

Voice of the Rocky Mountain Empire

# THE DENVER POST

FRIDAY, JUNE 14, 2019



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LOCAL

## SURVEY TESTS REBUILD OF COLUMBINE

Jeffco Public Schools will use an informal online survey to test public opinion about a proposal to tear down and rebuild Columbine High School before proceeding with public meetings or a ballot question.

»2A

BUSINESS

## A SMOOTHIE STRAIGHT TO THE VEIN

As the rapid growth of Denver's Hydrate IV Bar demonstrates, there are plenty of people in the metro area willing to deal with a little sting — to their arms or their pocketbooks — to get water-soluble vitamins and nutrients pumping through their blood.

»7A

NATION

## SANDERS IS LEAVING WHITE HOUSE

White House press secretary Sarah Sanders will be leaving the Trump administration at the end of the month. She is one of President Donald Trump's closest and most trusted aides.

»10A

LIFESTYLES & CULTURE

## NEW RULE FOR PARK ALCOHOL

As visitors arrive at Denver's parks, now that the weather has warmed up, they will find a newly streamlined rule for alcohol.

»1C

GROW

## HOSPITAL'S GARDENS ARE THERAPY

Patients at Craig Hospital can take horticultural therapy and learn techniques for adaptive gardening.

»4L

STONEWALL

# Moment that "blew open the doors"



Don McMaster, 71, poses for a portrait at Christ Church United Methodist in Denver on Tuesday. McMaster is a member of the Denver Gay Men's Chorus, which is housed in the church. McMaster came out as a gay man in the early 1970s. Before accepting his sexuality, McMaster struggled with this part of himself. He was raised Catholic and had studied to be in the priesthood. "I always say that I didn't leave the church," McMaster said. "The church left me." *Kelsey Brunner, The Denver Post*

## On 50th anniversary of riots, the LGBTQ community reflects

By Carina Julig  
*The Denver Post*

In the early 2000s, Michelle Folmar, a lesbian Denver police officer, traveled to New York with a friend. And while staying at the Chelsea Hotel an older woman invited them into her apartment-style

room, where she regaled them with stories about her life as an entertainer and drag artist.

Folmar noticed a picture of a young black woman punching a police officer.

"Were you around for Stonewall?" Folmar asked.

The woman answered, "That's me."

Folmar was face to face with Storme DeLarverie, the butch lesbian widely credited with throwing the first punch at the 1969 Stonewall riots in New York City when gay people, who were tired of being arrested, fought against the police.

STONEWALL »4A

MEASLES

# Vaccine rate falls again in Colo.

Governor issues order to increase access, education

By Anna Staver  
*The Denver Post*

The number of Colorado kindergartners getting vaccinated for diseases such as measles and chickenpox dropped again this year, keeping the state at the bottom of the national rankings for childhood immunizations.

Gov. Jared Polis said it's a sign Colorado is headed in the wrong direction, but he thinks the solution is to increase education and access rather than eliminate non-medical exemptions, as other Democratic governors have done.

"I'm pro-choice," Polis said at a news conference Thursday to reveal an administrative plan to increase the state's vaccination rate. "I think it's your body and it's your decision."

The governor's recommitment to increasing education about and access to immunizations came the same day the Colorado Depart-

VACCINES »4A

# Tankers attacked near Strait of Hormuz

By Jon Gambrell  
*The Associated Press*

DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES» The U.S. blamed Iran for suspected attacks on two oil tankers Thursday near the strategic Strait of Hormuz, denouncing what it called a campaign of "escalating tensions" in a region crucial to global energy supplies.

The U.S. Navy rushed to assist the stricken vessels in the Gulf of Oman off the coast of Iran, including one that was set ablaze. The ships' operators offered no immediate explanation about who or what caused the damage against the Norwegian-owned MT Front Altair and the Japanese-owned Kokuka Courageous. Each was loaded with petroleum products, and the Front Altair burned for hours, sending up a column of thick, black smoke.

TANKERS »6A



# Woman allegedly killed by ex had filed previous reports

By Saja Hindi  
The Denver Post

Cellphone pings, a stolen debit card and a stolen vehicle eventually led authorities to arrest suspect Andrew Condon in connection to the killing of 23-year-old Aurora woman LeBrea Jackson, an arrest affidavit shows.

The document revealed that police had responded to previous domestic violence calls involving the pair in which Condon allegedly strangled Jackson.

Jackson's body was discovered bound and stuffed in a storage container Jan. 6 at a closed truck stop at exit 34 on Interstate 25 in Las Animas County. An autopsy determined Jackson likely died of strangulation, according to Condon's arrest affidavit, which was signed Jan. 25.

Jackson is believed to have been strangled to death on or between Dec. 21 and Dec. 24 in her apartment on 12700 block of East Mississippi Avenue in Aurora. Aurora police announced Condon's arrest Tuesday.

The young woman was first reported missing by her adoptive mother on Dec. 26. The mother told police that Jackson had texted her Dec. 23, saying she was picking up her then-boyfriend, Condon, and would be arriving at her parents' home in Westcliffe that evening, but she never came, according to the arrest documents. Jackson was last seen alive Dec. 21.

On Dec. 24, Condon was stopped by a Texas Highway Patrol officer while driving a silver Toyota Rav-4, according to arrest documents. That Toyota later was determined to be Jackson's. The trooper issued Condon a citation for drug paraphernalia possession and released him, the documents stated.

But Condon was stopped again later that day, this time by an officer from the Alvarado Police Department in Texas and this time was taken into custody on multiple charges.

Condon provided police with a stolen Colorado identification card, the affidavit said. Police also found Jackson's cellphone and other property during a search.

Cellphone data showed a ping on Dec. 23 from a tower near the location where Jackson's body was found and then pings traveling south through Colorado into New Mexico and Texas, the documents stated.

After finding the human remains, police showed photos to Condon, who would tell police only "not guilty" and that he wanted to speak to a lawyer, the affidavit said. But he also appeared to become emotional when looking at the pictures, police said.

In two prior domestic violence cases involving Condon and Jackson, she told Aurora police that Condon had strangled her, the document stated.

In November, Jackson gave police an alias for Condon, the same one he used when he was first stopped by authorities in Texas, according to the report. She had told police she was scared of Condon.

Condon also faced domestic violence charges against his ex-girlfriend and the mother of his son, the report stated, as well as had arrest warrants on allegations of violent crimes and escape out of El Paso County Department of Corrections.

"Andrew Condon had/has a propensity for physical violence according to his arrest record and a significant history with lying to law enforcement about his identity," the affidavit stated.

"We really view this as the third way between the government forcing people to get shots, which is counterproductive, and simply allowing these rates to go down, which is counterproductive to public health and will result in people dying."

Gov. Jared Polis

## VACCINES

◀◀ FROM 1A

ment of Public Health and Environment released data from the 2018-19 school year. It showed immunization rates dropping for four of the five vaccinations required to attend public school:

- Measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) dropped from 88.7 percent to 87.4 percent.
- Hepatitis B dropped from 92.1 percent to 90.8 percent.
- Polio dropped from 88.6 percent to 87.2 percent.
- Chickenpox dropped from 87.7 percent to 86.5 percent.
- DTaP rose from 88.7 percent to 90.3 percent.

The CDC already ranked Colorado's MMR vaccination rate the lowest in the country and put the state's overall rate near the bottom of the list.

The measles rates is of particular interest because of outbreaks across the country in the past six months. The national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has reported more than 1,000 reported measles cases across 28 states — the highest number since the disease was declared eliminated in 2000.

"I think it really hits home that keeping the status quo isn't working and is putting our kids at great risk," said Rep. Kyle Mullica, D-Northglenn.

The freshman Democrat tried to follow in the footsteps of lawmakers in California, Washington and New York this year who have pushed more aggressive legislation to combat outbreaks in their states, including eliminating personal and religious vaccination exemptions altogether.

But Mullica ran into opposition from Polis, who said he wouldn't support a bill that eliminated exemptions. The governor also didn't like the rewritten version that would have required parents to go to a local

health department office to fill out a standardized exemption form.

Ultimately, Mullica's bill failed in the Senate, but several of the ideas in it found their way into the governor's executive order.

"We really view this as the third way between the government forcing people to get shots, which is counterproductive, and simply allowing these rates to go down, which is counterproductive to public health and will result in people dying," Polis said.

The order directs the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing to incentivize doctors to participate in the Vaccines for Children program, which helps cover the costs of shots. It also says the state will study the effectiveness of local immunization drives — particularly those in rural communities — and encourage parents and schools to use a standardized form for vaccine exemptions.

"It's a good first step," Mullica said. "What I am encouraged about is to see more resources going to the issue. Do I think that's going to solve the problem? I don't know."

The executive order directs CDPHE to use existing dollars because it's the legislature's job to allocate money, and the governor isn't requiring parents to use a standardized exemption form, as Mullica's bill would have.

The Democrat, who also is an ER nurse, said the experts he worked with in drafting his bill believe making it more burdensome to get an exemption would increase the state's vaccination rate.

"If we want to focus on different areas, I'm all about it. There are some really good points, and to see some resources go to the issue is great," Mullica said Thursday. "But I think we also need to make sure we're bringing those experts into this conversation and listening to them."



Donaciano Martinez, 72, stands in his front yard with his homemade sign at his home in Denver on Wednesday. Martinez has marched in the Denver Pride Parade with his sign every year since 1976. Kelsey Brunner, The Denver Post

## STONEWALL

◀◀ FROM 1A

The riots would become a flash point in the contemporary gay rights movement, leading others across the country to push for equal rights in their communities. In Denver, it would inspire a 1973 gay revolt at the City Council, where activists forced the city to repeal its anti-gay laws.

On that day in New York, Folmar told DeLarverie that she was a police officer and joked, "Do you want to give me one in the kisser?"

DeLarverie did not. "I'm glad you made it," she said.

The exchange illustrates the strides gay people have made in society, including the ability to be open and still serve in an institution that once arrested gay people rather than employ them. DeLarverie, who punched a cop, paved the way for Folmar to become one.

"She and her generation blew open the doors," Folmar said.

This weekend, the progress will be celebrated at Denver Pride-Fest, which will commemorate the 1969 riots at the Stonewall Inn. The occasion is leading LGBTQ people, especially those who are older, to reflect on the moment and how much has changed during their lifetimes.

The Stonewall Inn was a gay bar in New York City's Greenwich Village, and, like many gay establishments at the time, it was a target of police vice squads.

The uprising happened June 28, 1969, when the police arrived and the bar patrons, who were fed up with the discrimination, fought back as police hauled people out of the bar. Violent clashes and protests erupted.

It was a watershed moment for the gay rights movement, said David Duffield, history director for The Center on Colfax, an LGBTQ advocacy organization in Denver.

"Generations are still being affected by the period of gay liberation," Duffield said.

For older generations of LGBTQ people, Stonewall was a pivotal moment in their lives, even if they did not immediately realize it at the time.

Kris McDaniel-Miccio, a University of Denver Sturm College of Law professor, was a teenager when Stonewall happened, but she remembers it "like it was yes-

terday."

She lived in the Bronx at the time, and she read through every newspaper in the city to learn about the event.

"I just ate it up, because I knew what they were doing was going to help me," she said. "I felt incredibly proud."

Stonewall influenced McDaniel-Miccio to dedicate her life to activism. She was one of the plaintiffs who successfully sued in 2014 to end Colorado's same-sex marriage ban.

Judith Blair, 77, who lives in Boulder, didn't know about Stonewall until years after it happened. She came out at age 13 in 1955, a profoundly difficult time to be gay. The consensus at the time was that gay people were mentally ill and sexually predatory, and she believed that she would never be able to live a normal life.

She moved to Los Angeles from Dayton, Ohio, in her 20s and lived a more open life, getting involved with gay activism. But news about Stonewall didn't reach her on the West Coast, and she didn't learn about it until she marched in her first pride parade in 1975.

"None of us knew anything about anybody else," Blair said.

Witnessing the rise of the LGBTQ rights movement has been thrilling, she said.

"I wasn't sure I'd see it in my life," she said.

But Blair cautioned the work is far from done. "We need to come together and keep going," she said.

When Don McMaster read about Stonewall in the *The Denver Post*, he was in the closet.

"I remember reading about it and in an odd way wishing I had been there, and at the same time trying to think, that's not about me," said McMaster, 71.

McMaster was struggling with the idea of being a gay man because of the negative connotations associated with it at the time. He tried everything from psychoanalysis to religion to change himself, with no success. Things got so bad that he began contemplating suicide.

Not knowing what to do, he one day looked up "gay" in the phone book and found the Gay Coalition of Denver. The phone line rotated between the houses of different members, and the man who picked up, Craig Henderson, listened to McMaster's desperation.

They met for coffee the next

week, and Henderson became a father figure to McMaster, teaching him about gay life and introducing him to other gay people.

"Everything in my life as a gay man I owe to Craig," McMaster said.

The Gay Coalition of Denver was instrumental in the 1973 gay revolt, which became known as Denver's own Stonewall moment.

At the time in Denver, hundreds of gay men were being arrested for indecent behavior for holding hands, dancing together or cross-dressing. The coalition filed a lawsuit against the city, and hundreds of supporters came to speak at a City Council meeting that October.

At first, the council president wouldn't allow the group to present its findings. But council member Irving Hook demanded they be allowed to speak and to show data on the number of people being arrested. The group's members spoke for hours about the discrimination they faced.

The following month, the City Council repealed Denver's anti-gay ordinances.

"It was our Stonewall," Gerald Gerash said.

Gerash was one of the founding members of the coalition and filed the lawsuit against the city. He later helped found the city's LGBT center, which is now The Center on Colfax.

When Donaciano Martinez heard about Denver's gay revolt, he was electrified.

Martinez was a member of the Colorado Springs chapter of the Gay Liberation Front, which local gay people founded after Stonewall. For Martinez, the Denver revolt was "even more uplifting and encouraging."

Martinez later moved to Denver and continued a lifetime of involvement in LGBTQ, Chicano and anti-war activism. Every year he marches in the PrideFest parade with a sign proclaiming "I have marched for justice since 1965."

Gerash was involved in national gay activism through his work in the National Lawyers Guild, and said that what Denver was doing at the time for gay rights was much more advanced than other cities.

Although many people are no longer aware of it, he said Denver was a leader in the gay rights movement.

"I call it the best-kept secret of gay liberation," Gerash said.

## COLUMBINE

◀◀ FROM 2A

bonds.

It isn't clear yet if Jeffco Public Schools could reallocate \$15 million from the district's latest bond issue that was supposed to go toward a host of renovations at Columbine, including an addition, new security cameras, more secure doors and updates to the plumbing, lighting and climate control systems.

The building is about 40 years old, but the district determined it was more cost-effective to fix it than to knock it down, Schiff said. But getting rid of a magnet for people obsessed with a violent tragedy that took place 20 years ago might have a value to the community that isn't as easy to calculate, she said.

"Before we go down that path (of renovating the school), because we're on the runway for that, let's find out how the community feels about 'scrape and rebuild,'" she said.

There's no consensus on whether it's better to raze the site of a mass tragedy or reopen it.

The Newtown Public School District in Connecticut demolished Sandy Hook Elementary School, and reopened another school with the same name on a different site after the 2012 shooting. Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., remains open after the 2018 shooting there.

An Aurora theater where moviegoers were shot in 2012 reopened quickly after a renovation. The Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Fla., remains closed three years after it was attacked, and debate goes on about whether it should become a memorial.

And officials at STEM School Highlands Ranch haven't released any information about how they will decide what to do with the building after a shooting that killed one and injured eight in May.

Jeffco Public Schools initially took a middle approach, closing Columbine and eventually tearing out the library where most of the

killings took place while leaving the rest of the school open.

But last week, Superintendent Jason Glass floated the idea of demolishing the building and erecting a new high school on the same property.

Glass said the school remained an attraction for people with a troubling interest in the shootings, including Sol Pais, the Florida woman who set off a massive manhunt this spring before she was found dead of a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

Informal discussions with teachers and people in the community suggests Jeffco should keep the name and symbols of the school, Schiff said.

Experts they consulted with believe people obsessed with the shooting won't be likely to seek out a new Columbine High School, she said.

"It's the structure and some of the history in the structure that's an attraction," she said.

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