

# DENVER & THE WEST

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### Wall Street

DOW JONES	213.86
▲ 11,482.50	NASDAQ
▲ 47.22	7,555.20
▲ 58.9	500
▲ 25.68	1,204.45

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## DOWN AND DIRTY FOR EDUCATION



A skull is about to become part of a fake crime scene put together Monday by Nick Repka, right, and others at the the Buffalo Ridge Landfill. Clues will be scattered to be found by students asked to determine how the "victims" died. Below: Associate professor Catherine Gaither, left, and Lauren Walther apply finishing touches. Photos by Helen H. Richardson, The Denver Post

## "Crime scene" created

By Monte Whaley The Denver Post

**KEENESBURG** While digging a shallow grave for two murder victims, Catherine Gaither and Thomas Newal compared notes and considered their next move.

"Think like a murderer who's burying the evidence," college professor Gaither told her roommate. "What would you do next?"

"Well first off," said Newal, a 30-year veteran of the Colorado Bureau of Investigation. "I wouldn't be doing this in broad daylight."

True. But just about every other part of the murder scene that Gaither, Newal and a handful of others from Metropolitan State College of Denver pieced together Monday morning seemed pretty close to form.

But the true test happens this fall, when Metro State students enrolled in forensic anthropology, chemistry and crime-scene investigation will descend on the same corner of the Buffalo Ridge Landfill — about 5 miles north of Keenesburg — to see if they can answer the question of what happened to the unfortunate couple.

Good luck to them. Because in about two hours Monday, under a baking sun, Gaither and her confederates had done their worst and produced a top-notch crime scene.

"Not too bad," said Gaither, who teaches anthropology at Metro State.



**"We try and make this as real as possible, so we will 'salt the scene' with all kinds of different things for them to look at."**

Thomas Newal of Metropolitan State College of Denver, as he helped prepare a corner of a landfill to mimic a murder scene for a crime investigation class

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## Fourth in fatal hit-run jailed

The valet's family had hoped for a longer term for the sister who helped the driver flee.

By Jessica Fender The Denver Post



The final accomplice in a hit-and-run that killed 21-year-old valet Jose Medina outside a Denver nightclub was sentenced Monday to a year in county jail for helping the driver flee authorities.

Yolanda Bastida-Nolasco, 44, gave her younger sister her passport and bought her airfare to Mexico after the Jan. 23 crash. She didn't know that sister Norma Vera-Nolasco had killed someone, according to both the defense and prosecution.

Authorities caught up with Bastida-Nolasco's sister in a taxiing plane at an Arizona airport moments before it took off for Mexico.

"We are here because she loved her sister. Her sister just said 'I need help. I'm in trouble,'" defense attorney R. Scott Reich told the judge. "Her sister played her. She is a very simple woman who made a huge mistake."

Bastida-Nolasco asked for probation, saying she was a mother and that, had she known the severity of her sister's crime, she would have instead helped by calling a lawyer.

The year-long jail sentence was not enough for Medina's mother, Linda Timon, and his fiancée, Shannon Burmess, 19.

The young couple planned to marry in February. "It has been seven months. But every day, it's not easier," Burmess said. "We've been together



Yolanda Bastida-Nolasco, top, was sentenced to a year in county jail for helping Norma Vera-Nolasco flee authorities.

**dp**  
**OnLine.**  
Previous coverage of the hit-and-run death of valet Jose Medina. [denverpost.com/extra](http://denverpost.com/extra)  
**VALET » 48**

## The grateful face of a grace-filled life

**TINA GRIEGO**  
Denver Post Columnist

In an advance of our meeting, Judy Rosen of Estes Park describes herself so that I will recognize her. "I'm 54," she says. "I'm 54." She says her hair is short and mentions chemotherapy.

She was diagnosed with late-stage ovarian cancer in October 2009. It went into remission for a year, but has returned. When she first e-mailed me in January, she called her illness "a gift in living life fully and fearlessly."

Such sentiment when expressed by the healthy is dismissed as trite. When offered by those who are dying, it is met with a range of emotion from understanding to skepticism with steps along the way as pity and condescension. Well, of course, you would say that.

This last reaction suggests a belief that anyone who is dying and who has time to contem-

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## Comcast casts Net to free-lunch kids

By Yesenia Robles The Denver Post

Slightly more than a third of all Colorado students qualify for free lunches, and starting this school year, those kids also will qualify for low-cost broadband Internet access if their neighborhoods are served by Comcast.

"A lot of families have had to make a lot of tough choices between Internet or cable, for instance, and school supplies or health care," said Chris Waney, president of the Colorado Children's Campaign. "For them, this will be a

### Interested?

For more information about Internet Essentials, go to [InternetEssentials.com](http://InternetEssentials.com) or call 855-846-8376 toll-free.

significant resource." Comcast Corp.'s Internet Essentials program is the result of a long list of conditions the Federal Communications Commission attached to the cable giant's January merger with broad-

cast network NBC Universal. The deal requires Comcast to help provide Internet access, personal computers and digital literacy education to low-income families across the country.

But the idea was already on Comcast's agenda, as a way to help bridge the digital divide, spokeswoman Cindy Parsons said.

"The program stemmed from an earlier and very similar program we were trying to develop called Adoption Flux," she said. "The thought behind that program was to propose a

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## INSIDE ROLLING OUT FASTTRACKS SUPPORT

The new Union Station light-rail platform, two blocks west of Denver Union Station adjacent to the Millennium Bridge, opened Monday, and Denver Mayor Michael Hancock used the occasion to reiterate his pledge to complete the FastTracks transit expansion. » 28

By Sangwon, The Denver Post

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# State to fight suit vs. TABOR

Lawyers say the legal action is an attack on citizen initiatives.

By Joey Bunch  
The Denver Post

Lawyers for Gov. John Hickenlooper on Monday asked a federal judge to toss out a lawsuit challenging Colorado's Taxpayer's Bill of Rights.

A bipartisan coalition of 34 current and former state legislators and local leaders sued Hickenlooper, in his capacity as governor, in May TABOR, they argue, hamstringing the General Assembly's constitutional authority to govern by forbidding legislators from raising taxes without voter approval.

In a 25-page filing Monday afternoon, state lawyers characterized the suit as an attack on citizen initiatives.

The suit claims TABOR has brought "a slow, insensible slide into fiscal dysfunction" to Colorado since voters approved the constitutional amendment in 1992.

Anti-tax activist Douglas Bruce of Colorado Springs, who wrote TABOR, said the government is correct. "Not only would their lawsuit invalidate TABOR, but it would invalidate term limits and many other initiatives the people have wanted and voters have approved," he said. "They're attempting... to do away with our right to petition."

State Rep. Andy Kerr, D-Lakewood, a coalition leader, said it is the interpretation of the U.S. Constitution — of the country as a republic governed by elected leaders — the lawsuit seeks to preserve.

"Doug Bruce does not have the power to go against more than 200 years of constitutional law, just because he writes a few words and gets some people to vote for it," Kerr said.

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## AROUND THE CORNER



Andy Schleck, center front, the runner-up at this year's Tour de France, accompanies cycling enthusiasts in Steamboat Springs on Monday. The 26-year-old from Luxembourg, will compete in the USA Pro Cycling Challenge in Colorado. The Colorado race runs from next Monday through Aug. 28. » MORE ON THE USA PRO CYCLING CHALLENGE, PAGE 2

Steamboat Ski & Resort Corp., Larry Flores, The Associated Press

## CU prof calls for flat-rate tuition

By Brittany Anas  
Daily Camera

A University of Colorado professor has a pitch that he thinks could help solve the university's budget woes: Charge a flat tuition rate for in-state and out-of-state students.

Environmental-studies professor Roger Pielke Jr. suggested the idea in a commentary published by the Chronicle of Higher Education last month. CU officials say it's an interesting idea, but they're not entertaining it.

At CU's Boulder campus, tuition this school year for in-state students in the College of Arts and Sciences is \$7,872. CU guarantees a four-year, locked tuition rate for out-of-state students, and the annual rate for incoming nonresidents is \$8,850.

Pielke suggests CU could charge a universal \$4,000 rate and still bring in the same amount of tuition revenue. He said the move would make CU competitive nationally and internationally and improve the quality

Entire proposal  
Boaz Pielke's commentary  
at denverpost.com/extra

Major endorsement:  
Teachers union backs  
ballot measure for  
education tax hike. » 28

of other schools would follow suit to remain competitive, he said. Boulder campus spokesman Bronson Hilliard said that while the idea is interesting, there are too many constraints, such as a state law that requires CU's freshman class to be made up of 55 percent in-state students, averaged over a three-year period.

Of CU-Boulder's roughly 26,000 undergraduates, Pielke said, two-thirds are Colorado residents, and the remainder are nonresidents paying much pricier tuition. The result is that almost two-thirds of the university's total tuition revenue comes from one-third of its students.

CU officials say it's an interesting idea, but they're not entertaining it. "The state-tuition subsidies still make sense. No, and in fact, they may actually be harming our institutions by contributing to the budgetary problems of universities, diminishing the academic quality of the undergraduate population, and, ultimately, failing to contribute to state economic growth," he writes.

In an interview, Pielke said the piece has been stirring discussions among higher-ed officials.

Already, he said, some states grant in-state tuition to students from neighboring states.

If a prominent university adopted his proposed model,

# State urges meningitis vaccinations

Focus on preteens could prevent a deadly outbreak.

By Caitlin Gibbons  
The Denver Post

State health officials are urging the vaccination of kids against meningococcal disease starting at age 11, hoping to avoid the type of outbreak that killed five people in Larimer County last year.

The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment teamed up with the Voices of Meningitis campaign Monday to spread the word about the importance of vaccinations for pre-teens and booster doses at age 15.

"Last year's outbreak reminds us this disease may be rare, but can devastate communities," said Kathy Reiner, of the Colorado Association of School Nurses.

Nine cases of meningococcal disease were reported in Larimer County between April and December, and five resulted in death. The county is not sure why there were so many cases of the disease last fall.

"We usually only have one or two cases of meningococcal disease in Larimer County," said Kim Meyer Lee, regional epidemiologist for Larimer County Health Department. "This was a really unusual year having as many cases as we did."

Approximately 5 percent to 15 percent of people carry meningococcal bacteria in their throats and noses, and an even smaller percentage

actually develop the disease, Lee said.

The vaccine is not state-mandated and, combined with a general wariness about vaccinations, Colorado is far from the target inoculation rate of 80 percent of teens, said Dr. Chris Urbina, executive director and chief medical officer of the state health department.

Nationally and in Colorado, about 54 percent of teens are vaccinated against the disease, which can cause deadly meningitis and sepsis. The vaccine was approved in 2005.

"All vaccinations have a risk, but to me the risk of not getting the vaccination and getting this disease is unacceptable," he said.

Colorado law does require universities and colleges to provide information about the disease to all students. Students must acknowledge they have read the information and are asked if they have had the vaccine, would like to receive it, or are uninterested.

The disease is carried in the respiratory system and is spread by spending long periods of time in close quarters, kissing, sharing eating utensils, water bottles and drinking glasses.

Lisa Krizman lost her daughter Sierra, 20, to meningitis in 2007. She was told Sierra did not need the vaccine because she was living off campus while attending the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley.

"She was perfectly healthy Easter Sunday morning and within 24 hours, she was gone," Krizman said.

## ADVERTISEMENT

**Finally, A Car Dealership Without all the Non-Sense. Colorado Chrysler Jeep Pre-Owned has a straight forward, easy-going staff.**

**Since opening January 1st, Colorado Chrysler Jeep Pre-Owned has set itself apart from the competition. Not only are they selling good cars, they are making the buying process easy, fun, and free of headaches.**

Denver, CO. I went to several dealerships looking for a pre-owned vehicle. I hadn't bought a new car for several years and was somewhat disappointed that I couldn't find a dealership that was worthy of my business.

Then I pulled into Colorado Chrysler Jeep Pre-owned at 505 S. Havana St. From the minute I parked my car, I felt right. I felt something different.

I was greeted by Tyler. Tyler was a 19 year old, who started in the business at a really young age. He was genuine, caring and was real interested in finding out what I wanted to use my vehicle for.

Was it business or personal? Did I want good gas mileage? What kind of options I wanted? At all the other dealerships they seemed more interested in showing me what they wanted to sell.

I told Tyler I had had a couple bumps in my credit the last year. I had a good job and was laid off. Money wasn't coming in like it should and I'm sure that I was a little late in paying for a few things. Heck, I wasn't even sure if I could buy a car.

Tyler made me feel comfortable. He said the thing that he likes about working at the dealership was the straight forward approach. He liked that not only did he like selling cars, more importantly he likes who he sells cars to. He liked that he felt like he knew his customers, and he knew the cars that he sold them were good vehicles.

The size of the inventory at the lot is amazing. They have over 300 used cars. If you are looking for domestic, import, car, truck or SUV, they will have it there.

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## PROGRAM: Comcast already had plans to get low-income students plugged in

FROM 1B

two-year, public-private partnership designed to promote broadband adoption for middle school-aged children in low-income households, but it never got off the ground."

Starting this school year, Internet Essentials will provide broadband Internet at \$10 a month and \$40 vouchers for laptops in the 30 states where Comcast operates.

To qualify, families must have at least one child in grade K-12 who qualifies for free lunch under the federal program. Free lunch is used as a federal measure of poverty.

The Internet program is not available to students eligible for reduced-cost lunches.

Families can enroll in the Internet program through the 2013-14 school year and continue to participate so long as they have a student in the free-lunch program.

The program includes free Internet training online, in print or in person.

"We have such a large ELL (English-language learner) population, that having that training also available to them, where it wasn't before, is going to create many more opportunities, and hopefully open new educational doors," said Denver Public Schools' chief operating officer David Suppes.

Some school district officials said providing the access may allow some teachers to be more creative using Internet resources

that they didn't feel were widely accessible before.

In 2008, the most recent year for which data is available, 26 percent of Colorado children did not have a computer at home, according to the Colorado Children's Campaign.

"We do believe that when students have access to tools to support their learning both inside and outside of the classroom, it helps provide a richer experience," said Mapleton schools Superintendent Charlotte Ciancio. "These tools can include exposure to libraries and books, museums, safe playgrounds, etc. Technology is a growing part of the picture these days."

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## Cherry Creek High grad dies in Italy fall

By Sara Burnett  
The Denver Post

A 2009 Cherry Creek High School graduate traveling through Europe with friends died early Saturday after she fell about 80 feet down a rocky cliff along the Italian Riviera.

Kelly Rose Denman, 30, was about to start her junior year at the University of Washington in Seattle.

She had posted messages on her Twitter account about a trip to Paris and plans to study abroad in South Africa this fall.

The motto alongside her

smiling picture is "she living."

Denman was the daughter of Mary and Ken Denman of Englewood, according to public records.

Authorities said Kelly Denman and two friends were staying in a room in the Cinque Terre region of northwestern Italy, an area known for its rugged coastline and the terraces that have been built right up to the edge of the steep cliffs.

They returned early Saturday from a night out. They had been drinking, said police commander Francesco Villa in the town of Vernazza.

Villa said Denman apparently fell from a window overlooking the water. The friend with her was asleep when authorities believe that Denman fell.

Her friends reported her missing later Saturday morning. That afternoon, two local men found her body in the water. The cause of death was drowning after the fall, Villa said.

Denman was a member of Delta Gamma sorority at the University of Washington.

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No column today Bill Husted's columns will return next week.

