

TODAY



55 26

Peasant and dry.
Forecast on Page B6

TOP STORIES

Avalanche victim found

LOS ANGELES — The latest in a series of storms that unleashed deadly avalanches, flooded streets and caused mud and rock slides barreled into Southern California on Saturday, threatening more problems for the rain-soaked region. Heavy showers arrived late in the day after a blue-sky break in the storms allowed searchers to find the body of a third skier killed by a snow slide and rescue a missing snowboarder who survived a frigid night in the San Gabriel Mountains.

MORE WORLD, D1



Lewis Geyer/Times-Call

Local funeral home sold

LONGMONT — Heath Carroll's story isn't a new one: A young man working for corporate America strikes out on his own to do things his way. But his profession makes Carroll's story stand out. At 29 years old, he and his 27-year-old wife, Hilary, are now the owners of Longmont's oldest funeral homes. Carroll-Lewellen Funeral Home & Cremation Services, formerly Lewellen Funeral Home, was founded in 1922 in the house at 503 Terry St., where the business still operates.

FULL STORY, B1

Water does well at Sundance

PARK CITY, Utah — At the Sundance Film Festival, 2008 became a banner year for large bodies of water as "Frozen River" took the grand jury prize for drama and "Trouble the Water" walked off with the top documentary award at the fest's closing night ceremonies Saturday at the Racquet Club here.

Spy satellite could hit Earth

WASHINGTON — A large U.S. spy satellite has lost power and could hit the Earth in late February or March, government officials said Saturday. The satellite, which no longer can be controlled, could contain hazardous materials, and it is unknown where on the planet it might come down, they said. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because the information is classified as secret. "Appropriate government agencies are monitoring the situation," said Gordon Johndroe, a spokesman for the National Security Council.

Times-Call wire reports

YOU SAID IT

"For every action, there's an equal and opposite reaction, and in politics, it's not an equal reaction."

— FORMER CITY COUNCILMAN DOUG BROWN

FULL STORY, A1

INSIDE

GET YOUR YEAR MOVING WITH HEALTH TRENDS



WORLD, D1

OBAMA ROUTS CLINTON TO TAKE S.C. PRIMARY

RESIDENTS SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS ON HOW LIFE BEGAN / D5

TIMES-CALL

No. 27

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Bloggers, groups add dirt to election

Longmont council candidates stay civil, but residents are making it ugly



By Rachel Carter
Longmont Times-Call

LONGMONT — November was ugly. This is uglier. One candidate will win one seat

on the seven-person Longmont City Council in Tuesday's special election.

Yet there has been more campaigning, blogging, pamphleteering, money raising, mudslinging and name calling leading up to this

election than there was ramping up to November's, when more than half the council seats were anybody's game.

And many longtime residents and political buffs can't remember an election — especially a one-seat

special election — that has been as contentious.

"I've never seen this in eight years," former Councilman Doug Brown said. "There was never this strong judgment about right and wrong and who's in and who's out. I've never seen this before."

Former Councilman Marty Block
Please see **DIRT** on A6

UP IN THE AIR



Jill P. Mott/Times-Call

Bob Huntsman works in his lab making lenses for a customer on Wednesday at Eye Expressions in the Twin Peaks Mall. Huntsman is concerned about the future of his independent business, which has been at the mall for 16 years.

'Give us a chance'

Mall merchants anxious about the fate of Twin Peaks and their business

By Tony Kindelspire
Longmont Times-Call

LONGMONT — With plans to renovate Twin Peaks Mall still up in the air, some mall merchants are claiming a drop in business and are anxious about their future.

Panattoni Development Co. bought the mall from CBL & Associates in July, putting CBL's plans to renovate the mall in limbo.

Panattoni officials say they've made no decisions on plans for the mall.

"Our big concern is (that

MORE BUSINESS: Harvest Junction was the first Colorado project for Twin Peaks' new owner **B1**

Panattoni is) not telling us anything," said one business owner, who asked that his name and business be withheld. "And traffic is dismal. It's great that they might have a plan for the future, but traffic is absolutely dismal today."

And his location near one of the now-shuttered former anchor stores isn't helping his business, the man said. "My sales since Penney's left

Please see **MALL** on A4

"Our big concern is (that Panattoni is) not telling us anything. And traffic is dismal."

— An anonymous Twin Peaks Mall business owner



Holiday sales at Larkspur Fine Jewelry and Watch Repair were down 50 percent from last year in the Twin Peaks Mall.

Masters' front-door exit symbolic

By P. Solomon Banda
The Associated Press

FORT COLLINS — A deputy reached for Timothy Masters' arm to lead him out a side door of the Larimer County Courthouse, and Masters dipped his shoulders in compliance, his wrists handcuff-width apart.

It was a habit Masters developed during the 9½ years he spent behind bars or being hustled between cells and courtrooms. But he wasn't wearing hand-

cuffs anymore, and he wasn't returning to a cell. His murder conviction and life sentence had just been overturned.

Defense attorney David Wymore waved the deputy off and insisted that Masters was walking out the front door this time.

"That was vital," said Maria Liu, another of his defense attorneys. "Since his arrest, he never walked through the front doors. He always walked through the side doors."

Please see **MASTERS** on A5



Timothy Masters, right, and his attorney Maria Liu listen as Judge Joseph Weatherby throws out his life sentence in Fort Collins on Tuesday.

Ed Andrieski/AP

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DIRT: A one-seat, contentious special election in city

From A1
echoed that sentiment: “I’m not sure that I’ve seen it at this level before.”
Tom McCoy, Longmont’s longest-running city councilman when he had to give up his seat in 2005, agreed.
“I probably haven’t seen this much radical reaction to an election or to an issue since probably 1980 or 1981, when El Comité was established,” he said.

Down and dirty

The candidates themselves aren’t dirtying their hands; their own campaigns have been civil.
But many residents and groups have chosen sides and are digging in.
Although four candidates are running for the vacant council seat — Trisa Baxter, Richard Juday, write-in candidate Dan Orner and Gabe Santos — most of the brouhaha is swirling around Juday and Santos.
Online bloggers are attacking everything from Juday’s campaign signs and Web site to Santos’ two-year stint as a manager in former Republican Rep. Tom DeLay’s office.
A Denver-based nonprofit corporation called Colorado League of Taxpayers mailed oversized postcards to many Longmont residents bashing Juday and the fact that he led efforts to overturn the council’s approval of LifeBridge Christian Church’s Union project.
Stephanie Baum, a Longmont resident who recently started a blog, penned and mailed an eight-page letter to many Longmont voters urging them to support Santos.

The Agenda, a locally produced weekly newsletter, continually endorses Juday and repeatedly prints an interview pressing Santos on his connection with DeLay. Eric Zimmerer, Juday’s campaign treasurer, writes for and publishes The Agenda.
The Longmont Association of Realtors earlier this month asked Baxter to back out of the campaign to avoid splitting the vote with Santos and “thus electing Richard Juday.”
And some homeowners say they received phone messages telling them they cannot display Santos’ yard signs.

Michael Kanner, an adjunct professor for the University of Colorado’s Political Science Department, has been watching this election “with amusement.”
Kanner, who has lived in Longmont since 1994, can’t remember receiving so much political mailing at the City Council level, “even compared



Baxter



Juday



Orner



Santos

to statehouse races,” he said.
And he is surprised at the amount of money being poured into candidates’ coffers and campaign efforts.
Although Kanner said several issues have played into Longmont’s stormy political atmosphere, he also thinks it’s natural for a growing city.
“As the town gets bigger, the stakes get bigger, so there’s going to be more invested in whether one wins or loses an election,” he said. “It’s just kind of natural. But it got people interested in the special election, (more than in) the past. It got people talking about it.”

How it all began

While people have different opinions about why Longmont politics are so tumultuous, most agree on the spark that ignited the political powderkeg: controversy over LifeBridge’s 350-acre Union project.
“All of the Union discussion had a direct impact on the election in November,” said former Councilman Block, who voted to annex the project into the city.
As residents organized last fall to overturn the city’s approval of LifeBridge’s planned development, four candidates campaigned as a bloc promising “smart growth.”
Brian Hansen, Sarah Levison and Sean McCoy won their races in November. Karen Benker, who campaigned alongside them, didn’t win the mayoral election against Roger Lange, but she retained her council seat.
And the other “side” — the free-market, pro-business contingent — was shocked when its candidates (including Santos) lost, said former Councilman Brown, who also voted to annex the Union project.
“People were angry. They were emotionally involved in LifeBridge, and it became an emotional issue to rally people around,” Brown said.

“This whole thing was based on LifeBridge. I think the Republicans and the more conservative business element of the community were reeling. I don’t think they really realized what was happening until it was too late.”
But Tom McCoy, Sean McCoy’s father, said the sweep promised a change from pro-growth to managed growth, “and I think the pro-growth people were not ready for it.”
Although he agrees that Union was the underpinning issue in November’s election, he believes residents already were angry about past councils’ actions that, he said, led to a glut of residential and commercial development.
“I think there was a high level of anger, and I think their anger spilled over into making some different decisions,” Tom McCoy said of voters. “Six thousand people signing a petition (to block Union) is just phenomenal, and I think that just overflowed into the election.”
Kanner thinks Union became the focal point of partisanship and Longmont’s changing demographics.
Longmont’s elections are supposed to remain nonpartisan. They haven’t, he said. Even though candidates don’t tout their party affiliations, voters know which side they are on, he said.
Kanner said Longmont’s demographics have changed over the past several years. While the city’s registered voters once were predominantly Republicans, “that’s not there anymore,” he said. “It’s still more, but the margin isn’t as big as it was.”
While Longmont has more Democrats than in the past, many longtime residents and families (Republicans and conservatives included) also don’t want Longmont to change or grow too much, he said.
Those factors helped Union become the focal point in November.
“I think (Union) became a rallying cry, but I think it became a rallying cry of issues that were already out there,” Kanner said. “It does come down to how you feel about growth and the development issue.”
Aftershock
Nov. 6 came and went. Candidates conceded. The three new council members were sworn in. Lange took the helm as Longmont’s mayor — leaving his council seat up for grabs.
Juday, who was Hansen’s campaign manager, was the first to step into the race, kick-

ing off his campaign on Election Night.
Within weeks of Santos’ loss to Levison in November, he announced he would seek the vacant seat in the January election.
Baxter joined the race in late December, and Orner jumped in the first week of January.
After November’s election, people in the community began to worry about the new council’s direction, Brown said.
“For every action, there’s an equal and opposite reaction, and in politics, it’s not an equal reaction,” he said.
Brown thinks the current political atmosphere in Longmont is a result of power struggles and dogmatic politics. He said there are “strong political groups” out there, camped on party lines, and no one is willing to work together.
“People are very dogmatic right now,” he said. “They don’t want to work with anyone across the aisle.”
Tom McCoy, however, said the new council simply needs to be given a chance to “express the will of the majority.”
“We’ve got a good City Council,” he said. “We’ve got six good people there, and soon we’ll have a seventh.”
Block believes the political tension is rooted in the uncertainty of the new council and what its agenda will be. He said Tuesday’s election is about finding the “right balance for council.”
Balance, however, doesn’t exist, Kanner said.
“There’s never any balance,” he said with a laugh. “There’s never any balance unless they’re supporting your side.”

Moving on
Tuesday’s election, many hope, will mark an end to the months of political upheaval and community division.
“I think it is unfortunate when issues can divide a community,” Block said. “I do believe that’s unfortunate, but the good news is we’re about to resolve it. It’s almost over. Then the rest of the story is about what does the council do with their opportunity to govern the community? My hope is they’re thoughtful.”
Tom McCoy thinks the nastiness is a short-term phenomenon. He hopes the community will come back together once the election is over.
“I think after the election, whichever way it goes, people will try to pull themselves back to a more civil endeavor,” he said.
“I think we need to rebuild our confidence in each other, rebuild our respect,” McCoy added.



Kirstin Boes, left, and Dean Myers jog with their dog Bishop in Longmont on Dec. 27. The couple love the snow and weren’t going to let it stop them from enjoying their run. Snowfall was well above normal for Longmont in December, with 16.4 inches spread over two major storms and numerous smaller snowfalls.
Jill P. Mott/Times-Call

COLD: Lower temps than average

From A1
inch of recorded snow, Larison said. His 18-year recorded average is 7.2 inches in January.
Snowfall was well above normal for Longmont in December, with 16.4 inches spread over two major storms and numerous smaller snowfalls. Larison’s measured average for Longmont is a little more than 6 inches in December.
In December 2006, Longmont got 31 inches of snow. The National Weather Service declared it the sixth-snowiest December on record in Boulder and Denver.

This year’s snow has had far less of an impact than last year’s, Larison said. “But it has been very stubborn to completely melt off,” he added.
Climatologist Klaus Wolter at the University of Colorado said the last seven weeks have been exceptionally snowy in the mountains, but that January is typically a drier month. La Niña years such as this, following a cyclic weather pattern related to El Niño, tend to have a very wet April,

THE NUMBERS	
December:	
30-year average high:	43.7 degrees
30-year average low:	13.5
January:	
30-year average high:	42.1
30-year average low:	12
December 2007:	
Average high:	39.6
Average low:	10.1
January 2008 (through Jan. 23):	
Average high:	38.6
Average low:	12.2

Wolter said.
As for the cold, the last time there was a back-to-back two-month period this cold was December 1992 and January 1993, Wolter recalled.
“Since then, a cold winter has been an endangered species, considering the long-term warming trend we’ve observed,” Wolter said.
“If people think we’ve had a cold winter, they’re absolutely justified.”

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Election Ballot Drop-Off Location

Tuesday, Jan. 29 (7am - 7pm)

Drop-off your Longmont Special Election Ballot without getting out of your car. City staff will take your ballot and place it into the box located on the 300 block of Emery St. on the west side of the street, adjacent to the Civic Center.

For more information contact the City Clerk's office at (303) 651-8649.

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of the St. Vrain Valley School District

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Sunday, January 27, 2008, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

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Plant & Environment Tech

Printing Trades

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The Staff of the Career Development Center (CDC) invites you to join us on Sunday afternoon, January 27, 2008, between 1 and 4 p.m. for our Open House at 1200 S. Sunset Street in Longmont.

All departments will be open, and students and staff will be available to answer questions and share information about each program. Discover the classes, programs and opportunities that CDC has to offer.

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