



Troubled waters
Closures, cautions cast cloud over fishing season.
OUT THERE, D3



Time to shine at Air Force
Path to playing time unblocked for Rocco Conti, tailbacks, slot receivers. **SPORTS, C1**

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FRIDAY, AUGUST 7, 2026 **\$3.50**

Mother's murder conviction overturned

Deborah Nicholls has been serving a life sentence since 2008 for the 2003 deaths of her three children in a house fire

BY NICK SMITH
The Gazette

A Colorado Springs mother convicted in 2008 of murdering her three children in a house fire might get a new trial after a judge ruled that prosecutors withheld key evidence that could have impacted the jury's verdict.

Deborah Nicholls, whose conviction

was overturned Saturday, is scheduled to be transferred to the El Paso County jail on Aug. 20 for a bond hearing, court records show.

In 2003, her children — 11-year-old Jay, 5-year-old Sophia and 3-year-old Sierra — died in a fire at their Village Seven home off North Carefree Circle. At trial, prosecutors said Nicholls talked her then-husband,

Timothy, into setting the fire to get insurance money to pay off their drug debts.

Deborah and Timothy Nicholls were convicted and sentenced to life in prison.

In April, the 4th Judicial District Court found that the prosecution



Deborah Nicholls, center, is flanked by her attorneys, Deputy Public Defender Jeff Schwartz, left, and Deputy Public Defender Cindy Jones in December 2008, as she listens to Judge Steven Pelican sentence her to three consecutive life sentences for killing her three children in a fire at the family home in 2003.

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THE GAZETTE FILE

Wait persists at Hormuz



ISNA VIA THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

People spend time at a beach as commercial vessels are anchored Wednesday in the Strait of Hormuz off Bandar Abbas, Iran. The wait for an Iran-Oman deal that partially reopens the Strait of Hormuz continued through Thursday. **Story, A6**

Fauci could face criminal contempt charge

Senate panel, led by Rand Paul, votes 8-5 to move forward

CQ-Roll Call

WASHINGTON • The Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee voted Thursday to hold former Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Anthony Fauci in criminal contempt of Congress for declining to answer questions about the COVID-19 pandemic during a highly charged hearing last week.

The Thursday 8-5 vote represents an extreme move in the fight between Committee Chair Sen. Rand Paul and Fauci, who was a key White House adviser during the pandemic.

Paul has repeatedly accused Fauci of knowing more about the origins of COVID-19 than he ad-



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
Dr. Anthony Fauci appears before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee at the Capitol last week in Washington.

mits and of lying to the Senate about it. Fauci has accused Paul of being unreasonably obsessed with putting him behind bars.

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Emerald ash borer confirmed in Colorado Springs; 'pest is here to stay'

BY BRENNEN KAUFFMAN
The Gazette

Colorado Springs is asking residents to be on the lookout for an invasive beetle species that has jumped down the Front Range and into local ash trees.

Lackluster leaves?
What does drought mean for fall colors in Colorado?
Out There, D6

City officials said Wednesday that a confirmed emerald ash borer infestation

had been found in Colorado Springs for the first time. City foresters were implementing a response plan and asked the public and tree management companies to watch out as the insect spreads.

Lead City Forester Matthew

Puckett said that one of the city foresters was responding to an issue in a neighborhood in northeast Colorado Springs in July when she spotted concerning signs on a dying ash tree. The biggest initial giveaway was the D-shaped holes

left by ash borer larvae when they hatch out of the tree.

The city cut down the tree and sent samples of the larva still inside to the Colorado State Forest Service, which confirmed them as emerald ash borers.

"Right now it's isolated, but it will move. That pest is here to stay," Puckett said.

Originally from eastern Asia, the emerald ash borer is a small green beetle that has

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WEATHER B6
HIGH 96, LOW 62



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LOVE, REIMAGINED.



MONDAY



TUESDAY



WEDNESDAY



THURSDAY



FRIDAY