

New home on the ranch
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Sounds of celebration
SEE LIFE Page 6A

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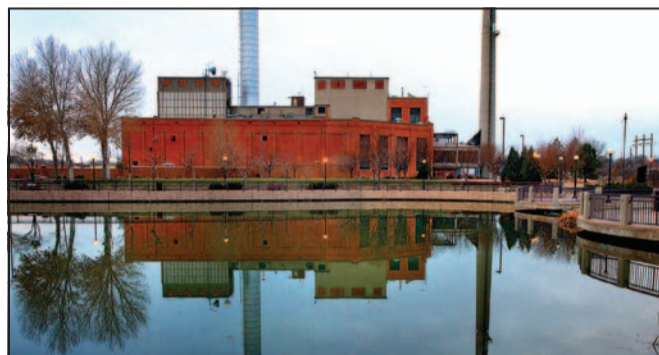
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FRIDAY, JULY 3, 2015

COLORADO'S OLDEST DAILY NEWSPAPER/148TH YEAR

UNION AVENUE AREA

City's commercial demolition ban expires



CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/FILE

The old Black Hills Energy old Station 5 & 6 power plant is reflected in the water of the adjacent Lake Elizabeth at the Historic Arkansas Riverwalk of Pueblo

Black Hills to tear down old Downtown power plant

The handcuffs that City Council put on Black Hills Energy last winter, barring the utility from demolishing the old Station 5 & 6 power plant in the Downtown, fell off this week with little fanfare.

Council's six-month moratorium on the demolition of any large commercial building — a ban aimed directly at the power plant — was writ-

ten to expire June 30 and it did.

"As of now, the future of 5 & 6 is up to Black Hills," City Manager Sam Azad confirmed Thursday. "Of course, the city expects Black Hills to clean up any environmental problems as part of the demolition process."

Council put the demolition ban in place back in December in order



As of now, the future of 5 & 6 is up to Black Hills.

SAM AZAD
CITY MANAGER

to give local groups and individuals time to consider ways to redevelop the old power plant, which sits behind Black

Hills' offices on Victoria Street.

Old power plants have become shopping malls, microbreweries and other attractions in other cities. But the usual players, like the Pueblo Urban Renewal Authority, didn't see an opportunity in the power plant and other redevelopment advocates haven't shown

SEE EXPIRES, 2A



Gary Walker

SOUTHERN DELIVERY SYSTEM

Springs, Walker settle for \$7.1M

Parties must now work together

BY CHRIS WOODKA
THE PUEBLO CHIEFTAIN

Colorado Springs Utilities and Gary Walker have reached a \$7.1 million settlement for the damage to Walker Ranches from the Southern Delivery System pipeline.

The pipeline crosses 5.5 miles of the 63,000-acre property on its route from Pueblo Dam to Colorado Springs. The \$841 million SDS project is scheduled to go online next year and will supply water to Colorado Springs, Fountain, Security and Pueblo West.

On May 6, a jury awarded Walker \$4.75 million, which included a \$4.665 million judgment beyond the \$82,900 stipulated value of the easement across Walker Ranches. Damages plus interest would have brought the total payment to \$5.78 million, according to a joint press release.

Utilities disputed the amount, and filed an appeal on May 7. Walker Ranches appealed the decision on May 14. Those appeals were

SEE WALKER, 3A

More on the web
CHIEFTAIN.COM/
WATER

SUMMER RECREATION

Fantastic flows

As the Arkansas River lowers, whitewater rafting is taking off

BY TRACY HARMON
THE PUEBLO CHIEFTAIN

CANON CITY — Rafting outfitters are rolling in the deep.

For most of June, the Arkansas River was raging between 4,000 and 6,200 cubic feet per second at the Parkdale gauge, so outfitters were steering clear of the Royal Gorge section above Canon City. The Numbers section above Buena Vista also was avoided due to high water advisories.

When that happens, outfitters adjust trip locations along the 15.2-mile stretch of river between Granite and Canon City. Many focus on the Big Horn Sheep and Browns Canyon areas.

"This is an exceptional year and the boating is out-of-this-world great," said Dennis Wied, owner of Raft Masters in Canon City.

Starting Wednesday, boats returned to the Royal Gorge and other more technical sections of the river.

"We stop running the gorge at 3,200 cubic feet per second and Wednesday it was running at 3,100, so it is definitely an exciting trip through the gorge."



COURTESY PHOTO/RAFTTHEBEST.COM

Rafts have returned to more technical sections of the Arkansas River after water levels dropped.

One of Wednesday's groups was "perfect" for the gorge trip, Wied said, as it included Fort Carson soldiers who are in special operations and accustomed to adrenaline rushes.

Wied said about a third

of his customers like to try the Royal Gorge section of the river while the remaining two-thirds prefer Big Horn Sheep Canyon because they are families with children and first-time rafters.

Water levels in The

Numbers also have dropped. Flow is below the 2,400 cut-off and is more appropriate for commercial rafting.

"Although our high water season has concluded for the year, we're anticipating fantastic flows for

the duration of the summer," said Mike Kissack, Arkansas River Outfitter Association president and owner of American Adventure Expeditions

"The Arkansas is a

SEE RAFTING, 2A

ELECTION 2016

An untangled Webb begins to weave

Democratic candidate brings outsider's view to presidential run

Former Virginia Sen. Jim Webb on Thursday announced his campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination.

AP PHOTO/FILE



BY KEN THOMAS
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Jim Webb, a decorated Vietnam veteran and accomplished novelist who became a fierce critic of the Iraq war in the Senate, announced Thursday that he's challenging Hillary Rodham Clinton and other rivals for the Democratic presidential nomination.

Webb, in a statement posted on his campaign

website, acknowledged he would face major hurdles but vowed to bring an outsider's voice to the 2016 race, dominated by Clinton.

"I understand the odds, particularly in today's political climate, where fair debate is so often drowned out by huge sums of money," Webb wrote. "I know that more than one candidate in this process intends to raise at least a billion dollars."

But he added, "We need to shake the hold of these shadow elites on our political process" and find fresh answers to the nation's problems.

Webb, 69, was a Navy secretary under Republican President Ronald Reagan who became a Democrat in response to the Iraq war that he opposed, and Clinton supported.

He surprised many fellow Democrats when

SEE WEBB, 3A

Inside today

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OPINION
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6C
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1B
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Underdog

Against all odds, a homeless terrier mix finds love with a Canon City family and some furry friends.

UPPER ARK, 3B



Grass stain

A second-round match proves to be another Wimbledon disappointment for Rafael Nadal.

SPORTS, 1D



WEATHER

85/61

Mostly cloudy with afternoon thunderstorms.

DETAILS, 11C



Daily 50¢ - Sundays \$1.50
May vary outside Pueblo



6 56749 0001 8



COURTESY PHOTO/RAFTTHEBEST.COM

Somewhat lower water levels still are providing plenty of waves in the Royal Gorge section of the Arkansas River, which is one of the most technical stretches.

RAFTING/from page 1A

fun river. This year it is as good as it gets — it's huge," Wied said.

To put things into perspective, during a low water year, the river

will be augmented to the flow of 700 cubic feet per second if storage water is available and the flows drop below that level between July 1 and Aug. 15.

"This year, we are probably not going to need to call on the flow program," Wied said.

"Rafters will be able to enjoy great weather and great rafting all the way

through Labor Day and beyond," Kissack said.

Wied said his Raft Masters business was slower than he would have anticipated until the last week of June.

"Now we are busy. The Fourth of July week and the next couple of weeks after that will be crazy busy," Wied said.

tharmon@chieftain.com

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Announcements day of auction take precedence over previous advertising. All items sold as is where is with no warranties or guarantees expressed or implied. Day of sale ID required to bid.

EXPIRES/from page 1A

council much more than ambitious drawings.

Only a week ago, council acknowledged that the moratorium was about to expire. And it has.

Which puts Black Hills where it was a year ago — wanting to demolish the old diesel-powered station. Its demolition contractor was in the area last winter and tore down the old coal-powered plant in Canon City.

Black Hills planned to bring the contractor to Pueblo afterward, but council dropped the

demolition moratorium in its path.

"We are pursuing the necessary permission to demolish from the Colorado Public Utilities Commission," Black Hills spokesman Bret Jones said this week.

The utility had given council several choices — the city could take ownership of the power plant as is; let Black Hills demolish it and remediate whatever soil contamination problems the plant created; or have a third party take over for redevelopment. Council hasn't wanted

to take the risk of taking ownership of the old plant and any environmental issues it might contain.

Black Hills, on the other hand, will have to remediate environmental problems in getting tear-down permission from the PUC and from the Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment.

Jones estimated that process — from authorization to cleanup — would take about a year. proper@chieftain.com

FOR THE RECORD

The Pueblo Chieftain makes every effort to print all news stories accurately.

If an error does occur, please call the city desk 544-3520 immediately so a correction can be printed here in the next day's edition.

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