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Colorado Daily

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— Apache proverb

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Colorado Daily



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Locavore love

From Cafe Aion's paella to Blackbelly's skirt steak, 'A Bite of Boulder' offers more than 40 recipes from 30 restaurants and local superstar chefs
[Page 14]

Pot: What pandemic?

Despite the pandemic (probably because of it), Colorado is getting (record) high. September's sales surpassed \$200 million. Willie Nelson and Snoop would be so proud.

BIFF shifts to summer

BIFF is scrapping a virtual fest and will move from spring to summer 2021. That means we can still rage on the red carpet (pending the pandemic) and gather with real human beings.

Hey turkeys, stay home

Colorado health officials have offered guidance on how to celebrate Thanksgiving and it looks like it will consist of a big fat party starring you, a turkey and your dog.

Snap of the week



Jenny Evans / Getty Images

A squirrel monkey is seen Nov. 18 with a baby on its back at Taronga Zoo in Sydney, Australia. Taronga Zoo was allocated \$37.5 million as part of the New South Wales budget to build new, state-of-the-art wildlife hospitals in Sydney and Dubbo. The remaining \$35.9 million to complete the project will be sought from philanthropic and private donors.

High country

Slopes allowed to stay open

Resorts in Level Red counties must suspend indoor dining, but mountain activities can continue

By John Meyer
Denver Post

Ski areas in counties listed at Level Red, or “severe risk,” on the state’s COVID-19 dial will be allowed to remain open when new restrictions go into place starting Nov. 20.

Summit County, where Keystone, Arapahoe Basin and Breckenridge are already in operation, is one of 15 counties that will move to Level Red on Nov. 20. Another Summit County resort, Copper Mountain, is sched-

uled to open in two weeks.

According to an email from the Colorado State Joint Information Center sent Nov. 18, the new dial level announced Nov. 17 by Gov. Jared Polis “does not affect ski resort on-mountain operations specifically.” Ski areas in Level Red counties must suspend indoor dining and provide takeout and grab-and-go or outdoor dining, “but may still operate their lifts according to their approved plan.”

The statement also said facilities “essential for health

and safety like restrooms” can remain open. Families also may go indoors “to warm or shelter from inclement weather.”

The Loveland ski area is in Clear Creek county, which also will be at Level Red. Winter Park is in Grand County, which is at Level Orange.

Parking system at Eldora open

Eldora opened its parking reservation system on Nov. 9. Up to seven days can be booked in advance, and as

visitors use their days, additional days can be booked a week in advance.

The parking reservation system at Eldora has an added benefit for skiers and riders: In normal times, the parking lot often filled on weekends. That was frustrating for would-be visitors who drove to Eldora only to be turned away — or wait for a parking spot to open up.

“Our parking reservation system means that Eldora guests will know that when they plan a day of skiing and riding here, they are going to

have a great experience, because they will know they have a space to park and plenty of room to spread out on the mountain,” president and general manager Brent Tregaskis said in Eldora’s release.

Eldora visitors also need to be advised that RTD service to the area will be cut substantially compared to normal years. RTD will be operating fewer busses and those busses will be limited to 20 people.

Daily lift tickets will be sold online only.

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On the Cover

The ingredients for Blackbelly’s skirt steak with chimichurri sauce, a recipe that is featured in “A Bite of Boulder” cookbook.

Christina Kiffney / Courtesy photo



Local

Short Stuff

University of Colorado Boulder

Prof wins top water research prize

A University of Colorado Boulder professor is being honored for his research and work to improve water quality in the United States and abroad, particularly through using ultraviolet light to enhance water treatment systems and support water sustainability in small and rural communities.

Linden has been working in water research for decades and his work has focused on how to integrate new technologies and approaches into creating less expensive, more purified water, such as by implementing UV purification systems into communities that have not traditionally had access to them.

BCPH

Top boss to retire

Chana Goussetis, spokesperson for Boulder County Public Health, confirmed that Jeff Zayach, the department's executive director, is retiring.

First reported by Colorado Newswire, the article stated that Zayach will be leaving the office in April and had planned to retire before the coronavirus pandemic. The article said the pandemic was not the reason for his decision to leave.

Former September School site

Rehab, group home planned

The former site of the September School at Walnut and 19th streets could be revived to serve as a drug rehabilitation and group home facility.

Boulder's Planning Board is set to review plans to renovate the historic home.

The home will have addiction treatment and gathering spaces on the ground floor and residential rooms above, while the three-story addition will have rooms, a kitchen and community shared space, planning documents show.

Staff Reports

Thanksgiving

Guidance: Feast alone, friends



Pittsburgh Post-Gazette / TNS

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment has issued guidance with this warning: "If you must attend an in-person celebration with other households, know that you are putting yourself, your family, and your community at risk."

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment offers some health tips

The Denver Post

We have searched without luck for a health expert who will assure us it is safe to gather with friends and family this Thanksgiving. But Colorado health officials say the wisest course is to stay home.

"The best way to ensure that those who mean the most to us – especially older family members or those at increased risk – will still be gathered around our tables and giving thanks next year is to stay apart from them this year," Dr. Bill Burman, executive director of Denver Public Health, and Dr. John

Douglas Jr., executive director of the Tri-County Health Department wrote in a recent op-ed for The Denver Post.

And yet, people will travel to see loved ones and try to keep lonely relatives from spending the day alone. With that in mind, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment has issued some guidance, but with this warning: "If you must attend an in-person celebration with other households, know that you are putting yourself, your family, and your community at risk."

Here is their guidance:

- Interact with just one other household with 10 or fewer total guests. (Note: After this guidance was issued, the state placed 15 counties under restrictions that would ban such gatherings.)
- Eat dinner outside where airflow makes transmission

less likely. (The current forecast for Denver calls for a high in the low 50s)

- Wear a mask and keep 6 feet from anyone who doesn't live with you.
- Wash your hands with soap and water frequently.
- Designate a food server who wears a mask while filling guests' plates. Avoid buffet-style serving.
- Have each household bring and eat their own food from home.
- Quarantine for 14 days before interacting with another household and 14 days after returning home.

For those traveling:

- Quarantine for 14 days before visiting and 14 days after returning home.
- Wear a mask and maintain 6-foot distances
- Wash your hands frequently, or use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not

available.

- Open windows to improve ventilation on buses, trains, or shared cars.
- Postpone or cancel your travel if you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 in the 14 days before your travel. You should get tested as soon as you develop symptoms or seven days after you think you have been exposed.
- Cancel your plans if you or your traveling companions test positive or develop symptoms.

CDPHE has a "myth vs reality" chart at covid19.colorado.gov/thanksgiving that can help as you navigate your decisions. And the CDC has created its own guidance, which includes having conversations with your guests in advance about expectations for the day.

Have a happy, safe Thanksgiving, Colorado.

Boulder International Film Festival

'The hottest BIFF ever'

BIFF moves to summer 2021 with select screenings at Chautauqua, parties downtown

By **Kalene McCort**
Staff Writer

Since 2004, Boulder International Film Festival has attracted a bounty of filmmakers, actors and cinephiles to the Front Range.

While the pandemic has reshaped the entertainment industry and most all events, sisters Kathy and Robin Beeck — founders of BIFF — have opted to not transform the cherished multi-day event into a cyber offering, but keep the red-carpet soul of it intact with in-person festivities.

The festival, normally held in March, will now move to summer 2021 and offer plenty of outdoor screenings, as well as indoor ones at Chautauqua Auditorium.

"We've attended some virtual film festivals this summer and fall, and they're great, but nothing beats human interaction and community engagement," said Robin Beeck. "Filmmakers love Boulder audiences, so we hope to bring directors and producers to the festival as always. We know they'll love it here in the summer."

The Beecks, wanting to offer the community a chance to gather safely during COVID, set up a drive-in theater at Boulder Municipal Airport in June. The makeshift outdoor cinema, that often featured sold-out showings, screened "Two Trains Running," "Jimmy Carter: Rock & Roll President," "40 Years in the Making: The Magic Music Movie" and others.

"We always have big ideas, and for next year, we are planning for anything," said Kathy Beeck. "Our drive-in theater at the airport was hugely successful this summer, so one of the reasons we're adding Chautauqua — besides the beautiful auditorium — is the possibility of adding outdoor parties and screenings. We've been talking with the great people there and at the City of Boulder about what that could look like at Chautauqua in June."

Music is always a constant that runs through BIFF's repertoire. From documentaries that shed light on the backstories of some of the world's most beloved bands to a steady-stream of live musicians performing outside of



Jeremy Papasso / Staff Photographer

The Boulder Theater marquis is reflected on a car hood during opening night of the Boulder International Film Festival in 2018. BIFF 2021 will be held June 24-27 with screenings at Chautauqua for the upcoming season.



Matthew Jonas / Staff Photographer

From left, Boulder International Film Festival organizers Kathy Beeck and Robin Beeck, pose for a portrait at the Boulder Theater on Feb. 24, 2020. The sisters have opted to not transform the event into a cyber offering, but instead will keep the red-carpet soul of it intact with in-person festivities June 2021.

Boulder Theater and at nearby venues, live entertainment is at the forefront of this cinematic tradition.

Interviews with rock 'n' roll icons David Crosby and Robbie Robertson have been part of prior BIFFs. The festival has also brought Jesse Eisenberg, Martin Sheen, William H. Macy, Shirley MacLaine and other industry greats to Boulder.

It's the Beecks hope that next summer's BIFF will capture the same magic and star-studded lineup.

"Pearl Street has been the heart and soul of the festival for the last 16 years and we plan to continue that with world-class films, our talk-back/music tent on the mall and great parties downtown," Kathy said. "We have

a lot of long-time hotel and restaurant sponsors near Pearl Street, so we will continue to have big things happening there."

While the festival won't take place till June 24-27, the Beecks and their team have been busy narrowing the collection of next year's films.

"With the date change, we extended the submission deadlines a few months,"

Robin Beeck said. "Entries have been steadily coming in and our selection committee is busy watching a fantastic selection of films. The 2021 program will be outstanding. And, with the festival in late June and, now after some big premiere film festivals, we'll be able to highlight some great content we might not have been able to if BIFF was



Jeremy Papasso / Staff Photographer

Renee Malis, front, and Amanda Rhodes, both dressed as characters from "Cats," walk out of the Hotel Boulderado during the opening night of the Boulder International Film Festival in 2020.

in March. We haven't seen many films come through yet about the craziness of 2020, but we have no doubt we will see more of that in 2022."

All access festival passes for BIFF 2021 — that retail for \$395 — are on sale now. Buyers can also purchase gift packs available in denominations of \$30 for two

films, \$60 for four films and \$90 for six films.

"We were the last big party in town in early March before COVID hit and we're hoping to be one of the first big parties back next summer," Kathy Beeck said. "We plan to take full advantage of the warmer temps in June. It's going to be the hottest BIFF ever."

City of Boulder policy statement

Priorities: equity, climate action

Council approves amendments to 2021 statement

By Deborah Swearingen
Staff Writer

Boulder on Nov. 17 expressed continued support for policies that further the city's equity and climate action goals.

The Boulder City Council unanimously approved amendments to its 2021 policy statement, which highlights the city's lobbying priorities. The council held a public hearing on the revisions in October. That hearing was continued, but no additional public comment was taken in the second iteration.

According to the council packet, Boulder's priorities on the Colorado level for the upcoming year include:

- Accelerating the adoption of collaborative and equitable policies that ensure emissions will meet the targets identified in the state's Greenhouse Gas Pollution Reduction Roadmap for 2025 and 2030.
- Advancing the mobility needs of Denver's northwest region, specifically the projects identified through the Northwest Area Mobility Study, while keeping climate action at the forefront.
- Repealing three House bills, which together restrict local governments from proactively engaging with undocumented immigrants to meet

community needs.

Federally, the city is prioritizing pandemic fiscal support, reformation of the federal pesticide law, support for Colo. 119 improvements as well as support for federally funded labs and the University of Colorado Boulder.

In its 2021 policy statement, Boulder outlines dozens of priorities with climate, human rights, public health and transportation initiatives leading the way.

There were a few changes from last month's public hearing, including an initiative that would push Colorado to support counties that want to move to ranked-choice voting. That is important, considering Boulder voters overwhelmingly supported the Our Mayor, Our Choice ballot measure, which allows voters to select the next mayor through ranked-choice voting.

Chief Policy Advisor Carl Castillo said lobbying makes a

"The short of it is regional, state and federal policy matters impact the city, and we have the ability to shape them."

Carl Castillo
Chief Policy Advisor

difference, the list of priorities indicates what's important.

"The short of it is regional, state and federal policy matters impact the city, and we have the ability to shape them," Castillo said. "The adoption of policy statement provides direction for all city officials to speak and to advocate on the policy issues and to do so in a way that is uniformed and coordinated."

Boulder spends \$40,000 for federal lobbyists from Smith Dawson & Andrews and \$55,000 for state lobbyists from Headwaters Strategies Inc., but Castillo said many other people play a role.

Several community mem-

bers in open comment pushed for Boulder to support single-payer universal health care or Improved Medicare for All.

Jason Hubbard, a physical therapist, questioned how government officials can stand by and watch people die due to insufficient health care coverage.

"As a leader on the world stage, our callousness toward our neighbors across the country in this regard is staggering," Hubbard said.

However, Councilmember Aaron Brockett said the city does prioritize providing greater health care at a lower cost, which would allow Boulder to support such a bill.

Boulder City Council



Paul Aiken / File photo

Elizabeth Wilhelm and Valentino Petrusich drink tea at the Dushanbe Teahouse in Boulder in 2017.

Dushanbe Teahouse to become landmark

The intricacy and beauty of the building will be protected

By Deborah Swearingen
Staff Writer

Boulder City Council on Nov. 17 unanimously passed on second reading an ordinance that protects both the exterior and interior of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse and designates the site as a landmark.

The matter was first brought before council in late October. However, councilmembers opted to continue the hearing so staff could work with advocates from Friends of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse and Teahouse staff to craft language that would protect the interior as well as the exterior. It's not something Boulder has done before, but council and community members said they thought it was important because of the intricacy and beauty of the building.

"This building is a treasure for Boulder," Mayor

Sam Weaver said.

The amended ordinance dictates that regulation will be limited to the inside pavilion and won't include the "utilitarian addition" of the bathrooms, hallway, office and kitchen. This means that any changes proposed to the inside pavilion part of the building, as well as any proposed to the exterior, would need to go through a review process.

Other key revisions include an outline of the review process for the interior, which is similar to the process for landmark alteration certificate review of the exterior, and a refined definition of the word "alteration" to clarify what work requires review.

Council thanked staff for working to amend the ordinance in a manner that's amenable to all.

"It was important to our community, and it was important to council," Council member Bob Yates said. "I know it was unprecedented."

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Worldview



Mladen Antonov / Getty Images

A Buddhist monk walks past riot police standing guard on Nov. 17 during an anti-government rally by pro-democracy protesters in Bangkok.

Short Stuff

Islamabad

U.S. withdrawal rattles Afghan allies and adversaries alike

An accelerated U.S. troop withdrawal from Afghanistan, announced by Washington, has rattled both allies and adversaries. There are fears of worsening violence and regional chaos, which some say could embolden the local Islamic State affiliate to regroup and perhaps even try to build another “caliphate.”

Under an earlier deal between the U.S. and the Taliban that outlined a gradual pullout, the remaining U.S. forces were to leave Afghanistan by April. The Pentagon now says some 2,500 troops will leave by January, just days before President-elect Joe Biden’s inauguration, leaving another 2,000 or so U.S. forces in place. Biden has said he prefers a small, intelligence-driven, counterterrorism presence in Afghanistan.

A U.S. withdrawal would be welcome in most of rural Afghanistan where civilians are

increasingly caught in the crossfire between Taliban and government forces, said Torek Farhadi, a former Afghan government adviser and political analyst.

“After a bombing by any side of the conflict, no one has gone back to rebuild any infrastructure. No one has really worked on healing hearts and minds,” he said.

Macizo de Peñas Blancas, Nicaragua

Lota’s devastation comes into focus in storm-weary Nicaragua

The devastation caused by Hurricane Lota became clearer Nov. 18 as images emerged showing piles of wind-tossed lumber that used to be homes and concrete walls that were pounded into pieces by the second Category 4 storm to blast Nicaragua’s Caribbean coast in two weeks.

Nicaragua Vice President and first lady Rosario Murillo on Nov. 18 raised the nation’s death toll to 16. The victims were spread across

the country, swept away by swollen rivers or buried in landslides.

Rescuers searched at the site of a landslide in northern Nicaragua, where the local government confirmed four deaths and neighbors spoke of at least 16. A short video from the nation’s emergency management agency showed a massive bowl-shaped mountainside shrouded in clouds that collapsed. Police blocked media access to the site on the Macizo de Peñas Blancas, a mountain in Matagalpa province, north of Managua.

Berlin

Police forcefully disperse protestors over virus rules

German police used water cannons and pepper spray Nov. 18 to disperse people protesting coronavirus restrictions in Berlin’s government district, after crowds ignored calls to wear masks and keep their distance from one another in line with pandemic regulations.

As water sprayed from the cannons rained down on protesters outside the landmark Brandenburg Gate, police in riot gear moved through the crowd carrying away some participants. Some demonstrators threw fireworks, flares and other objects in response as police helicopters hovered overhead.

Officers avoided shooting the cannons directly at protesters because there were children in the crowd, and they worked slowly and methodically to disperse the crowd, Berlin police spokesman Thilo Cabiltz said. Some protesters popped open umbrellas and held their ground until they were eventually forced back.

More than 100 people were arrested, Cabiltz said, and many more temporarily detained. Nine police officers were injured.

Nairobi, Kenya

People go hungry in Ethiopia’s Tigray as conflict marches on

People are going hungry in

Ethiopia’s rebellious northern Tigray region as roads are blocked, airports are closed and the federal government marches on its capital in a final push to win a two-week war. But residents are afraid to leave for fear of being killed, an internal assessment says.

Trucks laden with food, fuel and medical supplies have been stuck outside the region’s borders since the Nov. 4 announcement by Ethiopia’s Nobel Peace Prize-winning Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed that a military offensive had begun in response to an attack by Tigray regional forces on a military base.

“At this stage there is simply very little left, even if you have money,” according to the internal assessment by one humanitarian group, seen by The Associated Press.

Banks in Tigray were closed for days, cutting off humanitarian cash transfers to some 1 million people, or one-sixth of the Tigray population. And even before the fighting, a locust outbreak was destroying crops.

Stateside



Elijah Nouvelage / Getty Images

Democratic Georgia State Rep. Vernon Jones speaks Nov. 18 at a "Stop the Steal" rally against the results of the presidential election inside the Georgia State Capitol in Atlanta.

Short Stuff

Billings, Mont.

Trump pushes new environmental rollbacks on way out the door

Down to its final weeks, the Trump administration is working to push through dozens of environmental rollbacks that could weaken century-old protections for migratory birds, expand Arctic drilling and hamstringing future regulation of public health threats.

The pending changes, which benefit oil and gas and other industries, deepen the challenges for President-elect Joe Biden, who made restoring and advancing protections for the environment, climate and public health a core piece of his campaign.

"We're going to see a real scorched-earth effort here at the tail end of the administration," said Brian Rutledge, a vice president at the National Audubon Society.

The proposed changes cap four years of unprecedented environmental deregulation by President Donald Trump, whose administration has

worked to fundamentally change how federal agencies apply and enforce the Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act and other protections.

Most of the changes are expected to sail through the approval process, which includes the White House releasing the final version and publication in the Federal Register.

Washington

Boeing Max cleared for takeoff, 2 years after deadly crashes

After nearly two years and a pair of deadly crashes, the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration has cleared Boeing's 737 Max for flight.

The nation's air safety agency announced the move early Nov. 18, saying it was done after a "comprehensive and methodical" 20-month review process.

Regulators around the world grounded the Max in March 2019, after the crash of an Ethiopian Airlines jet. That happened less than five months after another Max

flown by Indonesia's Lion Air plunged into the Java Sea. A total of 346 passengers and crew members on both planes were killed.

Federal Aviation Administration chief Stephen Dickson signed an order Nov. 18 rescinding the grounding. U.S. airlines will fly the Max once Boeing updates critical software and computers and pilots receive training in flight simulators.

The FAA says the order was made in cooperation with air safety regulators worldwide.

Pfizer: COVID-19 shot 95% effective, seeking clearance soon

Pfizer said Nov. 18 that new test results show its coronavirus vaccine is 95% effective, is safe and also protects older people most at risk of dying — the last data needed to seek emergency use of limited shot supplies as the catastrophic outbreak worsens across the globe.

Earlier in the week, competitor Moderna Inc. also announced similar effectiveness of its own COVID-19

vaccine candidate, which is made with the same, brand-new technology — using a snippet of the genetic code of the coronavirus to train the body to recognize if the real virus comes along.

The announcement from Pfizer and its German partner BioNTech, just a week after they revealed the first promising preliminary results, comes as the team prepared to formally ask U.S. regulators to allow emergency use of the vaccine.

The companies also have begun "rolling submissions" for the vaccine with regulators in Europe, the U.K. and Canada and soon will add this new data.

For both, "there's every reason to be enormously optimistic," said Dr. Paul Offit of Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, one of FDA's advisers.

Virus won't stop NORAD from tracking Santa

Children of the world can rest easy. The global pandemic won't stop them from tracking Santa Claus' progress as he delivers gifts

around the globe on Christmas Eve.

The North American Aerospace Defense Command has announced that NORAD will track Santa on Dec. 24, just as it has done for 65 years. But there will be some changes: Not every child will be able to get through to a volunteer at NORAD's call center to check on Santa's whereabouts, as they have in years before.

Normally, 150-160 volunteers crowd into a conference room at Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado Springs, taking two-hour shifts to answer the phones as eager children call to see if Santa and his sleigh have reached their rooftops. All together, 1,500 people over 20 hours have participated in the call center in the past, fielding more than 130,000 phone calls, beginning at 6 a.m. Eastern time on Christmas Eve.

This year, due to safety restrictions forced by the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of volunteers has been drastically cut to what NORAD expects will be fewer than 10 people per shift.

University of Colorado Boulder

Research: Prehistoric wildfires linked to climate change

If we take action, 'we can mitigate the impact'

By **Katie Langford**
Staff Writer

University of Colorado Boulder researchers have found that climate change spurred wildfires across much of the planet millions of years ago, with implications that human-caused climate change could have similar impacts in the future.

Former doctoral student Garrett Boudinot and Assistant Professor Julio Sepulveda studied marine rocks deposited in Utah 94 million years ago, focusing on what the “molecular fossils” left behind could tell them about the state of the planet.

To their surprise, they found evidence of burning wood and specific molecules that are used to trace forest fires.

“We did not set out to study forest fires,” Boudinot said. “We went out to look at marine ecology.”

Boudinot and Sepulveda hypothesized that because the world was experiencing climate change 94 million years ago, the cycle of carbon and oxygen in the atmosphere was disrupted. An excess of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere from volcanic activity led to warmer tempera-



Matthew Jonas / Staff Photographer

A slurry bomber makes a drop on the Calwood Fire as it burns in Boulder County on Oct. 17. CU researchers found that climate change spurred wildfires millions of years ago, with implications that human-caused climate change could have similar impacts in the future.

tures, increased photosynthesis in the oceans and thus oxygen-deprived oceans.

More carbon was being stored in marine sediment and not being released into the atmosphere as the planet attempted to right itself, leading to an excess of oxygen in the atmosphere and fueling forest fires that burned up to 40% of the planet’s forests over the course of tens of thousands of years.

“This is something folks had hypothesized and modeled since the ’80s, but it was very fringe because there was not much evidence to support it,” Boudinot said. “We now have multiple lines of evidence to support this hypothesis.”

In a research paper published in the journal “Nature Geoscience” in September, Boudinot and Sepulveda wrote that evidence also sug-

gests that precipitation and plant type didn’t see big changes at the time, indicating that fires burned even in wet forest ecosystems, aided by the increased oxygen in the atmosphere.

That long-ago climate change resulted in species extinction and toxic oceans, Boudinot said. It also was not as severe as climate change today.

“The rate of input is much

faster than what was occurring 94 million years ago,” he said. “It’s incredibly relevant in that it suggests that (carbon dioxide) and climate change will have long-lasting impacts for thousands of years, and that they don’t just impact the ocean but fundamentally impact how ecosystems behave.”

Science journalist Peter Brannen, an affiliate with the Institute of Arctic and Alpine Research at CU Boulder, said the study is an example of times when the planet has gone through climate change all on its own, similar to what the world is experiencing with human-caused climate change now.

“As the study shows, things can really go haywire when you push on this lever of CO₂,” he said. Brannen wrote a book about catastrophes in earth history, “The Ends of the World,” which echoes Boudinot and Sepulveda’s research — that catastrophes are often associated with massive injections of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

The difference between now and then, Boudinot said, is that we can have a hand in preventing further damage to the climate with action.

“If we change our actions and come up with ways of living that don’t require combustion of fossil fuels and carbon dioxide input to the atmosphere, we can mitigate the impact of climate change,” he said.

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Boulder Valley School District

Parents sue over transgender lesson

Suit alleges violations of religious freedom

By Shelly Bradbury
Denver Post

The parents of three students at a Boulder County elementary school who wanted to pull their kids from lessons on transgender issues sued the Boulder Valley School District on Nov. 16, alleging the district violated their constitutional right to religious freedom.

Lewis and Brecken Jones, who say they are Christians, filed a federal lawsuit over the school district's handling of the incident, which began in 2018 when the parents asked that their children be exempted from a planned presentation on transgender issues at Superior Elementary School.

The presentation at the kindergarten-through-fifth-grade school had been prompted by the bullying of a transgender student, the Daily Camera newspaper in Boulder reported at the time. School administrators planned to include the performance of a musical by Phoenix, Colorado's Trans Community Choir, as well as

videos on gender roles and related topics, followed by classroom discussion.

The lawsuit alleges the school district violated its own policies when administrators allowed the Jones' children to opt out of only the musical performance, and not the videos and classroom discussion. The lawsuit also claims the district retaliated against the family by creating a hostile environment after the parents filed a formal complaint with the school district in November 2018. That complaint was supported by nine other families, the Camera reported at the time.

"Teachers were overheard at school openly maligning the families who complained about the (school's) transgender materials," the complaint reads. In addition to the religious freedom violations, the lawsuit also alleges the school district violated the parents' constitutional right to raise their children as they choose.

The Jones family pulled their children from the school and are now both homeschooling the students and sending them to private schools, according to the

lawsuit.

The lawsuit asks the school district be forced to pay the family's expenses related to the alternate schooling, because the students would have continued to attend public schools "were it not for BVSD's action in violation of their constitutional rights."

An attorney for the Jones family and a spokesman for the Boulder Valley School District did not immediately return requests for comment.

Sam Bullington, founder of the choir that put on the musical performance, said that the choir performs in schools to help change the environment for transgender youth, who are often bullied, misunderstood and targeted by their classmates.

The musical the choir performed at Superior Elementary School featured animal characters and was about a transgender raven who is considered to be a girl but doesn't feel like a girl, he said, and the raven's journey

to acceptance among friends.

"So yes, one of the parents is like, 'This is incompatible with my Christian faith,' and I'm like, 'The message of the play is around the importance of unconditional love, which is the message of your faith,'" Bullington said. "The play never mentions the word transgender, it is really about being seen for who are on the inside, rather than the projections put on you based on what you look like, which is relevant to everyone."

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Boulder shooting

Ex-Buff set for trial in summer

Justin Bannan pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity in August

By Mitchell Byars
Staff Writer

Justin Bannan is now set for a two-week trial in the summer in a Boulder shooting last year.

Bannan, 41, pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity in August to attempted first-degree murder after deliberation, attempted first-degree murder — extreme indifference; first-degree assault causing serious bodily injury with a deadly weapon; first-degree assault — extreme indifference; possession of a weapon on school grounds; and four crime of violence sentence enhancers.

Following a mental health evaluation, Bannan this week was set for a 10-day trial starting June 7. Bannan, who is out of custody on \$500,000 bond, is also set for



Matthew Jonas / Staff Photographer

Justin Bannan, seen arriving at a Dec. 9 preliminary hearing at the Boulder County Justice Center, is scheduled for trial on charges related to an October 2019 shooting starting June 7.

a motions hearing on May 6 and a pre-trial readiness conference on May 26.

Colorado statute deems a person is not guilty by reason of insanity if the defendant “was so diseased or defective in mind at the time of the commission of the act as to be incapable of distinguishing right from wrong

with respect to that act.”

Bannan’s defense attorney, Harvey Steinberg, has previously alluded to Bannan’s football career and the possibility of chronic traumatic encephalopathy, commonly known as CTE.

Bannan played for the CU Buffs from 1997 to 2001 before being drafted by the

Buffalo Bills in 2002. He spent 11 years in the NFL, including two stints with the Denver Broncos.

If found not guilty by reason of insanity, Bannan would be held at a psychiatric facility for treatment until he was deemed not to be a threat to himself or the community.

According to police, Bannan used a handgun to shoot a 36-year-old woman in the arm on Oct. 16, 2019, at Black Lab Sports, 3550 Frontier Ave. The woman, later identified as Ashley Marie, was taken to Boulder Community Health’s Foothills Hospital with injuries that were not life-threatening.

According to an affidavit, Marie was unlocking her therapy room in the building when Bannan, who was already in the room, shot her in the shoulder while she was standing in the doorway.

Marie said she knew Bannan, but only because he was part-owner of the building and she would occasionally see him pass in the hall-

way. Bannan is listed as the co-founder of Black Lab Sports, but Marie worked for a company called Element 6 that operates inside the same building but is not a part of Black Lab Sports.

When police found Bannan at the scene, he was carrying a bag containing two loaded handguns, along with an extra magazine. They also found a rolled-up \$20 bill coated with a white substance that tested positive for cocaine.

Bannan told police he “didn’t mean to shoot her,” and that he was just hiding in the room because the Russian mafia was after him and tracking his cellphone. He said he fired the gun only once and that it was an “accident.”

Marie has also filed a lawsuit against Bannan and Black Lab Sports in Boulder District Court to “be compensated for her medical bills, lost wages, and other serious damages.” That civil case is set for a hearing in January.

Crime

Former CU student’s sex assault trial pushed back

Man accused of repeatedly sexually assaulting another student while she slept

By Mitchell Byars
Staff Writer

A former University of Colorado Boulder student accused of repeatedly

sexually assaulting another student while she slept has had his trial pushed back to May.

Conner Lee Shaver, 21, pleaded not guilty to four

counts of sexual assault in June and was set for a six-day trial starting Dec. 15.

But Boulder County has stopped all jury trials until at least January due to rising coronavirus numbers across the state.

Court records show Shaver, who is out on a \$20,000 personal recognizance bond, is now set for a six-day trial starting May 17. He is also set for a pre-trial readiness conference on May 5.

According to an arrest affidavit, Shaver and the named victim met through CU Boulder about three years ago, and have had consensual sex in the past.

The woman told Boulder police she stayed with Shaver on July 4, 2019, and drank alcohol and smoked marijuana before going to sleep in her underwear. She said she woke up the next morning naked and was sore and noticed signs she had sex even though she did not remember it. The woman also told police Shaver was naked next to her when she woke up.

The next day, the woman

said the same thing happened, and at this point she became suspicious Shaver was having sex with her while she was asleep.

On July 7, 2019, the woman told police she did not drink or smoke, and went to sleep in her underwear next to Shaver after telling him she did not want to have sex. This time, the woman told police she woke up in the middle of the night naked to Shaver having sex with her, though she did not immediately confront him.

The next morning, the woman said Shaver asked her how she slept and she lied and told him she slept through the night. Shaver did not bring up the incident during the night.

According to the affidavit, the woman and Shaver exchanged texts about the alleged incidents, with Shaver sending a text reading, “I had sex with you, I only did it because I thought you said you have my consent.”

The woman told police she never gave Shaver permission to have sex with her while she was sleeping.

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Coronavirus

Teachers navigating wild year

The challenge of in-person, remote learning is 'like nothing I've ever done before'

By Amy Bounds
Staff Writer

Meredith Antonuccio was spending most of her teaching time in her second grade classroom at Superior's Eldorado K-8 behind a desk draped in a clear plastic sheet.

The extra layer of protection from the plastic, combined with keeping some distance from her students, helped Antonuccio feel more comfortable returning to the classroom when kindergarten through second graders started coming in person at the end of September.

A two-week quarantine in October after a student in her class tested positive reinforced the need for taking as many precautions as possible. At the same time, she said, not getting "up close and personal" with her young students has been one of the hardest parts of an already hard school year.

"What I love about teaching is being close to these kids," she said.

It's not just safety precautions that kept her behind a desk. She used two computers plus a document camera to manage teaching students learning remotely from home at the same time as she taught her in-person students. To make it all work, her 17 in-person students often log on to their laptops to join the seven online at home.

"There are just a million things to do (in this model)," Antonuccio said. "We're constantly relearning or trying to do it better."

And it's all changed again as her class has joined the rest of Boulder Valley in switching to 100% remote, the same way they started the school year. The district's goal is to bring students back in person after winter break.

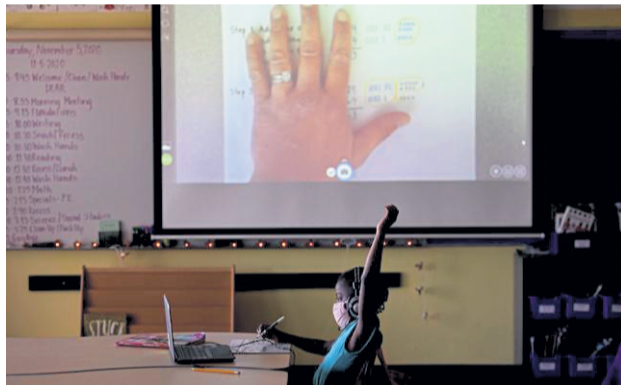
While Antonuccio agrees with the decision to return to remote learning because of high case numbers, she's worried some students won't sign on consistently. Another worry is how well such young students can handle so many transitions.

"I want them to make growth, and I want to be part of that positive transition into third grade," she said. "All of these worries stay with me consistently as a teacher this year. I just hope that when we sign on next week, they feel



Matthew Jonas / Staff Photographer

Second grade teacher Meredith Antonuccio gives an "air high five" to a student working remotely while sitting at her desk at Eldorado K-8 in Superior on Nov. 5.



Matthew Jonas / Staff Photographer

Second grader Amelia Hires raises her hand to solve a math problem while following along on her laptop with teacher Meredith Antonuccio on screen Nov. 5 at Eldorado K-8 in Superior. The class is a hybrid of in-person and remote learners.

as happy to be part of our classroom community as I am happy that they are there."

Changing learning models plus the complexities of teaching in a pandemic have even veteran teachers saying it feels like they're back in their first year of teaching.

"There are just so many layers that get added on in this teaching environment," said Dan Greenberg, a 22-year teaching veteran who is a sixth grade math teacher at Boulder's Manhattan Middle School. "The key is to find what works and keep moving forward. It's a puzzle I'm going to keep trying to figure out."

Boulder Valley, along with the St. Vrain Valley School District, turned to a hybrid mix of in-person and remote learning to be able to reopen school buildings while following health guidelines. At the same time, district officials have acknowledged the heavy workload as teachers manage what now feels like at least twice the work.

"I walk away from those hybrid days the most exhausted I have ever been," Greenberg

said.

In Boulder Valley, where elementary students were attending four out of five days in person, not all elementary teachers were teaching in-person and remote students at the same time, dubbed "HyFlex" by the district. Depending on how well staffing levels matched up with in-person attendance, some schools could assign a separate teacher to the remote-only students.

Altogether, about 25% of the district's students were 100% remote in the hybrid model.

Boulder Valley's secondary students, who attended two days for middle and one day for high school, joined the live in-person classes from home, requiring all those teachers to teach both groups.

Focus is on essentials

Teachers said they aren't getting through the curriculum as fast as they usually would. Instead, they're trying to focus on essentials, going deeper into certain areas.

They're also spending more time making connections

with students and skipping some lessons to address social and emotional issues.

"The most important thing is to build relationships with your kids," Antonuccio said. "Without that trust, you're not going to get anywhere with their education. Just letting them know we see them and hear them is going to go further than reading a leveled book."

On a recent day at Eldorado K-8, Antonuccio kept up a steady patter of cheerful, encouraging words during a math lesson, interspersed with regular reminders to move away from a classmate and pull a mask over a nose.

She starts each lesson by teaching a new concept to the whole group and then practicing the new skill together, with in-person students following along with her on a large screen at the front of the class. Then students work in smaller groups, followed by a check-in on how the lesson went. The groups combine both in-person and online students.

During math, Antonuccio juggled helping an in-class boy upset about a glitching laptop while leading a small group through solving math addition problems. She provided a number search sheet for the rest of the students to try if they finished early, reminding an at-home student it was in the packet his parents picked up.

One online girl told her, "I forgot how to do it because it's way too hard." She asked all the students to give an encouraging "you can do it" before putting on headphones to help her directly while the others worked independently.

"Nice job," she told the girl as they solved the problem. "Are you remembering now?

You're awesome."

Greenberg, at Manhattan Middle, has close to two hours of class time to fill while trying to divide his time equitably between in-person and remote students in the hybrid model. A new block schedule has Boulder Valley middle schoolers taking three classes at a time.

Generally, the first half of his class is a "live" session, with online students joining in from home. The second half, students at home work independently while he works with the students in his classroom.

While he uses cooperative learning apps so all the students can learn together in the first half of the class, he tries to "engage them in person, with computers closed, as much as possible" for the second half in the classroom.

Because of the challenge of sanitizing shared supplies, like rulers, he's also had to get creative with lessons.

Fluctuating in-person attendance creates other challenges. He had one class with just a single in-person student as others were pulled out to get extra help. So he connected that student with one who was 100% online through Google Meet.

"They were doing the same activity," he said. "It was like they were sitting across from the table with each other, except they weren't."

Before Boulder Valley announced the switch to remote, his school was one of nine that had already moved to remote learning because of staffing issues created by quarantines. Making that announcement in his last class, he said, was really tough. Students had only been in person for 2½ weeks.

"This volleyball of all of this is not easy," he said.

For remote learning, he said, challenges include teaching to a "screen full of avatars," keeping students engaged when it's so easy for them to get distracted and encouraging them to use academic language.

"I'm trying to have students use their voice in meaningful ways, not just shouting out answers," he said. "It's an important age for them to use their voice."

With the district now remote until January, he said, he worries about students who are successful in person but really struggle online.

"I have some students who are vastly different students online compared to when they are in my classroom," he said.

Longmont Amateur Radio Club

Santa signing on in stereo

Club hosting on-air with Santa, seeks to spark interest in amateur radio

By Kelsey Hammon
Staff Writer

The coronavirus has altered the way that communities are celebrating this year's holidays, meaning Santa Claus may not be able to make his Christmas list through in-person visits. One Longmont club, though, is giving Kris Kringle some air time so that he can still hear from Boulder County's children in a safe-distanced way.

The Longmont Amateur Radio Club will host On Air with Santa from 6-7 p.m. Dec. 1-5. The club is encouraging licensed ham radio operators to give their children and grandchildren a chance to connect with Santa in a safe, distanced way.

Firestone's Chuck Poch, president of the radio club, said this is the first time that the Longmont Amateur Radio Club has hosted the event. While the Longmont Amateur Radio Club wants to give children a chance to connect with Santa, members also hope to transmit an interest in the next generation of ham radio operators.

"The thought was, one: Get kids on the radio and get them to experience talking to Santa on the ham radio and maybe saying 'I can talk to Santa on the radio. Cool, I want to learn more about it,'" Poch said.

Poch (Santa Claus) said it will also be a chance for parents to listen in and find out what their child wants for Christmas.

"It's a win-win," he said.

Steve Haverstick, of Longmont, who serves as the publicity committee for the



Matthew Jonas / Staff Photographer

Chuck Poch, call sign KOITP, and the rest of the Longmont Amateur Radio Club operators will be giving kids the opportunity to talk to Santa via ham radio from Dec. 1-5.

Longmont Amateur Radio Club, said he hopes the first-time event sparks some interest.

"We are trying to get the younger folk involved," Haverstick said. "There's not much talk about ham radios anymore. Kids handle phones and computers and they're good at that. We thought this is a way to get them to talk to Santa and get them comfortable and maybe get involved."

Haverstick and Poch said the ham radio community offers more than a hobby for those who share in the skills. Amateur radio communications can be paramount in spreading important information when other sources like the internet and cell towers are not operating.

For example, the Longmont Amateur Radio Club works with Longmont's Office of Emergency Management.

The club provides the city's Community Emergency Response Team with education on ham radio operations and how to obtain a license.

A ham radio is a radio that's capable of broadcasting over a short wave length. A transmission license is required from the Federal Communications Commission for a person to be able to operate an amateur radio. Poch said the club saw a boost in those interested in becoming a licensed ham radio operator after the 2013 flood.

With technology constantly seeing advances, Poch said the ham radio is no different.

"A lot of people think of a guy with a ham and cheese sandwich, drinking a beer with a microphone and a big rig with a 100-foot tower in the backyard," Poch said. "It's not like that anymore.

Ham radio has expanded."

Software like EchoLink gives those interested a chance to join the airwaves using just their computer. Poch said people are welcome to chat with Santa using EchoLink, but they must still have a licensed operator present. Haverstick, emphasized though, that being a ham radio operator still takes knowledge.

"You have to understand a little bit about electronics," Haverstick said. "You have to understand a bit about bionic and atmospheric conditions to be able to transmit. You have to have some antenna knowledge. What kinds of antennas are needed and why, as well as frequencies and bandwidth — all kinds of fun stuff."

The club offers classes to educate people on what they need to know to pass the test to receive amateur radio licensing. Details, as well as study guide resources, can be found on the Longmont Amateur Radio Club's website at: w0eno.org/node/10.

The club has about 150 members, which has seen an increase in about 10 people in the last three years, according to Poch.

To transmit its signals, the club has two repeaters installed on the top of the Longmont Community Justice Partnership building, 528 Main Street.

In layman's terms, Poch said a repeater is a radio and an antenna. The club's repeaters can send a signal over a roughly 35-mile radius.

According to Poch, there are 116 ham radio operators in Longmont; 102 in Boulder and 3,789 across the state.

To participate in On Air with Santa, children wishing to chat with Santa must be with a licensed ham radio operator. Poch encouraged anyone with questions to reach out to him at k0itp@w0eno.org.


"I thought this would be the perfect thing to start in Longmont, considering we are all stuck in house," Poch said.

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