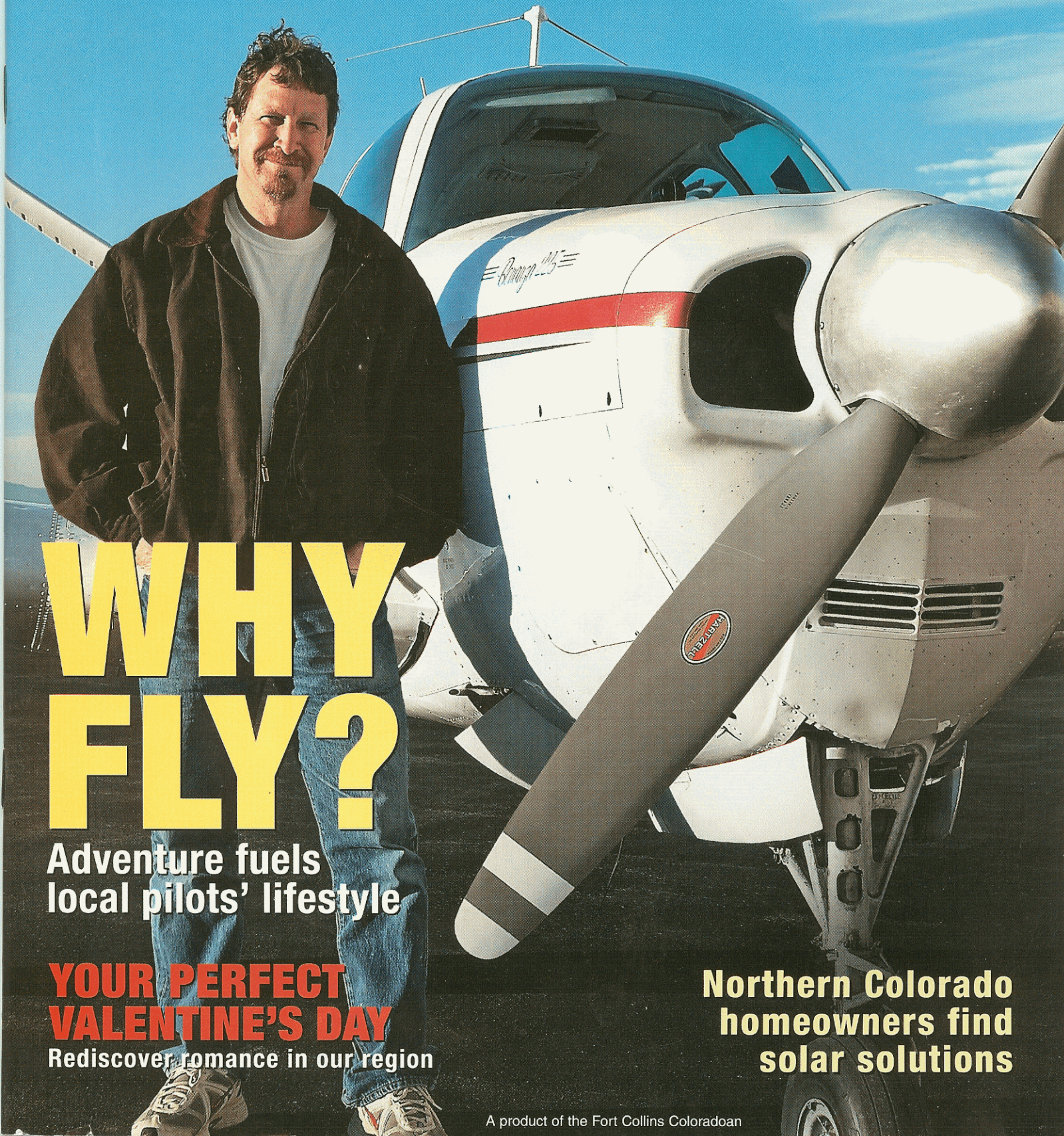


JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2006

# 25 NORTH



Magazine for Northern Colorado



## WHY FLY?

Adventure fuels local pilots' lifestyle

**YOUR PERFECT VALENTINE'S DAY**

Rediscover romance in our region

Northern Colorado homeowners find solar solutions

# Romance IN OUR Region

Stories by Maryjo Faith Morgan  
Graphics by Jason Melton

## Perfect Valentine's getaways close to the heart and home

### A day in Fort Collins

There are many ways you and your sweetheart can spend Valentine's Day in Fort Collins. See the city from a hot-air balloon, spend some time at Swetsville Zoo and shop till you drop in Old Town. Romantic dining options abound in the city.

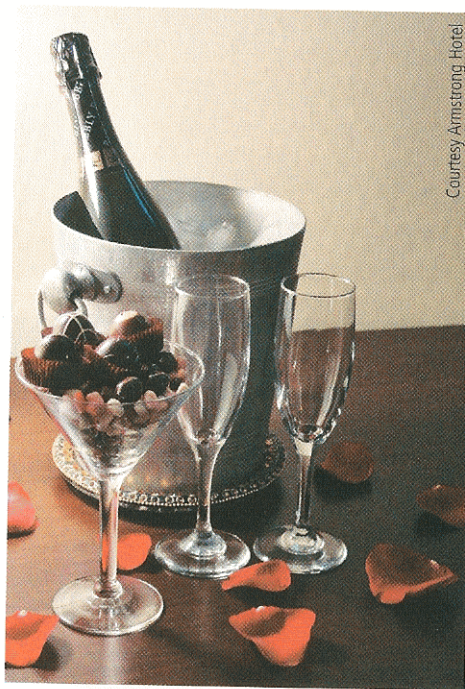
If you can clear your calendar, you and your Valentine will feel fortunate to be in Fort Collins on **Tuesday, Feb. 14.**

At dawn, sweep your Valentine off his or her feet with a hot-air balloon flight over Fort Collins from **Wind-tracker Balloon Adventures LLC.** Yes, there is champagne, and no, it isn't as cold up there as you might think.

Now that you are back on the ground, stop by the **Egg & I** at Lemay and Harmony to recount the thrill of your morning flight over a hearty breakfast. Then head east on Harmony, and just past I-25, pull into **Swetsville Zoo.** The child in each of you will enjoy matching the inventive titles to more than a hundred fanciful creations and scrap-metal dinosaurs displayed in amusing groupings all along the river.

On your way back to town, stop by the **Fort Collins Convention and Visitors Bureau** and collect brochures for future excursions to other places you live near but may never have visited.

When Prospect reaches College, turn south and pull into **Whole Foods** on the west side of the road. The prepared



Courtesy Armstrong Hotel.

foods department offers a smorgasbord of entrées, side dishes and desserts for a quick lunch that elevates fast food to the realm of gourmet.

Now head downtown, stopping just long enough to check into the historic **Armstrong Hotel.** If you reserved a special romance package, you will find rose petals scattered in your room.

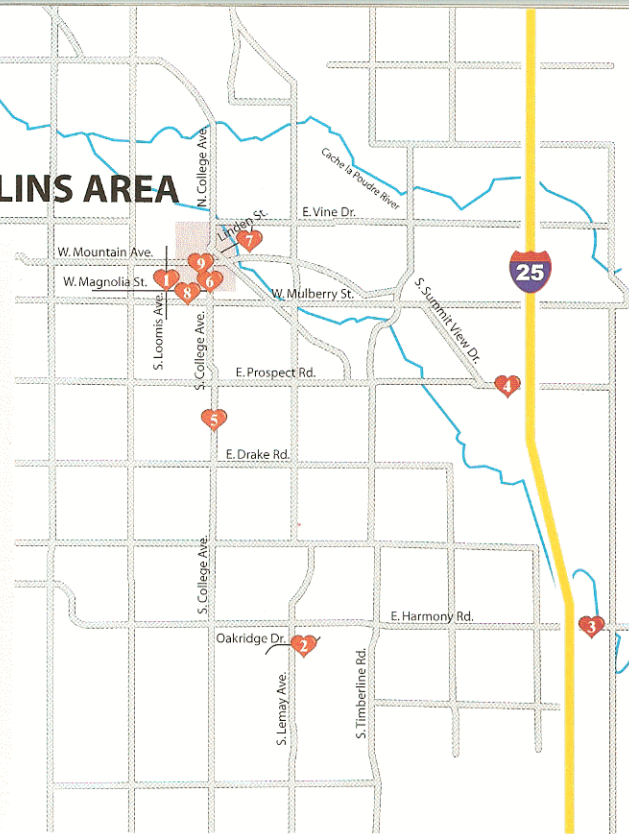
Stroll through Old Town and visit the increasingly famous **New Belgium Brewing Company.** Take a tour at 1, 2 or 3 p.m., meet the energetic crew and sample microbrews only available in the tasting room. Last year New Belgium invited customers to bring their dogs for





Courtesy Armstrong Hotel

## FORT COLLINS AREA



- 1 Windtracker Balloon Adventures LLC, 315 South Loomis Ave., (970) 482-4492, [www.windtracker-balloons.com](http://www.windtracker-balloons.com); all flights by appointment, weather permitting.
- 2 Egg & I Restaurant, 1112 Oakridge Drive, (970) 223-8022, [www.theeggandirestaurants.com](http://www.theeggandirestaurants.com)
- 3 Swetsville Zoo, 4801 E. Harmony Road, (970) 484-9509. Free admission.
- 4 The Fort Collins Convention and Visitors Bureau, 3745 E. Prospect Road, #200, (970) 491-3388, [www.ftcollins.com](http://www.ftcollins.com)
- 5 Whole Foods, 2201 S. College Ave., (970) 267-9200; [www.wholefoods.com](http://www.wholefoods.com)
- 6 Armstrong Hotel, 259 S. College Ave., (970) 484-3883, [www.thearmstronghotel.com](http://www.thearmstronghotel.com)
- 7 New Belgium Brewing, 500 Linden St., (970) 221-0524, [www.newbelgium.com](http://www.newbelgium.com)
- 8 Lincoln Center, 417 W. Magnolia St., (970) 221-6730, [www.lctix.com](http://www.lctix.com)
- 9 Enzo's Italian Kitchen, 126 W. Mountain, (970) 484-8466, [www.enzios.com](http://www.enzios.com)

a special Valentine's Day treat made of grains used in the brewing process. The brewer also sold chocolates (for people) and donated money from sales to the Humane Society. They are planning something special for this year too.

Peruse Old Town's many distinct galleries and shops (see the shaded area on the map). Whether it's rustic furniture or fancy lingerie, skateboards or original art, you are sure to find something for you and your Valentine. Take a spin on the ice-skating rink in Old Town Square for some good, old-fashioned fun.

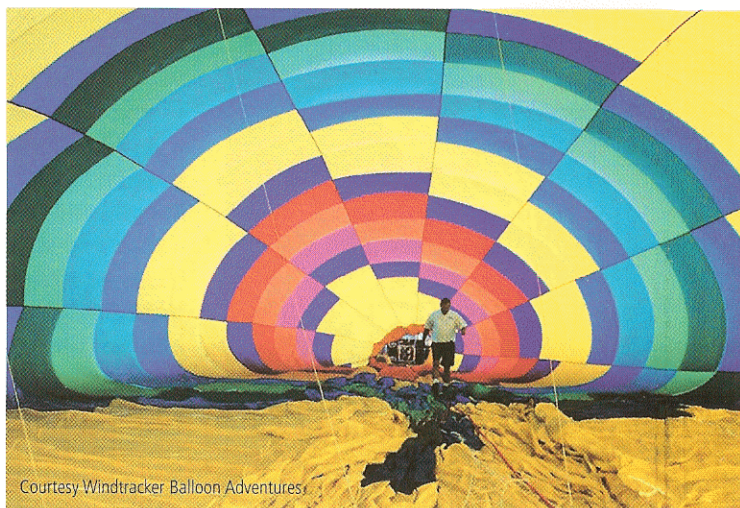
Kick off your shoes, unload your purchases and relax back at the Armstrong. Wallow in the indulgence of a four-course dinner served in your room with sparkling wine.

Make the short trip to the 8 Lincoln Center for the 7:30 p.m. performance of "Trip to Bountiful," a drama that will tug at your heartstrings.

If you feel like a walk before returning to the Armstrong after the show,

9 Enzo's Italian Kitchen is only a few blocks north on Mountain. Have a commemorative photo taken while you put your heads together over Tiramisu and cappuccino.

After topping off your Valentine's celebration with sweets for your sweetheart, walk back to your home away from home. As part of the romance package, enjoy breakfast in bed Wednesday morning. Not bad for a weekday!



Courtesy Windtracker Balloon Adventures


Information for this package was compiled from the sources listed and is subject to change. Please contact the sources directly to confirm times, dates, locations and availability.


## Weekend in Estes Park

The weekend before Valentine's Day, celebrate in Northern Colorado's most renowned playground: Estes Park. Create memories in a familiar day-trip haunt, a romantic bed and breakfast and Rocky Mountain National Park.

Stash your luggage in the car Thursday night so you are ready to head out as soon as you've finished work Friday.


### Friday, Feb. 10



If you can make it into town by 7 p.m., "Colorado's Legendary Lovers," a free visual presentation at the  Estes Park Museum, will put you in a romantic mood. Author Rosemary Fetter shares excerpts from her book of "Historic Scandals, Heartthrobs and Haunting Romances" among famous Colorado lovebirds and talks about the history of Valentine's Day.

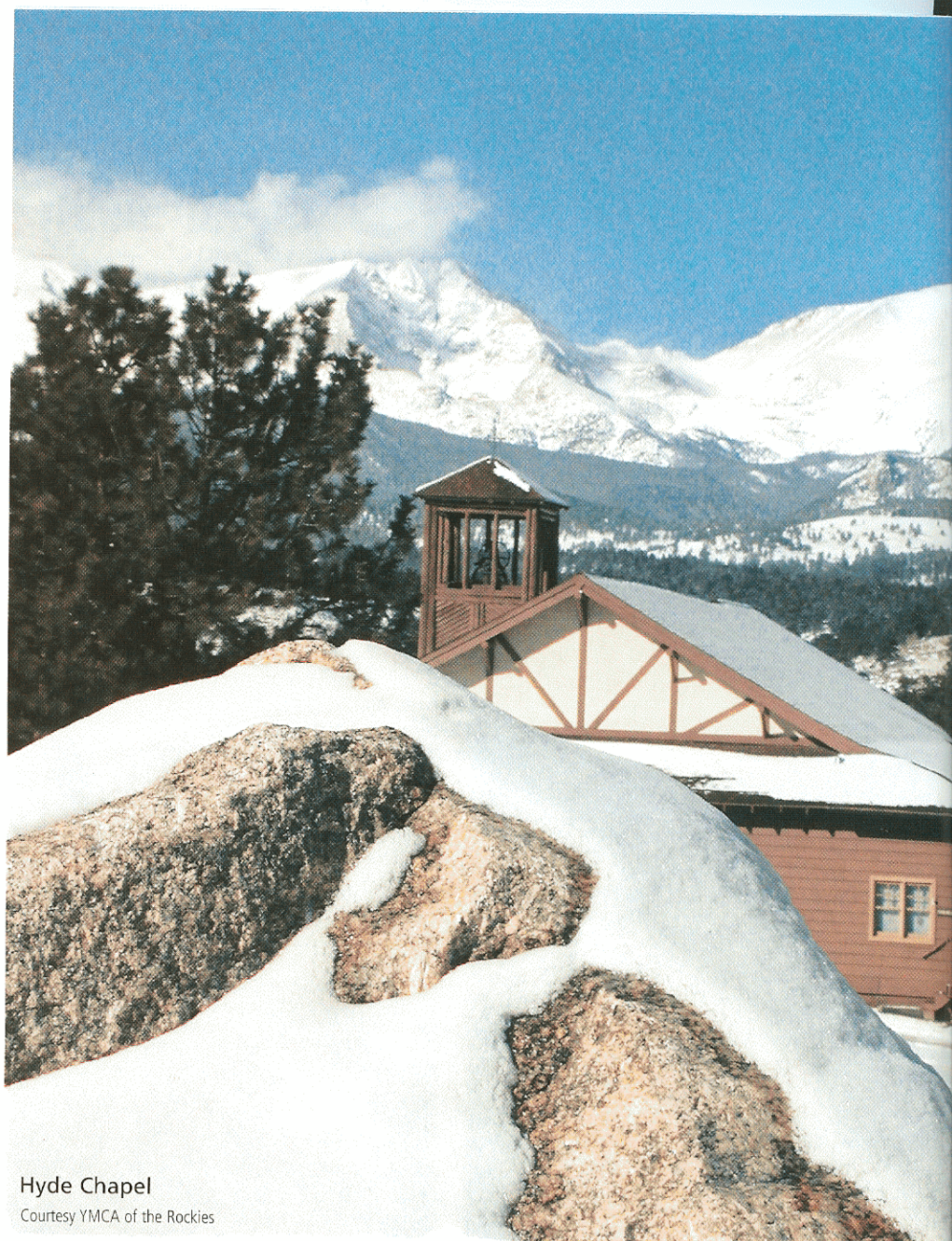
After the presentation, check in at the secluded  Romantic RiverSong Bed and Breakfast Inn. Enjoy a candlelit dinner for two by the fire as part of the Stars in Your Eyes romance package. Then retire to your room and relax next to your private fireplace after a soak in the jetted tub. Be sure to schedule your "massage for two." Get to sleep early, as you have a full day ahead of you.

### Saturday, Feb. 11

After a hearty breakfast at RiverSong, put on your hiking clothes and explore the outdoors on RiverSong Trail. After your hike, pack up your luggage and check out.

Head to the  Art Center of Estes Park, where you will don craft aprons and create hand-painted tiles expressing "What Colorado Means to You" as part of the Community Unity Project. The finished mosaic will beautify a pedestrian tunnel in town, and students from Eagle Rock School and Estes Park High are key players in the project. Today's tile-making runs from 10:30 to noon. Cost is \$8 per tile, and advance registration is required.


Ready for lunch? Head downtown to  Mama Rose's for an authentic Italian meal or  Poppy's Pizza and Grill for a heart-shaped pizza pie. Be sure to





Hyde Chapel

Courtesy YMCA of the Rockies

meet Rob Pieper at Poppy's or Julie Pieper at Mama Rose's; the couple shares a special Valentine story of their own.

After lunch, explore the distinct shops and art galleries downtown. Then head southwest on Highway 36 to  Hyde Chapel, on the grounds of the YMCA of the Rockies, where the 13th annual Student Solo and Ensemble Recitals will fill the hills — and your hearts — with music starting at 3 p.m. Admission is free, and a reception follows each hour of music. It's Family Valentine's Weekend at the YMCA, and themed family activities are planned. The center sports a game room, mini golf, skating and tennis. Check out the Maude Jellison Library and the Lula W. Dorsey Museum as well.

When you've had your fill of fun, head back to town and check in to the historic  Stanley Hotel. Learn all about the lodge made famous by the film adaptation of Stephen King's novel "The Shining." Take advantage of Valentine's deals at the spa and dine at Cascades Restaurant. Enjoy some wine after dinner, and, as part of the Stanley's Classic Romance Package, have champagne and truffles delivered to your room.

If you're not yet ready to retire, head to the  Estes Park Brewery and Pub to sample the local microbrew selection.

### Sunday, Feb. 12

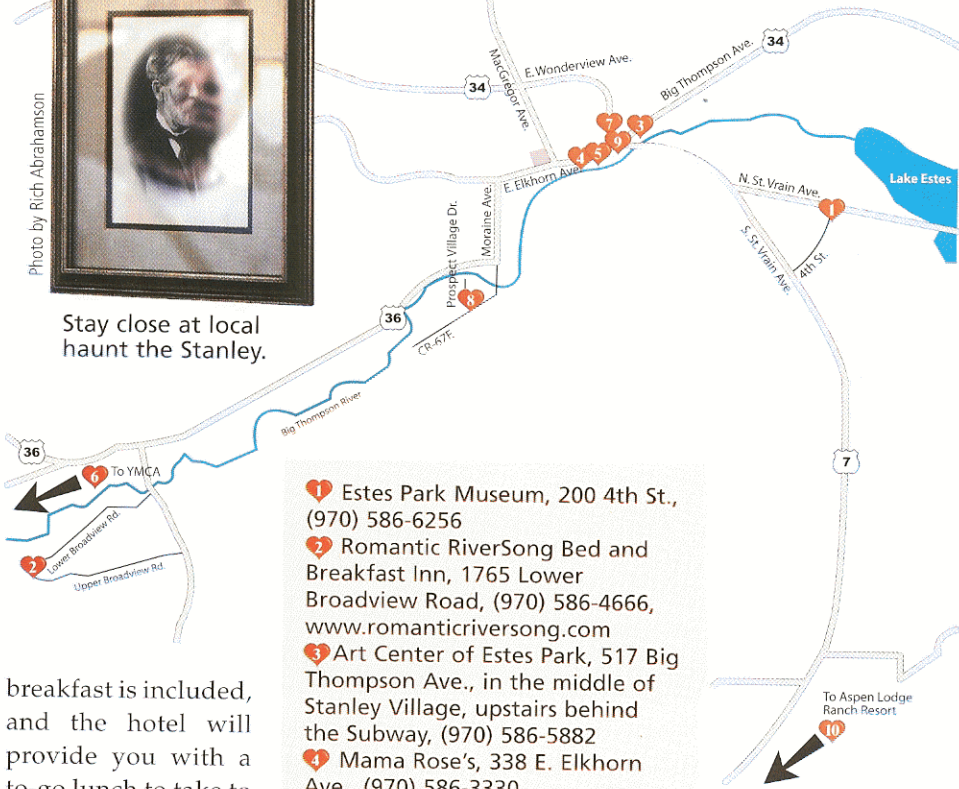
Sleep in and then return to Cascades for breakfast. If you signed up for one of the Stanley's adventure getaways,

Photo by Rich Abrahamson



Stay close at local haunt the Stanley.

## ESTES PARK AREA



- 1 Estes Park Museum, 200 4th St., (970) 586-6256
- 2 Romantic RiverSong Bed and Breakfast Inn, 1765 Lower Broadview Road, (970) 586-4666, [www.romanticriversong.com](http://www.romanticriversong.com)
- 3 Art Center of Estes Park, 517 Big Thompson Ave., in the middle of Stanley Village, upstairs behind the Subway, (970) 586-5882
- 4 Mama Rose's, 338 E. Elkhorn Ave., (970) 586-3330, [www.mamarosesrestaurant.com](http://www.mamarosesrestaurant.com)
- 5 Poppy's Pizza and Grill, 342 E. Elkhorn Ave., (970) 586-8282, [www.poppypizzaandgrill.com](http://www.poppypizzaandgrill.com)
- 6 Hyde Chapel, YMCA of the Rockies, 2515 Tunnel Road, (970) 586-3341, [www.ymcarockies.org](http://www.ymcarockies.org)
- 7 The Stanley Hotel, 333 Wonderview Ave., (970) 586-3371 or (970) 577-9900, [www.stanleyhotel.com](http://www.stanleyhotel.com); Cascades Restaurant: (970) 577-4001
- 8 Estes Park Brewery, 470 Prospect Drive, (970) 586-5421, [www.epbrewery.net/contact.html](http://www.epbrewery.net/contact.html)
- 9 Estes Park Visitors Center, 500 Big Thompson Ave., (970) 577-9900; [www.estesparkcvb.com](http://www.estesparkcvb.com)
- 10 Aspen Lodge Ranch Resort, 6120 Hwy 7, (800) 332-6867, [www.aspenlodge.net/sleighhay.html](http://www.aspenlodge.net/sleighhay.html)

breakfast is included, and the hotel will provide you with a to-go lunch to take to Rocky Mountain National Park.

If you'd rather go it alone, 9 Estes Park Visitors Center offers options as well as the latest reports of snowpack and weather conditions in the park. Plan a morning adventure exploring on cross country skis or snowshoes, hiking, horseback-riding or sledding.

After your morning recreation, head to Bond Park in the center of downtown (see map's shaded area) for the Estes Park Dog Weight Pull, starting at 10:30 a.m. There are plenty of restaurants to choose from downtown for lunch, and you could visit some of the stores and galleries you missed Saturday — possibly returning for that item your sweetheart was eyeing.

For an outdoor experience that allows you to sit back and relax, call 10 Aspen Lodge Ranch Resort and make your reservation for a romantic horse-drawn wagon or snuggly sleigh ride.

Carriage rides are offered from noon to 4 pm daily.

Drive back to the Stanley for a 2 p.m. concert in the Music Room by violinist Barbara Barber, part of the Estes Park Music Festival's Sunday concert series.

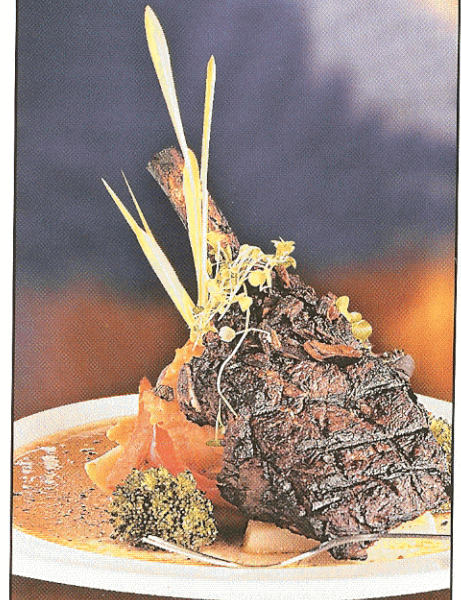
After the show, go across the lobby to the MacGregor Ballroom and sign up to participate in the Renewal of

Vows ceremony. Registration starts at 3 p.m. The group ceremony takes place inside the lavish MacGregor Ballroom at 4 p.m. Assure your spouse that you would make the same choice all over again by renewing your vows along with numerous other couples. After a champagne toast and slice of wedding cake whets your appetite, take advantage of the Cascades Restaurant's dining discounts for vow-renewal participants immediately following the ceremony around 6 p.m. Or hit the road for home and grab something along the way.

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## Loveland getaway

Start celebrating Valentine's Day the weekend before in the Northern Colorado city known for love. Take part in the Loveland Valentine Re-Mailing Program, which started in 1947. The Sweetheart Town holds an annual contest to design and write verse for the official Loveland Valentine Card. Starting Feb. 1, volunteers hand-stamp letters sent to the post office from all over the globe with the year's cachet and a special Loveland postmark, dated Valentine's Day.

While people around the world get a kick out of receiving mail from Loveland, you have the opportunity to experience the Sweetheart City firsthand with your Valentine.

As soon as you can wrap up the day Feb. 10, drive downtown Loveland while searching the lampposts for your personalized Valentine heart. Like the tin man in "Wizard of Oz," it may take you some time to find your heart, which could be anywhere in the map's shaded area. New this year, you can buy a T-shirt sporting the same personalized message you request to be painted on your lamppost sign. Call (970) 663-0700 to place your order before Jan. 25.



The Loveland Museum/Gallery houses a permanent collection of cachets and official city Valentines in a mini 'post office.'

Photo by Maryjo Faith Morgan

### Friday, Feb. 10

The ♥ Loveland Museum/Gallery (5th Street and Lincoln) reopens at 6 p.m. for A Night on the Town, which, fortunately for you, takes place the second Friday of each month. Check out the first-floor gallery as well as the Valentine cachet display upstairs. Pick up your brochure for A Night on the Town, running till 9 p.m. Participating

venues include art galleries, antique and retail shops and even a wine-tasting room. Nibble on the complimentary goodies you'll find along the way as you stroll arm-in-arm through historic downtown. Be sure to purchase this year's Loveland Valentine Card.

If you want to tap your toes to the Celtic beat of "The Elders" performing at ♥ The Rialto Theater, make yours a

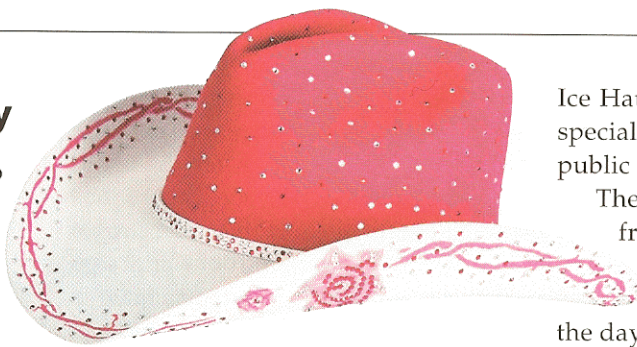
## Good times in Greeley

Greeley is a great place to spend time with your Valentine. Here are some ideas to make **Tuesday, Feb. 14**, special for you and your sweetheart.

Surprise your Valentine with breakfast in bed and a custom hat for a day on the town. ♥ Greeley Hat Works is famous nationwide and has made hats for presidents, including a few for President George W. Bush to wear on his ranch. It's also the official hatter for Colorado State University.

While you are downtown, why not browse some art galleries. You can start at ♥ Max'ims of Greeley and ♥ Tointon Gallery for the Visual Arts.

Next, show off that new hat at "The Mad Hatters of Greeley" exhibit at the new ♥ Greeley History Museum. Also



see the museum's tribute to courting traditions of the late 1800s with vintage bicycles that were often used by couples to take long rides without a chaperone. Opportunities for chivalry included keeping tires properly inflated and assisting the lady onto the bike.

Order some passion fruit tea with your lunch at the Victorian-inspired ♥ Canterbury Tea Room. British favorites like Yorkshire Pork Pie and "savories" are on the menu.

After lunch, loosen up and have some fun on the ice. The new ♥ Greeley

Ice Haus has plans for Valentine's Day specials. Call for more information and public skating hours.

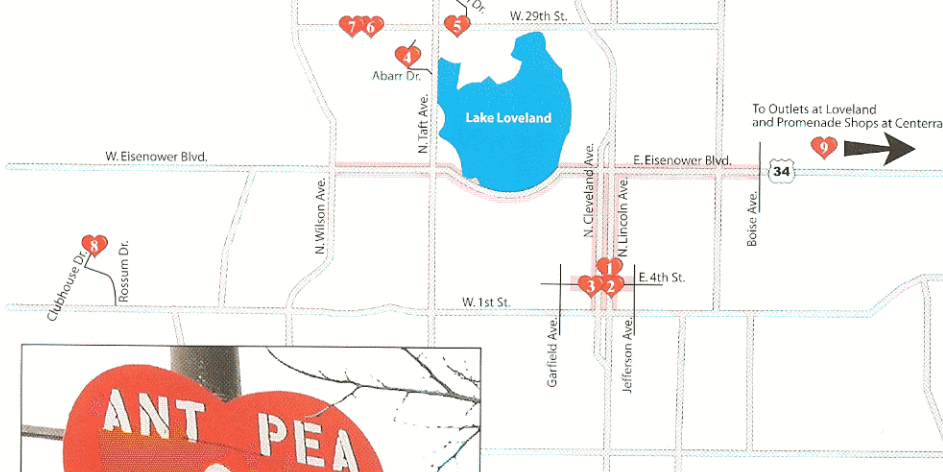
There are many venues to choose from to top off your day with a romantic dinner.

♥ The Magnus always does the day up right for couples with a special meal that includes a salad, an entrée and a delectable dessert.

If you are up for a short drive, head to ♥ Windsor, where you will find two great choices. Chimney Park Bistro's renowned Chef Florian Wehrli promises a memorable dining experience for lovers. Reservations are recommended. The new Austin's Homestead at Pelican Lakes Country Club is known for "comfort food with flair." A Valentine's Day menu is planned. Call for reservations. ■

Freelance writer Maryjo Faith Morgan lives in Loveland.

## LOVELAND AREA



- ♥ Loveland Museum/Gallery, 503 N. Lincoln Ave., (970) 962-2410; [www.ci.loveland.co.us](http://www.ci.loveland.co.us); A Night on the Town Gallery Walk: (970) 635-0649
- ♥ Rialto Theater, 228 E. 4th St.; (970) 962-2120, [www.ci.loveland.co.us/rialto-rialto.htm](http://www.ci.loveland.co.us/rialto-rialto.htm)
- ♥ Henry's Pub, 234 E. 4th St., (970) 613-1896, [www.henrys-pub.com](http://www.henrys-pub.com)
- ♥ Cattail Creek Inn Bed and Breakfast, 2665 Abarr Drive, (970) 667-7600, [www.cattailcreekinn.com](http://www.cattailcreekinn.com) (The Valentine's Day package can't be accessed through online reservations.)
- ♥ Benson Sculpture Park, corner of 29th and Beech, [www.sculptureinthepark.org/benson\\_park.html](http://www.sculptureinthepark.org/benson_park.html)
- ♥ The Olde Course, 2115 West 29th Street, (970) 667-5256
- ♥ Cattail Creek Golf Course, 2116 W. 29th St., (970) 663-5310
- ♥ Mariana Butte Golf Course, 701 Clubhouse Drive, (970) 667-8308
- ♥ The Outlets at Loveland, I-25 and U.S. 34, Exit 257B, (970) 663-1916, [www.outletsatloveland.com/index.cfm](http://www.outletsatloveland.com/index.cfm)
- The Promenade Shops at Centerra, 5971 Sky Pond Drive, Suite OFC, (970) 461-1285, [www.promenadeshopsat-centerra.com](http://www.promenadeshopsat-centerra.com)

Courtesy Loveland Rotary Club



size bed. You'll be treated to an after-dinner fruit-and-cheese plate, sparkling cider and a "Bed and Breakfast Inns in North America and Canada" guidebook.

### Saturday, Feb. 11

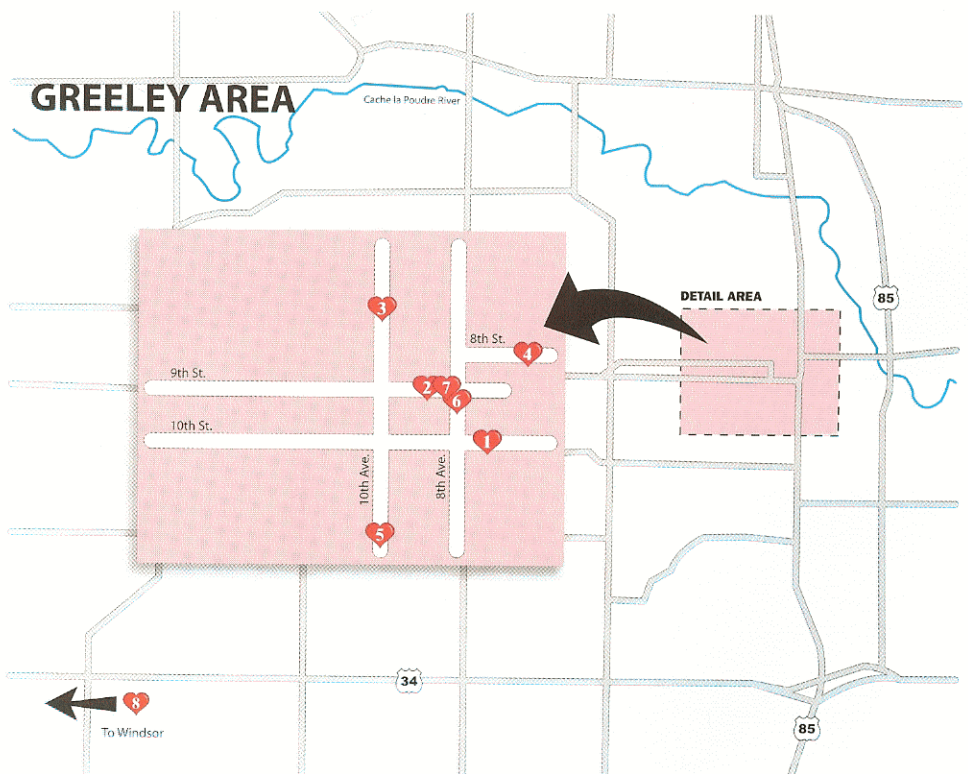
After an unhurried breakfast, walk the few blocks to the ♥ Benson Sculpture Park off 29th Street between Beech and Aspen drives. Bring along the list of Loveland's Art in Public Places from the city's Web site: [www.ci.loveland.co.us](http://www.ci.loveland.co.us).

If the weather cooperates, play a round of golf or hit a bucket of balls at ♥ The Olde Course or ♥ Cattail Creek Golf Course, located near your B & B. Or drive a ways to ♥ Mariana Butte on

the west side of town.

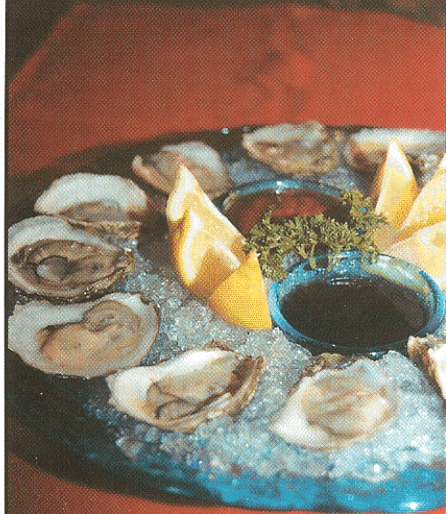
If the weather is ugly, head out to ♥ Interstate 25 and spend the rest of the day shopping with your special someone at The Outlets at Loveland and The Promenade Shops at Centerra.

- ♥ Greeley Hat Works, 725 10th St., (970) 353-7300, [www.greeleyhatworks.com](http://www.greeleyhatworks.com)
- ♥ Max'ims of Greeley Art Gallery, 818 9th Street Plaza, (970) 352-9341 [www.greeleycvb.com/gallery\\_mus.html#gal](http://www.greeleycvb.com/gallery_mus.html#gal)
- ♥ Tointon Gallery for the Visual Arts, 651 10th Ave., off the first-floor lobby of the Union Colony Civic Center, (970) 350-9491
- ♥ Greeley History Museum, 714 8th St., (970) 350-9220, [www.greeleygov.com](http://www.greeleygov.com)
- ♥ Canterbury Tea Room 1229 10th Ave., (970) 356-1811, [www.canterburytearoom.com](http://www.canterburytearoom.com)
- ♥ The Greeley Ice Haus, 900 8th Ave., (970) 350-9402
- ♥ The Magnus, 801 9th St., (970) 392-0080, [www.themagnus.com](http://www.themagnus.com)
- ♥ Chimney Park Bistro, 406 Main St., Windsor, (970) 686-1477, [www.chimneypark.com](http://www.chimneypark.com)
- Austin's Homestead at Pelican Lakes, 1600 Pelican Lakes Point, Windsor, (970) 674-1100



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## editor's note

**T**hank you for your overwhelmingly positive response to our premiere issue of 25 North magazine. Colorful, classy, informative and fun were words used in letters, e-mails and calls from readers like you.

I hope you enjoy our second issue even more. In the chill of the season, our hearts warm with memories made during the holidays. Sweethearts — and those with a sweet tooth — are now looking forward to Valentine's Day.

My mother was a bit of a fanatic when it came to holidays. On Feb. 14 my brother, sister and I would awake to heart-shaped eggs and toast covered with raspberry jelly. Mom would put pink food coloring in our milk and pack our school lunches with heart-shaped bologna sandwiches, cranberry juice and cherry Jell-O. It was a creative labor of love I'll always cherish.

In this issue we suggest creative ways for you and your Valentine to share a perfect day or weekend in Northern Colorado. Read about how the thriving artistic culture downtown Fort Collins lured a talented couple to our community.

No matter where you go for Valentine's Day, don't forget the chocolate.



We explore the history and mythology behind two reputed aphrodisiacs and show you where to go for the ultimate food-love experience in Northern Colorado.

With love — and loved ones — in mind, we urge you to take a serious message to heart. In honor of Heart Health Month, 25 North examines groundbreaking cardiac technology at Heart Center of the Rockies and the newly expanded North Colorado Medical Center. Also in this issue are profiles of local pilots and a look at the history of aviation in the region. And with gas bills skyrocketing, read about how some Northern Colorado homeowners are looking to the sun for energy.

So nestle into your warmest blanket with a mug of hot chocolate and enjoy reading 25 North. Then drop me a line with your thoughts, suggestions and story ideas. This is your magazine, and I'm eager to hear from you.

— Kathy Lee Strickland  
editor in chief

kathystrickland@coloradoan.com

## 25 NORTH

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