

OPINION

THE DENVER POST
established 1892

*“There is no hope
for the satisfied man.”*

Post founder Frederick G. Bonfils, 1861-1933

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The Post Editorial

A chance to manage the Colo. gray wolf

Who can blame the residents of Walden for feeling nervous – and a little bitter – about the gray wolf who moved into their community in 2019 and had a litter in 2021.

So far three cows and two dogs have been killed by the small pack, and the toll on pets and livestock will only get worse as the pack grows, other wolves move south from Wyoming, and the state begins the formal reintroduction process. And while attacks on small children or even adults are unlikely, it is not irrational to fear the unpredictable actions of an apex predator in the wild.

The Denver Post’s Conrad Swanson traveled to Walden to report on the growing unease among the first Coloradans to live with a wild wolf population in eight decades.

“The wolves know where our cows are,” said Kim Gittleson who has already had two cows killed and one injured by the pack. “It’s like we’re their grocery store.”

It is painfully obvious from Swanson’s story that Colorado is woefully unprepared for a large population of wolves to enter the state, despite a 2020 ballot question that mandated the reintroduction of wolves beginning in 2023. With two years to prepare, the state hasn’t taken basic steps to provide for those most likely to be harmed by the reintroduction.

The Denver Post editorial board supported the 2020 ballot question, writing before the election that we found evidence from Yellowstone compelling. The benefit to our ecosystem of adding wolves would outweigh the harm caused to ranchers.

But, a huge condition of our support was the proper management of our wild animal populations.

Colorado is no longer an ecosystem that can be put on autopilot and expected to thrive. Too disjointed are our habitats with too many nearby residents and too many

The Open Forum Letters to the Editor



Cameras are used in a Nebraska courtroom in 2008 as part of a pilot project that allowed video and still images of court proceedings to be distributed by the news media. Nati Harnik, Associated Press pool file photo

Is Colorado’s judiciary in need of reform?

Re: “Colorado’s judges need more oversight and sometimes ouster,” Jan. 30 commentary

This week’s opinion column by George Brauchler claims, among other things, that applying term limits to Colorado’s appointed judges (whom he disingenuously calls “elected” officials) would make our judicial branch “more experienced.” Backward thinking.

He also wrote about a “ten-year divorce lawyer who has never been in front of a jury” serving as a judge, resulting in a first day at work sentencing a convicted child molester.

Among his other unsupported and specious arguments, he claims judges in Colorado earn more and have more benefits than lawyers can find in the private sector. In truth, many of our judges, who tend to be highly credentialed and accomplished prior to their appointments, serve in their judgeship while sacrificing the greater riches they would likely have encountered in a private sector legal career. Other absurdities and non-sequiturs abound in his column, but we letter writers face a word limit.

Much like his memorable pretense about Kim Kardashian’s trucker-sentence influence, this column blows a lot of smoke.

Peter Ehrlich, Denver

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I concur with George Brauchler’s call for cameras in courts open to the public.

It is worth noting that without cell phone cameras, the public would have been denied the graphic images of the gross injustices to which George Floyd and Ahmaud Arbery were subjected. Consequently, a very different and false narrative would likely have carried the day with the perpetrators, in all probability, avoiding conviction and any accountability whatsoever.

Without such visual evidence, God only knows how many other instances of horrifying injustice have escaped the public scrutiny that so often is the real catalyst for change that nudges us ever closer to “equal justice under law” and “liberty and justice for all.”

Further, former British Prime Minister William Gladstone’s keen observation that “justice delayed is justice denied” is particularly significant when applied to cameras in the courtrooms.

Undoubtedly, the degree to which the public trusts our legal system to be fair, transparent, and accountable will grow in direct proportion to the promptness with which courtroom cameras are employed as a regular and routine part of the judicial process.

Lou Horwitz, St. Peters, Mo.

Want to solve crime? Repeal HB 1263 and SB 217

Re: “Denver’s crime wave can be quelled,” Jan. 30 editorial

Last Sunday’s editorial was ridiculous. The Denver Post believes that increasing funding for mental health will magically make crime go away. If you believe that, I’ll sell you Pikes Peak.

The real issue is the progressive left’s pro-crime and anti-law enforcement initiatives. Specifically, House Bill 19-1263 and Senate Bill 20-217 are a one-two punch of the increase in crime and debauchery.

HB 1263 downgraded possession of small amounts of heroin, cocaine and fentanyl to a misdemeanor. Two milligrams of fentanyl can kill you.

SB 217, “Enhancement Law Enforcement Integrity,” holds police officers personally liable up to \$25,000 if their employer finds they did not act in “good faith and reasonable belief that the action was lawful.” SB 217 is a reason many cops retired and why every law Colorado law enforcement agency cannot hire the cops they need.

If the progressive left and its ringleader Gov. Jared Polis is serious about reducing the current crime wave, they will start by repealing HB 1263 and SB 217. But this is doubtful. Gov. Polis reduced the sentence of a convicted truck driver who killed four people to 10 years from 110. Mayor Michael Hancock has let downtown and Union Station become a cesspool of crime and debauchery.

Jeff Jasper, Westminster

Wear masks to protect kids

Re: “Back to us,” Jan. 30 commentary

I usually respect Doug Friednash’s opinion, but I have to question his thinking that since we can wear N95 masks if we choose, it is OK for others to not be required to mask anymore.

Cases continue to rise among children, young kids cannot be vaccinated yet, and anyone who has tried to keep a mask on a 2- or 3-year-old will tell you even with the soft, cloth child masks, it can be impossible, and I have not even seen N95 masks for small children.

It has been said that when children’s needs conflict with adults’ wishes, kids lose. This has been apparent in the thinking, policies, and politics re the pandemic. We often hear that children are our greatest resource, yet people say it is their right to expose others to the virus without regard to their risk to children.

I hope businesses will continue to require masks and adults will continue to wear them in public places to protect the most vulnerable around them until infection rates drop significantly. They may not be your children, but we will need them to pay taxes and take care of us when we are old.

Gail Ryan, Lakewood