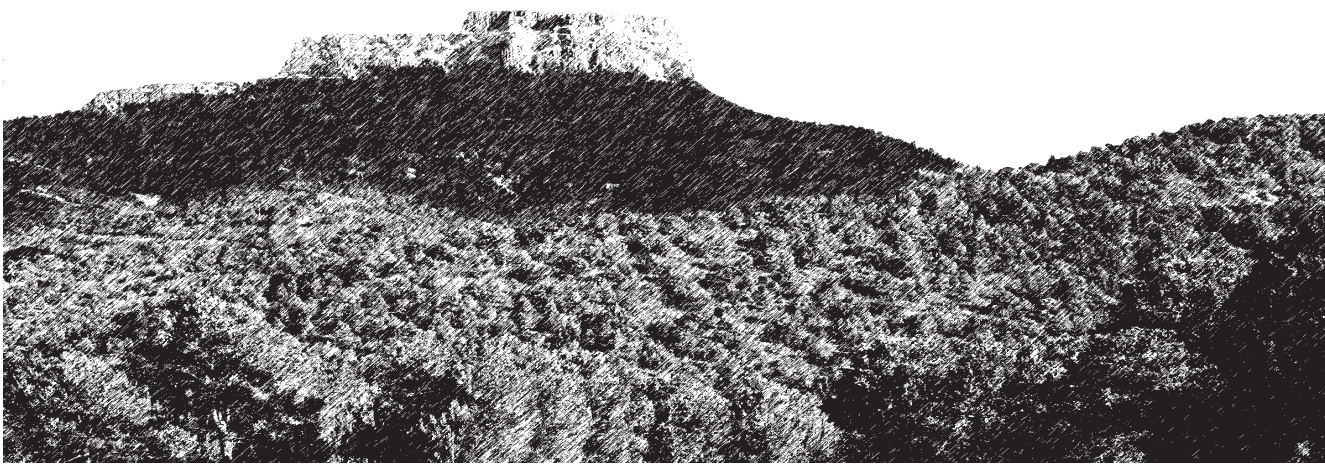


OVER THE PASS



"Humidity and mosquitoes. We moved here from the Texas gulf coast eight years ago and those are two things I do not miss."

– Larry Carnes, retired, General Services Administration (Trinidad)



TRINIDAD-RATON CONNECTION

"What bugs you?"

By Tim Keller
Correspondent
The Chronicle-News

Photos by Tim Keller / The Chronicle-News

"Nothing bugs me. It's a choice, isn't it? You choose whether to be annoyed. You choose how to respond to things."

– Rob Taylor, structural engineer, Santa Barbara, CA (Raton)



"We sit on the front porch every night and watch them run the stop sign. We're on a street behind the courthouse."

– Richard Rasmussen, retired farmer (Trinidad)



"Negative-speak. I can't stand it when people can't find the good."

– Christina Boyce, director, A.R. Mitchell Museum of Western Art, Trinidad (Raton)



"I love my work but the baggage people bring to work, that bugs me. I'm sure they'd say the same about me. That's probably why we're on a much-needed vacation."

– Steve Silvestri, TV news photographer, Kansas City, MO (Raton)



"Watching the pigeons fly in and out of the Schneider Brewery because I'm afraid it's gonna become too dilapidated to renovate. I love that building. It's crucial for our skyline."

– Lori Holdread, TSJC academic support (Trinidad)

PARKS & WILDLIFE

Southeast Region Park swim beaches closure dates approach

Colorado Parks & Wildlife
Special to The Chronicle-News

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. - Find some end of summer fun in the sun at southeast region state parks, as the closure dates for the swim beaches at three state parks are fast approaching.

There is no fee to enter the respective swim beaches, but a valid park pass (\$7 daily or \$70 annually) is required on every vehicle that enters a Colorado state park.

■ Lake Pueblo State Park Rock Canyon Swim Beach

Hours: 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Thursday through Monday

Amenities: Swimming, sandy beach area, picnic facilities and paddle boarding. No lifeguards.

Last Day of Season: Sept. 7

Anticipated 2016 Re-opening: May 27, 2016

■ John Martin Reservoir State Park Swim Beach

Hours: Sunrise to Sunset, Every Day

Amenities: No lifeguards, glass, fires, pets or fishing. Restrooms near by the beach area.

Last Day of Season: Sept. 8

Anticipated 2016 Reopening: Memorial Day Weekend 2016

■ Lathrop State Park Swim Beach

Hours: 5 a.m. to 10 p.m., Every Day

Amenities: Restroom, shower, picnic tables and changing room. No lifeguards, dogs or glass.

Last Day of Season: Sept. 21

Anticipated 2016 Reopening: Memorial Day Weekend 2016

For more information and news about Colorado Parks and Wildlife go to: <http://cpw.state.co.us>.

CPW is an enterprise agency, relying primarily on license sales, state parks fees and registration fees to support its operations, including: 42 state parks and more than 350 wildlife areas covering approximately

900,000 acres, management of fishing and hunting, wildlife watching, camping, motorized and non-motorized trails, boating and outdoor education. CPW's work contributes approximately \$6 billion in total economic impact annually throughout Colorado.

Strategic Plan presentation slated in Alamosa on Sept. 3

MONTE VISTA, Colo. - Colorado Parks and Wildlife has released a draft of its long-term strategic plan and the public is invited to learn more about the project and discuss aspects of the plan at an open-house, 6-8 p.m., Sept. 3, at the Rodeway Inn, 333 Sante Fe Ave. (U.S. Highway 160) in Alamosa.

CPW operates 42 states parks that receive more than 12 million visitors annually. The agency also keeps tabs on the state's wildlife species and sells about 850,000 hunting and fishing licenses every year. The draft plan was developed using input provided by stakeholders, public, staff, and the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission. The goals, objectives, and strategies in the plan are intended to guide the creation and execution of CPW's future operations.

The plan can be reviewed on CPW's home page at cpw.state.co.us. There is also a comment form that can be submitted on-line. The deadline for comments is Sept. 14.

CPW's mission is to perpetuate the wildlife resources of the state, to provide a quality state parks system, and to provide enjoyable and sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities that educate and inspire current and future generations to serve as active stewards of Colorado's natural resources. The development of this strategic plan serves as a guide to help CPW achieve its mission.

The agency is facing many management challenges and the public's insights are needed to help CPW as it moves into the future. Many parks facilities are aging, the public continually asks for more recreational access, and people expect more recreational opportunities. The agency also faces many wildlife challenges, including how to maintain big game, fisheries and watchable wildlife opportunities, and how to address issues regarding wildlife habitat and species-of-concern. Long-term funding for the agency is also a major issue.



COLORADO THEATER TRAGEDY

Judge gives spirited defense of theater shooter's trial

By SADIE GURMAN
Associated Press

CENTENNIAL, Colo. (AP) — The judge who oversaw Colorado theater shooter James Holmes' trial gave an impassioned defense of the jury and the process Monday after the mother of one of the wounded said Holmes' life sentence showed more concern for Holmes than for the victims.

"You can't claim there was no justice because it wasn't the outcome you expected," Judge Carlos A. Samour Jr. said in an unusual speech from the bench during Holmes' formal sentencing hearing for the 2012 attack.

Samour said the jury was fair and impartial and that he tried his utmost to be the same.

"And that's how you know it was justice," he said.

Samour spoke after Kathleen Pourciau testified that her daughter, Bonnie Kate Pourciau, suffers constant, excruciating pain and terrible nightmares from the gunshot wounds she suffered at Holmes' hand.

Kathleen Pourciau said the sentence showed little respect for life.

"The message is the state of Colorado values a mass murderer more than the lives of those he murdered," she said, speaking from a lectern facing Samour and occasionally turning toward the attorneys and the packed gallery behind her.

Afterward, she sat quietly and nodded but showed no other reaction as Samour defended the trial.

Holmes murdered 12 people and tried to kill 70 more when he opened fire during a packed midnight showing of "The Dark Knight Rises." His attorneys blamed the massacre on his schizophrenia and psychotic delusions, and experts testified that it wouldn't have happened if he were not seriously mentally ill.

Jurors quickly rejected his insanity defense, convicting him on July 16 of 165 felony counts. But they were divided on the sentence, with 11 favoring death and one favoring life in prison without parole. Under Colorado law, jurors must be unanimous to impose the death penalty, so Holmes automatically got life.

Samour will formally hand down the life sentences for 24 murder convictions — two for each victim — after a three-day hearing that began Monday. He'll also sentence Holmes on the 141 other counts, which include attempted murder and an explosives charge.

The hearing won't change the life sentence but gives survivors a chance to share their harrowing stories.

At least 100 victims and witnesses are expected to testify. Holmes will also have an op-

portunity to speak, though he declined to do so during his trial.

Two jurors who heard the case — including an alternate who didn't participate in the deliberations — sat in the gallery listening to the testimony Monday.

Holmes wore a burgundy jail uniform and sat shackled at the defense table Monday. He showed little emotion and twiddled his thumbs as Pourciau and others described the physical pain, the grief and the despair his rampage caused.

"There's no human language that can convey the pain I have witnessed seize hold of my family," said Kristian Cowden, whose father Gordon Cowden was the oldest of those killed.

Cowden and her sister, Brooke, spoke in trembling, tearful voices as they talked about how their father's death shattered their lives and left them in a black hole of sorrow.

Brooke Cowden described "drowning in pain and sadness."

Tom Teves, whose son Alex was killed, called Holmes an evil coward and also denounced the defense attorneys as "agents of evil" who were trying to advance their own careers.

Aurora Police Cmdr. Michael Dailey spoke of the emotional trauma that he and other officers — including his wife, an Aurora officer — suffered in the chaotic and bloody aftermath of the shooting.

He called Holmes a monster who should be banished from public sight and forgotten.

"I hope that every day is painful for him. I hope that prison is not kind to him," Dailey said. "I hope prison gives him his just rewards."

Survivors and witnesses of the Colorado theater attack are remembering the victims of the massacre and describing how it has affected their lives.

They are testifying in the final sentencing phase for James Holmes, who opened fire on a packed suburban Denver movie theater on July 20, 2012, killing 12 people and injuring 70 others.

Sonya Akutagawa remembered calling hospitals in a panic after the attack to try to find her niece, 32-year-old Rebecca Wingo. Wingo, who was killed in the shooting, was a single mother of two daughters.

Akutagawa said, "There was not any hate or anger in Becky's heart, and I know she wouldn't want anyone to carry that burden."

Also Monday, Amber Raney, who was in the theater, recounted hearing people screaming and said she has had constant nightmares about death since the attack. She added that she is now always cautious and aware of her surroundings, "but no person should ever have to feel like that."