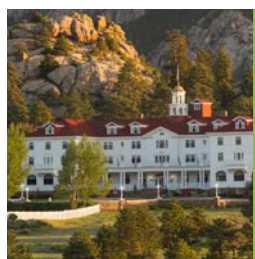




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ANNUAL POINT-IN-TIME SURVEY

Homelessness at highest reported level

By Kevin Freking The Associated Press

WASHINGTON» The United States experienced a dramatic 12% increase in homelessness to its highest reported level as soaring rents and a decline in coronavirus pandemic assistance combined to put housing out of reach for more Americans, federal officials said Friday.

About 653,000 people were homeless, the most since the country began using the yearly

point-in-time survey in 2007. The total in the January count represents an increase of about 70,650 from a year earlier.

The latest estimate indicates that people becoming homeless for the first time were behind much of the increase.

A rise in family homelessness ended a downward trend that began in 2012.

“For those on the frontlines of this crisis, it’s not surprising,” said Ann Oliva, chief executive officer at the National Alliance to

End Homelessness, an advocacy group.

Housing and Urban Development Secretary Marcia Fudge said the data underscored an “urgent need” to support proven solutions that help people quickly exit homelessness and that prevent homelessness in the first place.

Going back to the first 2007 survey, the U.S. then made steady progress for about a decade in reducing the homeless population as the government focused particularly on increasing invest-

ments to get veterans into housing. The number of homeless people dropped from about 637,000 in 2010 to about 554,000 in 2017.

The numbers ticked up to about 580,000 in the 2020 count and held relatively steady over the next two years as Congress responded to the COVID-19 pandemic with emergency rental assistance, stimulus payments, aid to states and local governments and a temporary eviction moratorium.

Jeff Olivet, executive director of

the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, a federal agency, said the extra assistance “held off the rise in homelessness that we are now seeing.” He said numerous factors are behind the problem.

“The most significant causes are the shortage of affordable homes and the high cost of housing that have left many Americans living paycheck to paycheck and one crisis away from homelessness,” Olivet said.

SURVEY » PAGE 2

HOLIDAY GIVING



CLIFF GRASSMICK — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Yuri Morquecho, right, and Joseline Ramos, center, find Christmas gifts on Tuesday. EFAA is hosting a gift room this week where families who have used EFAA services this year can come pick up gifts for their kids 18 and under. People can drop by through noon Saturday.

EFAA Gift Room offers holiday presents for kids

By Dana Cadey

dcadey @prairiemountainmedia.com

Boulder’s Emergency Family Assistance Association is trying to make sure no child is left without a present this holiday season.

Inside the Diagonal Plaza shopping center at 2850 Iris Ave., Boulder, tables sit filled

with toys, games and clothes for babies through teenagers. Appropriately named the Gift Room, its doors have been open this week for clients who have used EFAA services within the past year. Visitors can take home two gifts for each child, along with a few stocking stuffers.

“If you can’t afford gifts for your kids, it’s grim around the holidays,” said Julie Van

Domelen, EFAA executive director. “This is not a huge thing, but it’s a really important thing. It’s a stressful time, December, so this can relieve some of that and bring a little joy.”

EFAA is a family resource center offering financial assistance, economic empowerment education and basic needs support to Boulder County residents. The nonprofit also pro-

vides housing for homeless families with children.

The Gift Room has been put on by EFAA for seven years. The gifts are grouped by their age demographics, allowing parents to pick items that are appropriate for their kids, whether that’s a puzzle, stuffed animal, knit hat or something entirely different.

GIFTS » PAGE 2

ALCOHOL AND SPEED POSSIBLE FACTORS

Suspect arrested in crash that killed mother, son

By Corbett Stevenson

cstevenson @prairiemountainmedia.com

The Broomfield Police Department on Friday announced the arrest of a 37-year-old man in connection with a crash earlier in the week that claimed the lives of a mother and her son.

Jose Menjivar was booked into the Broomfield County jail Friday after being released from the hospital. He is being held on charges of vehicular homicide reckless, vehicular homicide DUI and habitual traffic offender.



Menjivar

Melissa Powell, 47, and her son, 16-year-old Riordan Powell, died in the crash Tuesday afternoon at Main Street and Miramonte Boulevard.

Menjivar was driving a 2000 Toyota Tundra that allegedly crashed into the victim’s vehicle, a 2016 Mazda CX-5.

The police department’s statement said an investigation into the cause of the crash is ongoing, but that it’s believed that alcohol and speed were contributing factors. The official toxicology report has not yet been released.

Riordan Powell was a student at Broomfield High School and the Boulder Technical Education Center. A family friend has started a GoFundMe, at tinyurl.com/47b2u9s5, for Melissa Powell’s surviving children, Chris and Halen Powell.

ARREST » PAGE 2



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TO-DO LIST

TODAY

Boulder County Jingle Jam: 8 p.m., The Velvet Elk Lounge, 2037 13th St., Boulder. Boulder County's bluegrass, Americana and country musicians are all coming together to put together a holly jolly holiday revue. Expect to hear original instrumental arrangements and covers of favorite holiday songs and a sleighful of special guest appearances from every corner of the local music scene. All ticket sales will be donated in full support of Lafayette-based, nondenominational, nonprofit Sister Carmen, whose mission is to provide assistance to the residents of Lafayette, Louisville, Superior and Erie who are in need, without discrimination. \$25, 303-993-8743, event.etix.com.
Wreaths Across America: 10 a.m., Louisville Cemetery, 2105 Empire Road, Louisville. Remember the fallen, and honor those who have served at this national event. Participants will lay wreaths on the grave of fallen soldiers to remember them during the holiday season. Free-\$17, wreathscrossamerica.org.
Skate with Santa: noon, Sport Stable Ice Rink, 1 Superior Drive, Superior. Come to the Blue Sports Stable to skate with Santa, partake in hot cocoa and cookies and enjoy arts and crafts. RSVP requested. Free, member.superiorchamber.com.
Natural Highs Winter Craft Market: 1 p.m., Museum of Boulder, 2205 Broadway, Boulder. Vendors of all ages will be selling handmade arts, crafts and other goods. Natural Highs supports teens, mental health and healthy alternatives to substance abuse in Boulder and will provide information about its services. Free-\$10, 303-449-3464, eventbrite.com.
Music by the Hearth concert: 6 p.m., House Concert, 7301 Petrusdale Court, Boulder. Rebecca Folsom and surprise special guests offer a lively and heart touching combination of original songs and holiday fare. \$20, eventbrite.com.

Pick of the day



COURTESY PHOTO

Boulder County's bluegrass, Americana and country musicians are all coming together to put together a holly jolly holiday revue.

painting: 11 a.m. Sunday, The New Local, 741 Pearl St., Boulder. A family friendly holiday workshop led by instructor Nora Graven, featuring the hand-turned wood ornaments by resident lathe artist Anne Zaug of Hollow & Form. \$45, thenew-local.org.
Season of Light: 2:30 p.m. Sunday, Fiske Planetarium, 2414 Regent Drive, Boulder. Light up the cold, dark season with a warm, bright holiday show. Season of Light explores the reasons humans are so fascinated with lighting up our lives during the December holiday season. This show traces the history and development of many of the world's most endearing holiday customs, all of which involve lighting up the winter season. \$8-\$12, 303-492-1411, calendar.colorado.edu.

UPCOMING Hand turned wood ornament

Reindeer Games holiday concert 3 p.m. Sunday, Boulder Public Library, 1001 Arapahoe Ave., Boulder. Ars Nova Singers present an hour long program of holiday classics. Sing along with jolly old St. Nicholas as the singers deck the halls with their glorious vocals. calendar.boulderlibrary.org.
A Season Of Light holiday concert: 4 p.m. Sunday, First United Methodist Church, 1421 Spruce St., Boulder. Winter is the coldest and darkest of seasons, but it is also a time which holds some of the warmest and brightest celebrations of the year. Most cultures and religions for centuries have brought light in to fend off the dark and then celebrated the return of the light in mid-winter. This concert traces the history and development of many of the world's most endearing holiday customs, all of which involve lighting up the winter season. Free-\$50, boulderchorale.org.
Holiday brass with Boulder Philharmonic Brass and Percussion: 4 p.m. Sunday, Mountain View United Method Church, 355 Ponca Place, Boulder. Holiday Brass offers a joyful and uplifting experience that captures the spirit of the winter season, delivering a memorable performance that will leave audiences feeling merry and bright. \$40, 303-449-1343, boulderphil.org.

RUDY GIULIANI

Jury awards \$148 million to election workers

By Lindsay Whitehurst and Alanna Durkin Richer

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON » A jury awarded \$148 million damages on Friday to two former Georgia election workers who sued Rudy Giuliani for defamation over lies he spread about them in 2020 that upended their lives with racist threats and harassment.

The damages verdict follows emotional testimony from Wandrea "Shaye" Moss and her mother, Ruby Freeman, who tearfully described becoming the tar-

get of a false conspiracy theory pushed by Giuliani and other Republicans as they tried to keep then-President Donald Trump in power after he lost the 2020 election.

There was an audible gasp in the courtroom when the jury foreperson read aloud the \$75 million award in punitive damages for the women. Moss and Freeman were each awarded another roughly \$36 million in other damages.

"Money will never solve all my problems," Freeman told reporters outside Washington's federal courthouse after the verdict. "I can never move back into

the house that I call home. I will always have to be careful about where I go and who I choose to share my name with. I miss my home. I miss my neighbors and I miss my name."

Giuliani didn't appear to show any emotion as the verdict was read after about 10 hours of deliberations. Moss and Freeman hugged their attorneys after the jury left the courtroom and didn't look at Giuliani as he left with his lawyer.

The former New York City mayor vowed to appeal, telling reporters that the "absurdity of the number merely underscores the

absurdity of the entire proceeding."

"It will be reversed so quickly it will make your head spin, and the absurd number that just came in will help that actually," he said.

It's not clear whether Giuliani will ever be able to pay the staggering amount. He had already been showing signs of financial strain as he defends himself against costly lawsuits and investigations stemming from his representation of Trump. In September, his former lawyer sued him, alleging Giuliani had paid only a fraction of nearly

\$1.6 million in legal fees he racked up.

His attorney in the defamation case told jurors that the damages the women were seeking "would be the end of Mr. Giuliani."

Giuliani had already been found liable in the case and previously conceded in court documents that he falsely accused the women of ballot fraud. Even so, the former mayor continued to repeat his baseless allegations about the women in comments to reporters outside the Washington, D.C., courthouse this week.

GIULIANI » PAGE 4

Survey

FROM PAGE 1

Within the overall rise, homelessness among individuals rose by nearly 11%, among veterans by 7.4% and among families with children by 15.5%.

People who identify as Black make up about 13% of the U.S. population but comprised 37% of all people experiencing homelessness. People who identify as Hispanic or Latino make up about 19% of the population but comprised about 33% of those experiencing homelessness. Also, more than a quarter of the adults experiencing homelessness were over age 54.

HUD said that rental housing conditions were "extraordinarily challenging" in 2022, with rents increasing at more than twice the rate of recent years. It noted that trend has subsided since the January count.

Such relief could show benefits when volunteers and housing officials around the country begin the next homeless count in just a few weeks.

Officials also noted that President Joe Biden's budget for this fiscal year has



JAE C. HONG — ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

A tarp covers a portion of a homeless person's tent on a bridge overlooking the 101 Freeway in Los Angeles, Thursday, Feb. 2. The United States experienced a dramatic 12% increase in homelessness as soaring rents and a decline in coronavirus pandemic assistance combined to put housing out of reach for more Americans, federal officials said Friday.

recommended guaranteed vouchers for low-income veterans and youths aging out of foster care, among other investments designed to reduce homelessness.

More than half the people experiencing homelessness in the country were in four states: California, New York, Florida and Washington. While about 28% of the nation's homeless are estimated to be in California, its increase was only about half the national rate. New York's homelessness went up more than three times the national rate, according to HUD's report.

New Hampshire, New Mexico and Colorado along with New York saw the largest percentage increases in homelessness. In all, the number of people experiencing homelessness increased in 41 states and the District of Columbia, and decreased in just nine states.

HUD also sought to highlight improvements and noted that some communities bucked the national trend. Chattanooga, Tenn., and the surrounding region, for example, saw a 49% drop from the 2022 count to this year's. Chatta-

nooga increased efforts to more rapidly connect people to permanent housing and boosted efforts to prevent people from becoming homeless.

Other communities highlighted for a drop were Dallas, which experienced a 3.8% decrease, and Newark and Essex County, N.J., which saw a 16.7% drop. Houston has closed numerous homeless encampments across the city and saw a 17% reduction in unsheltered homelessness. San Jose, Calif., and Tucson also were cited for improvements.

Arrest

FROM PAGE 1

"Melissa and Riordan were both a light in many of our lives and it is hard to even understand and grasp the situation," the GoFundMe posting reads.

The statement included in the GoFundMe posting was authored by Jeremiah Garrick, who identified himself as a friend of both Chris Powell, and the brother of Chris Powell's fiancée.

"This inconceivable loss has left the Powell family grappling with grief and unforeseen financial burdens as we head into the holiday season," the statement reads.

"As the family navigates through this difficult time, we are reaching out for support. Anything you can donate would greatly help support Chris and Halen through and past the expenses of the funeral and help ease the heartbreak and strain brought on so suddenly. All of the funds raised will go to Chris and Halen Powell."

The funding request set a goal of \$30,000. By late Friday, it indicated that \$17,645 had been pledged.

Gifts

FROM PAGE 1

"We have a model and a belief that participants that use EFAA services should have agency," Van Domelen said. "This is like you're just shopping. We try to keep it as empowering as possible."

The Gift Room opened Tuesday morning to over 150 families stopping by to pick out presents. Its final

day open will be Saturday from 9:30 a.m. to noon.

The Gift Room's stock comes from community donations, which Van Domelen said were especially needed this week.

She said twice the number of kids are eligible for presents this year than last year, and estimated over 1,000 children will be receiving gifts from EFAA this holiday season.

"Our services have gone through the roof with the

number of people needing food and financial assistance because of inflation and the rising cost of housing," Van Domelen said. "It's just harder and harder to make ends meet for families in the community, and the things that get cut are things like Christmas gifts."

EFAA received gift donations from Toys for Tots for the first time this year, which Van Domelen said helped meet the demand. Local nonprofits also

stepped up, including the Kiwanis Club of Longmont, whose members donated carved wooden toy cars.

Sue McCullough, director of volunteer services with EFAA, said 48 individual volunteers along with a few corporate teams helped set up and run the Gift Room this year.

"Everybody wants to be a part of helping the community," McCullough said. "This really attracts people (for whom) this might be

their first engagement with EFAA."

Boulder resident Courtney Lynch spent Tuesday and Friday helping clients navigate the Gift Room. Lynch donated toys for the room last year, but this week was her first opportunity to work inside it as a volunteer.

"It's such a great way to give back to the community and to see people so appreciative and excited," Lynch said.