

Stony Creek News

February 2026

Vol. 41 No. 02 • Circulation: 725

Buffalo Mac

INGREDIENTS

- Kosher salt, for the pot and seasoning
- 12 oz. elbow macaroni
- 2 Tbsp. salted butter
- 1 small yellow onion, diced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper
- 1 mounded Tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 2 1/2 cups whole milk
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 1 1/2 cups grated sharp cheddar cheese (about 6 oz.)
- 1 1/2 cups grated pepper jack cheese (about 6 oz.)
- 1 generous c. shredded rotisserie chicken
- 1/4 cup Buffalo-style hot sauce, such as Frank's Red Hot, plus more for serving
- 2 Tbsp. buttermilk ranch dressing
- 1/2 cup crumbled blue cheese for serving (optional)

DIRECTIONS

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the pasta and cook until al dente, about 8 minutes. Drain and set aside.
2. Meanwhile, melt the butter in a large skillet or saucepan over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic. Season with the pepper and a good pinch of salt and cook until the onion and garlic are softened, 3 to 4 mins.
3. Sprinkle the flour over the onion and garlic and stir to make a roux. Let cook 2 to 3 minutes before slowly stirring in the milk and then the heavy cream. Bring to a gentle boil, allowing the mixture to thicken slightly, 2 to 3 minutes.
4. Reduce the heat to low and stir in the cheddar and pepper jack a handful at a time, allowing each addition to melt before adding the next. Stir in the chicken, hot sauce, and ranch dressing and cook until the chicken is heated through, 1 to 2 minutes. Taste and adjust seasonings as needed. Add the cooked pasta to the sauce and toss well to combine.

The Love Letter Project

December 26, 2025 to February 8, 2026

Aspen Grove 7301 S. Santa Fe Drive, Littleton

In partnership with ROX Arts Gallery

Now in its 6th year, the Love Letter Project invites you to help spread a little warmth where it matters most. We're asking our community to create and share handwritten Valentine's cards for neighbors served by Nourish Meals on Wheels and Meals on Wheels recipients across the Denver metro area.

These cards are delivered by hand before Valentine's Day, each one a small reminder that someone is thinking of them.

How to Take Part

- Make a card. Handmade cards are encouraged, but heartfelt words matter more than perfection.
- Drop it off at ROX Arts Gallery or in the mailbox right next to the gallery.
- No stamp needed. Cards are hand-delivered by Meals on Wheels volunteers.
- Please do not seal your card.
- Write as many as you'd like. One card is lovely. Many are even better.

Why It Matters

Nourish Meals on Wheels serves homebound Littleton residents, and this project also reaches Meals on Wheels recipients throughout the Denver metro area. For many, your card may be the only Valentine's Day card they receive. A few kind words can turn an ordinary day into something quietly unforgettable.

For The LOVE Of Junk

A Pop-Up Valentine's Flea & Gift Market

Friday, February 13: 12:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, February 14: 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Location: Inside Space 450 Aspen Grove

Vintage romance meets flea-market magic at For the LOVE of Junk, a Valentine's weekend pop-up celebrating all things old-school, one-of-a-kind, and delightfully unexpected. Shop soulful finds, quirky treasures, nostalgic décor, and gifts with real personality. Add a bouquet from the Flower Bar, sip from a full bar that benefits the Humane Society of the South Platte Valley, and soak in the vibes.

- Live jazz music on Friday night
- DJ spinning tunes on Saturday
- Flower Bar for custom blooms
- Bar pouring adult beverages (and more) hosted by the Humane Society of the South Platte
- Interactive moments + Valentine fun

Whether you're shopping for your sweetheart, your best friend, or yourself (highly encouraged), this is your chance to find the kind of gift no one else will have.



Columbine Kiwanis

A few things we are proud of:

- Over \$15,000 collected for the Salvation Army. Thank you to the King Soopers Stores and people who donated to our kettles.
- 250 Meals on Wheels Deliveries.
- 12 Project Cure Medical supplies sorting.
- Blood Drive - December
- 50 days working at the Sheridan Food Bank. Usually Thursdays
- Socials every month.
- And much more

Upcoming projects that you can help:

- Sheridan Food Bank – Thursday preparing distribution and distributing food.
- Project Cure – once a month – Sorting Medical Supplies
- Meals on Wheels – Every Weekday (Each member about once a month)
- Blood Drive – March
- Working with Schools

If you're looking for hands-on service opportunities or want to meet active community members, join us! Details on upcoming projects and events are shared in our weekly newsletter—email info info@columbinekiwanis.org to subscribe. Visit columbinekiwanis.org or come for a free breakfast at our weekly meeting every Wednesday at 7 a.m. at 4Gs Restaurant, 5950 S Platte Canyon Rd, Littleton. Or email me at KenSweet@gmail.com.

Where Is the 2026 Real Estate Market Heading?

We're officially one month into 2026, and many people are wondering what this year will bring for the Denver and Littleton real estate market. While no one has a crystal ball, I do have over 30 years of local experience to help make sense of where we're headed.

To understand the future, we need to look at the past. The years 2023 to 2025 were all shaped by the aftermath of the COVID-era housing boom, when ultra-low interest rates, skyrocketing prices, and record-low inventory created an unstable market. What we've been experiencing since then is a necessary correction.

The biggest correction came from mortgage rates. In early 2021, a 30-year fixed rate was around 2.65%. By 2023, it peaked near 7.79% (the sharpest increase in nearly 40 years) designed to cool inflation. Since then, rates have slowly improved, and at the time of writing, the 30-year rate is around 5.875%. That's helping buyers with affordability and motivating sellers to move out of their ultra-low-rate homes. Inventory has also improved, rising about 10% compared to 2024, giving buyers more choices. In addition, the average single-family home price rose about 1% in 2025, showing steady growth.

All signs point to 2026 continuing this slow and healthy recovery. Rates are stabilizing, inventory is improving, and affordability is gradually getting better. All of these factors create an environment to allow sidelined buyers to re-enter the market. If you have questions or want to talk about what this means for you, I'm always happy to help!

–Rob Stark, Stark Real Estate Group

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This Space Intentionally Left Blank for Teen Services

Advertise in this Newsletter!

The deadline for advertisements is the 15th of the month for the next month's issue, except for the Jan. issue which is Dec. 6th.

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Fun Indoor Activities For Long Winter Evenings

1. Cook an International Feast. Spice up your dinner routine by picking a country and cooking a meal inspired by its cuisine. Make sushi rolls for a Japanese night, prepare Italian pasta from scratch, or try Mexican tamales. Get the whole family involved in chopping, mixing, and tasting. Add an educational twist by looking up fun facts about the country while you cook.

2. Plan a Themed Movie Marathon. Nothing beats curling up for a movie night when it's frosty outside. Make it extra special by choosing a theme—holiday classics, adventure films, or animated favorites—and matching snacks to the theme. For example, hot cocoa for winter-themed movies or nachos for an action-packed flick.

3. Turn Game Night into a Tournament. Whether it's classic board games, card games, or trivia challenges, a family game night is a recipe for laughs and good-natured competition. Create a mini-tournament, complete with a scoreboard and small prizes for the winners. For added excitement, have everyone bring their "A game" with silly team names or costumes.

4. Bake Your Family Favorites. There's something about winter that calls for baking. From gooey chocolate chip cookies to warm banana bread, baking together is both fun and delicious. Let each family member choose a favorite recipe, or try something new each week. Don't forget to sample your creations fresh out of the oven with a glass of milk or a cup of tea!

5. Create a Family Vision Board. Gather old magazines, scissors, and glue for a night of dreaming and planning.

Encourage everyone to cut out pictures and words that represent their goals, hopes, and dreams for the year ahead. Share your boards with each other and talk about how you can support one another in reaching those aspirations.

6. Build a Blanket Fort and Have a Storytelling Session. Transform your living room into a magical hideaway by building a blanket fort. Pile it high with pillows, string up fairy lights, and settle in for an evening of storytelling. You could share memories, tell favorite family tales, or invent silly stories together. It's a nostalgic activity that's just as fun for adults as it is for kids.

7. Take a Virtual Adventure Together. Travel might not be on the agenda, but virtual adventures are just a click away. Explore online tours of famous landmarks, museums, or even space! Let each family member pick a "destination" and guide the group through a virtual journey. It's an educational and inspiring way to explore the world from your couch.

8. Have a DIY Karaoke Night. Unleash your inner superstar with a karaoke session at home. Use a karaoke app or find instrumental versions of your favorite songs online. Whether you're belting out classics, crooning to love songs, or having a dance-off, the energy and laughter are guaranteed to warm up any winter night.

9. Have a Puzzle Marathon. There's nothing more satisfying than finishing a big jigsaw puzzle as a family. Set up a cozy puzzle station, make some hot chocolate, and spend the evening working together to fit the pieces. For an extra challenge, try a puzzle with a winter scene or a holiday theme.

—By Kari Owens



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Winter Movies To Watch When It's Too Cold To Go Outside

Coming to America (1988)

Coming to America goes from the fictional country of Zamunda to the snowy streets of N.Y.C., as Prince Akeem (Eddie Murphy) travels to Queens to find his queen (pun absolutely intended). These days, it's not just a throwback; it's also peak New York winter in the '80s.

Cool Runnings (1993)

Feel the rhythm, feel the rhyme...Yes, this is the movie about the Jamaican bobsled team, and what's even better is that it's based on truth. When a Jamaican sprinter (Leon Robinson) is disqualified from the Olympic Games, he and a disgraced coach (John Candy) work together to form the first Jamaican Olympic Bobsled Team.

Frozen (2013)

Let it go, let it gooooooooooooo...this is the animated film that birthed the earworm of a century. Frozen is a force, producing spin-offs and a Broadway musical, but the OG is always a great choice. Watch this one with the youngest members of your family and ask them, "Do you want to build a snowman?"

Groundhog Day (1993)

Groundhog Day is one of those film concepts that takes an idea—inexplicably living the same day over again—and shows you what its real-life application would be like. Note: It wouldn't be fun. Bill Murray is at his comedic best, the plot is universally acclaimed, and honestly? The message at the end makes the movie. This one is meant to be enjoyed with a nice cup of tea, and without worry that Punxsutawney Phil will see his shadow.

Force Majeure (2014)

Telling the story of familial tension after the patriarch attempts to abandon them during an avalanche, this film hits hard. For good reason, of course. Watch this Swedish film solo (and not with a partner you've been fighting with).

Knives Out (2019)

There's not much cozier in the colder months than curling up on the couch with a good whodunit. Not only does Knives Out offer a particularly twisty mystery, but it also features plenty of enviable knitwear that'll inspire your winter wardrobe. Chris Evans's character especially gives a masterclass on cold-weather layering.

Anatomy of a Fall (2023)

A cold drama (in more ways than one!), this award-winning film centers around the mysterious death of a man (Samuel Theis) who's found lying in the snow underneath his office window. Much of the drama takes place in a courtroom, where the man's wife (Sandra Hüller) is on trial for his murder, and where their visually impaired son (Milo Machado-Graner) must serve as the case's main witness.

The Chronicles of Narnia:

The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe (2005)

Sometimes it can feel like winter weather will never end, but, in The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, four children travel to a magical land where it is literally always winter (but, tragically, never Christmas), thanks to a curse from the villainous White Witch. Watch this if you need some family-friendly fantasy for your winter movie night.

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Snow Removal From Your Private Property

Many local laws require residents to clear sidewalks within 24 hours after a snowstorm to allow safe use by pedestrians. This is particularly important along school pedestrian routes to prevent children from having to walk in the street.

Owners must place snow from their sidewalks onto their

front yard or other areas of their own property, and not into the street. This practice reduces the number of icy areas on streets and ensures proper drainage flow into the storm sewer once snow melts.

-<https://www.codot.gov/travel/snow-removal>



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