



CU in the News

January 2011



CU Community Grabs Headlines Around the Globe

University of Colorado Boulder

Obama picks CU-Boulder prof Margaret Murnane for science post

President Barack Obama has selected a CU-Boulder professor to head a key administrative post. [Margaret Murnane](#), a physics professor and fellow of the Joint Institute for Laboratory Astrophysics (JILA), has been selected by the president to be the chairwoman of the President's Committee on the National Medal of Science. Murnane was first appointed to the committee in 2010. In addition, Murnane – whose work focuses on laser physics – was honored last month with the Boyle Medal Ireland's top scientific award. ~ Daily Camera, Dec. 30



Guest opinion: CU-Boulder volunteers champion homeless against anti-camping ordinance

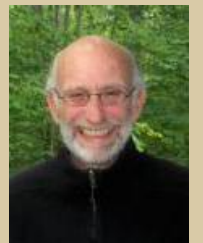
[Ann England](#), associate clinical professor of law, graduate student David Harrison and many students from the Legal Aid and Defender Clinical program at the University of Colorado Law School have been representing homeless people charged under Boulder's anti-camping ordinance.

The majority of these jury trials since 2010 have ended in favor of those criminally charged. The Daily Camera reported the average cost of prosecuting one camping ticket at about \$1,100. The 20 cases taken to trial since 2009 have cost city taxpayers around \$22,000. ~ Daily Camera, Jan. 1



The soda wars continue, taking aim at college campuses

Beverage marketers fight for the opportunity to build brand loyalty with a captive audience of tens of thousands of college students, and educational institutions have come to see the corporate deals as a reliable source of revenue, said [Alex Molnar](#), a research professor at CU-Boulder and publication director of the National Education Policy Center. While the financial terms of the deals appear significant, Molnar said beverage companies pay little considering the size of the audience they can access. In the case of a Colorado State University contract, the school will receive about \$500,000 per year – or a little less than \$17 per student. "It's laughably small per student," Molnar said. "But the soft drink companies get something very valuable in return, which is the credibility of associating with the institution." ~ Delaware Online, Dec. 19

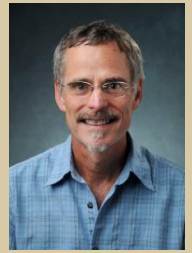


Wind turbines might help crops

Research has suggested that wind turbines operating on Midwestern farm fields might be good for crop production. The findings suggest that the turbine blades that generate renewable energy might also help corn and soybean crops stay cooler and drier, help them fend off fungal infestations and improve their ability to extract growth-enhancing carbon dioxide from the air and soil. The findings were released by [Julie Lundquist](#), assistant professor in the CU-Boulder atmospheric and oceanic studies department, and researcher Gene Takle of the Department of Energy's Ames Laboratory. "Because wind turbines generate turbulence and the mixing of air downwind, they may accelerate the natural exchange processes between crops and the lower part of the atmosphere," Lundquist said. ~ Earth Times, Jan. 4

The changing world of science journalism

Science and environmental journalism is a shrinking slice of a rapidly growing pie of communications, said [Tom Yulsman](#), co-director of the Center for Environmental Journalism at CU-Boulder. Yulsman, paraphrasing DotEarth-blogger Andrew Revkin, said "There's more communication going on now than there ever has been, but the people who are in a position to interpret it and tell us why it matters are in fewer and fewer positions to explain it to us." The number of blogs about science, frequently written by scientists or groups of scientists, has exploded. Research universities and federal agencies are producing more user-friendly information packages about breakthroughs, sometimes skipping the journalist in news propagation entirely. This can lead to a mountain of information with few guides to navigating it. ~ PBS.org, Dec. 21



CU-Boulder names Boswell vice chancellor for diversity, Coffin vice chancellor for student affairs



CU-Boulder has chosen [Robert Boswell](#) vice chancellor for diversity, equity and community engagement and [Deb Coffin](#) vice chancellor for student affairs. Boswell had been serving in the role on an interim basis and will oversee the Boulder campus's diversity efforts, including recruitment and retention of students and faculty, campus climate issues and developing best practices to promote diversity within the academic, professional and social environment of the university. Coffin, former dean of students, has served as associate vice chancellor for student affairs and dean of students at CU from 2008 through



2011, and has also been the assistant vice chancellor for student affairs and director of housing and dining services. ~ Daily Camera, Dec. 27, 30

University of Colorado Colorado Springs

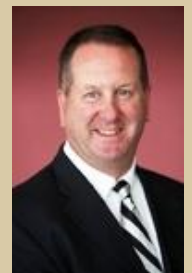
Colorado Springs writer finds similarities between North Fork, France

The North Fork Valley in Delta County and the Coulon River Valley in Provence, France, are worlds apart, at least as the crow flies. But [Thomas P. Huber](#), a geography professor at UCCS, manages to bring the two far-flung regions together in his book *An American Provence*. In its pages, Huber points to many unexpected similarities between the two regions. "When I am in Hotchkiss or Paonia, I cannot help thinking about Provence; when in Provence I repay the compliment by using these places in western Colorado as my comparative landscape," he wrote. Huber compares the light, agriculture, valleys and climate, and finds remarkable similarities. ~ The Daily Sentinel, Dec. 27



UCCS golf program helps students build careers in growing field

Some students at UCCS spend more than four years focused on golf. They are not always out on courses, however. Students enrolled in the PGA Golf Management Program learn about the business aspects of a growing multibillion-dollar industry. The UCCS program is growing, with about 115 students enrolled for next year, said [Ed Kelbel](#), program director. Through the UCCS College of Business and Administration, the program is one of 20 accredited PGA programs in the country. "You always hear the cliché, 'Follow your passion and you'll never work a day in your life,'" said student Daniel Ferg, 22. And he found it to be true. "The opportunities are mind-boggling." Ferg wraps up his internship in May, working on administration at a national level for the PGA. ~ The Gazette, Dec. 29



University of Colorado Denver

Many twice-victimized by sexual assault

The New York Times reported that victims might be reluctant to report a rape because they are embarrassed, fear reprisals and public disclosure, or think they won't be believed. Victims often think they somehow brought it on themselves, said [Callie Rennison](#), a criminologist at CU Denver. "Rape is the only crime in which victims have to explain that they didn't want to be victimized." These feelings are especially common among college women who may have been drinking alcohol or taking illicit drugs when raped by a date or acquaintance. ~ The New York Times, Dec. 12



In Malawi, what you don't know about AIDS can hurt

People in Malawi who are uncertain about their HIV status are more eager to start families than those who are certain of their HIV status, according to researchers. Malawi, a landlocked country in southeast Africa, has both a high fertility rate and a high prevalence of HIV. About 12 percent of the population is infected with the virus that causes AIDS. Researcher [Sara Yeatman](#), assistant professor of health and behavioral sciences at CU Denver, said 30 percent of Malawians were uncertain about their HIV status, and 70 percent were uncertain about the chance they will be infected with HIV in the future. Those uncertain of their HIV status indicated that they want to have children significantly sooner than those who were sure they have HIV and those who were certain that they did not have the disease. ~ News Medical, Dec. 2



Colorado was a dinosaur freeway way back when

Colorado's bustling thoroughfare 98 million years ago was the Dinosaur Freeway. More than 350 newly discovered tracks, made by various dinosaurs, crocodiles and a few pterosaurs, were identified at the site, which is now the John Martin Reservoir in Bent County. When added to previously found tracks there, the number of fossilized prints is well more than 1,000. The dinosaur freeway is described in the February issue of *Cretaceous Research*. "The Dinosaur Freeway runs from northeast Colorado near Boulder, to east central New Mexico, near Tucumcari," co-author Martin Lockley, professor of geology at the CU-Denver, told Discovery News. "It is a trampled zone in Cretaceous rocks representing an ancient coastal plain like the present day Gulf of Mexico." Lockley and colleague Reiji Kukihiro found and analyzed the animal tracks. ~ Discovery.com, Jan. 5

University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus

Addiction can ruin the holidays

It can destroy families, relationships and careers and, with the added stress of the holidays, addiction to alcohol or drugs often becomes a bigger problem, said [Anne Felton](#), the director of the Center for Dependency, Addiction and Rehabilitation (CeDAR). "If your means of coping is to pop a bottle of wine, make a drink, then the likelihood that you might overindulge or abuse is great. If you are already addicted, that's your coping mechanism." Felton said it is important to rely on those around you when the stress level gets higher. And it is important that a recovering addict has people he or she can trust. "It's really good to have an outsider involved in an intervention and not seem like 'everybody that cares about me is ganging up on me,'" Felton said. Other advice for recovering addicts is to attend regular support meetings, especially during the holidays. ~ 9News, Dec. 13



Nurse program helping low-income mothers, children

After becoming pregnant with son Kedrick Sims Jr. last year, Parisia Spears read child development books and enrolled in the Nurse-Family Partnership, a state program that pairs registered nurses with first-time mothers who are eligible for Medicaid. Chatty and chubby at 11 months, Kedrick is thriving through his mother's care and the advice of a visiting nurse, who comes to Spears' Baker, La., home twice a month to check on their progress.

The home visit program is the brainchild of [David Olds](#), a professor at the CU Anschutz Medical Campus, whose work in an inner-city day care inspired him to try to improve outcomes for low-income children. Olds' work with low-income mothers in New York, Tennessee and Colorado led to a program that now touches 33 states. The basic goals, program leaders said, are to improve pregnancy outcomes, to improve children's growth and development and to work with mothers on the spacing of their pregnancies. ~ The Advocate, Dec. 22

New era in AIDS treatment brings lethal disease back from the dark

When [MeriLou Johnson](#) first started working in AIDS research at the University of Colorado more than 20 years ago, people with the infectious disease had a dire prognosis. Now, with the advancement of drugs to help combat the virus, people with AIDS are living longer, healthier lives. "It's a really different epidemic than it was when it started," said Johnson, program director of the Colorado AIDS Education and Training Center at the CU Anschutz Medical Campus. But only about one in four Americans with the AIDS virus have the infection under control with medications, federal health officials said Nov. 29. Part of the reason is that about 20 percent of those infected with HIV don't know it. ~ Aurora Sentinel, Dec. 9

Making a great beginning to 2012

The National Weight Control Registry, established in 1994 by [James O. Hill](#), Ph.D., CU Anschutz Medical Campus, and Rena Wing, Ph.D., Brown University Medical School, was initiated to identify and investigate characteristics of people who achieved long-term weight loss. The researchers are tracking more than 10,000 individuals who have lost significant amounts of weight and kept it off for long periods. Registry members have lost an average of 66 pounds and kept it off for 5.5 years. The amount of weight lost ranges from 30 to 300 pounds with a duration of up to 66 years. The register found:

- 98% modified their food intake in some way to lose weight.
- 94% increased their physical activity (walking is the most common form of exercise reported) and 90% reported exercising, on average, about one hour a day.
- 78% eat breakfast every day.
- 62% watch less than 10 hours of television a week. ~ Detroit Free Press, Dec. 31

University of Colorado Students

CU students to design and build American Indian housing

The Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota, home to an estimated 40,000 members of the Oglala Sioux tribe, is one of the poorest areas in the country. The unemployment rate is above 80 percent and 97 percent of the population lives below the federal poverty line. Many of the houses on the reservation are considered substandard and lack basic water and sewage systems, electricity, and central heating. Plus, there's an overall housing shortage, with more than 4,000 new dwellings needed to address widespread homelessness.

This month, 16 undergraduate students from the University of Colorado's College of Architecture and Planning will travel to Pine Ridge to launch the Native American Sustainable Housing Initiative, an interdisciplinary service-learning project to address the reservation's housing woes. Led by instructor and researcher Rob Pyatt, the students will hold charrettes – intensive planning sessions where citizens, designers and others collaborate on a vision for development – with tribal members and students from the reservation's Oglala Lakota College and begin to design sustainable and affordable houses. "The actual design will come out of the process of working with community members," Pyatt said. "The houses need to be responsive to the specific climate and landscape at Pine Ridge, but also the cultural landscape." ~ Architectural Record, Dec. 20



Scientists at Work: Extreme ecology in a polar desert

Alia Khan, a graduate student at CU-Boulder, writes from the McMurdo Dry Valleys in Antarctica, where she is studying ephemeral glacier-fed streams. The McMurdo Dry Valleys are a cold polar desert on the shore of McMurdo Sound, 2,200 miles south of New Zealand. Within the Dry Valleys, the research is mainly focused on three watersheds within the Taylor Valley. "When I started as a graduate student at the University of Colorado, I had no idea I'd have the opportunity to do fieldwork in one of the most amazing places on Earth. I am currently a member of the 'Stream Team,' working as a field hydrology research assistant measuring flow of ephemeral glacier-fed streams in the McMurdo Dry Valleys in Antarctica." ~ The New York Times, Dec. 13

Students from CU Denver put stamp on new Tanzania Museum

An exhibit that displays some of the world's oldest human fossil footprints is featured in a new Tanzanian museum and bears the stamp of more than 45 CU Denver students. Dignitaries from across the world joined Tanzanian President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete in opening the National Museum and House of Culture in early December. Also at the opening was Charles Musiba, Ph.D., an associate professor of anthropology at CU Denver.

CU Denver students began working on the exhibit, which includes the fossilized footprints and human skulls, in 2009. They finished in 2010 and sent the exhibit to the board of directors of the Tanzanian National Museum and House of Culture for approval. It's the first comprehensive and culturally appropriate human origin exhibit in Tanzania, said Musiba, who has been taking CU Denver students to his country for almost 15 years. ~ YourHub, Jan. 5