

## COLORADO THEATER SHOOTER HELD ALONE, CLOSELY WATCHED IN CELL

**CENTENNIAL:** Colorado theater shooter James Holmes is being held alone in a cell in a southern Colorado prison, where he is more closely monitored and has fewer privileges than other inmates, officials confirmed.

Holmes is not in maximum security at the Colorado State Penitentiary but is more heavily supervised, which is not uncommon for those convicted of murder or for new prisoners, Department of Corrections spokeswoman Adrienne Jacobson said Monday. She confirmed that Holmes was transferred from a processing facility to the prison last week.

Holmes will stay at the prison in Canon City until officials find more suitable housing for him in a unit that provides even stricter supervision for the safety of staff and other inmates.

Jacobson would not give further details about how Holmes is being housed. But as a "close custody offender," he takes meals alone in his cell, she said. He has opportunities for recreation, phone calls and visitation, but they are fewer than they are for lower security inmates.

A judge in August sentenced Holmes, 27, to life in prison without parole after jurors failed to agree he deserved the death penalty. He was convicted of murdering 12 people and trying to kill 70 more in the July 20, 2012, massacre at a crowded movie theater in suburban Denver.

Citing safety concerns, officials did not post Holmes' photo and location on the corrections department's website, where other inmates' information is publicly available. Holmes' life sentence means he can try to earn his way into

less restrictive housing, unlike inmates on death row, Jacobson said.

But documents released separately Monday that detail Holmes' three years in a county jail show some of the difficulties ahead for him and authorities trying to house him. The jail logs and other documents released by the Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office in response to an open records request by The Associated Press illustrate the problems caused by his notoriety.

Less than a month after Holmes' arrest, sheriff's deputies caught him using a spoon to pry the screws out of a handcapped railing inside a cell. He told a deputy he needed "metal" to use a "club" to protect himself because "other people that come out of their cells hate him and he is afraid they may hurt him," according to a report.

The deputy assured Holmes he was safe, but the incident led deputies to search Holmes' cell and mattress and remove the metal railing. Deputies were on alert again in September 2012, when a man called the jail asking to talk to "his friend" Holmes or he would "kill more people like Holmes did and would show no remorse," records say. The man told deputies he had explosives and planned to "blow up the jail to free Holmes." Sheriff's deputies identified the caller and sent it for investigation, but the reports don't say what happened. In April 2013, a fellow inmate told his girlfriend during a recorded visit that he "didn't want to kill him (Holmes), he just wanted to hurt him," and if he ever saw Holmes walking to court, he would try, documents say. The reports don't show

what action sheriff's deputies took. Another inmate passed Holmes a note asking for his autograph. Deputies also faced groups of young female "sympathizers" who traveled to Colorado to attend Holmes' court hearings. A police officer at the movie theater where the attack took place notified deputies after three women who said they were Holmes' cousins said they wanted to go see him at the jail, according to the documents.

People from around the world sent Holmes letters of support. But a log says he received just 11 visitors during his three-year stay, mostly mental health experts who examined him for trial. One doctor, Bhushan Agharkar, saw Holmes twice but was never called to testify. His mother saw him three times. —AP

## NEW MEXICO SECRETARY OF STATE DUE IN COURT ON FRAUD CHARGES

**SANTA FE:** One of New Mexico's highest-ranking state officials is expected to enter a plea yesterday to charges that she funneled campaign contributions to her personal bank accounts and withdrew large sums of money at casinos. Republican Secretary of State Dianna Duran is due in district court to be arraigned on 64 counts of embezzlement, fraud, money laundering and other charges.

The charges involve a total of \$13,000 in campaign donations. It will mark her first public appearance since the charges were leveled in a complaint more than two weeks ago. She has also been a no-show at her \$85,000-a-year elected post with the exception of some conference calls with staff. Duran's attorney has vowed to fight the charges, but Duran has remained silent, making no statements or public appearances since being charged. The allegations have sent shockwaves through political circles and raised questions about the enforcement of the state's election and campaign finance reporting laws. Calls for Duran to resign continue and a special committee of state lawmakers is expected to begin work this week as part of impeachment proceedings.

Duran is accused of violating some of the laws she was elected to uphold. Political observers say the case has sparked disappointment and frustration among voters. "We have no idea how to measure the impact, but the general effect is one of disillusionment with government and politics," said Christine Sierra, an emeritus professor of political science at the University of New Mexico.

Duran tapped into those same feelings of voter

frustration to craft her platform when she first ran for secretary of state in 2010. A native of the southern New Mexico village of Tularosa, she wanted to turn around an office that had not only been the focus of federal investigations but was known for being dysfunctional. One of only a handful of Latina women in the nation to hold a statewide office, Duran has spent most of her life in public service. She worked her way up from a technician in the Otero County Clerk's Office to the New Mexico Senate, where she served for 18 years. She also was the first Republican elected to the New Mexico secretary of state's office in more than 80 years.

While partisan, Duran's reputation as a lawmaker and later as the state's top elections official never raised any flags. Former Republican state lawmaker Janice Arnold Jones characterized the allegations during a recent call-in show on KUNM radio as a "personal fall from grace." "It appears to me this is truly a gambling problem and there were personal choices, but it really didn't have anything to do with her ability to do the job in office," she said.

It's a credibility issue for Duran, but observers say the bigger question now is whether the case will spur lawmakers to take on reforms that have long proven to be elusive, such as the creation of a state ethics commission and tougher enforcement of campaign finance laws. Many reforms in other states have come through referendums. Making changes in New Mexico would mean in some cases amending the Constitution, which can be difficult and require the support of voters. —AP



**MIDDLETOWN:** Burned out vehicles and homes are seen in a residential neighborhood of Middletown, California on Monday. According to Cal Fire, the Valley fire has charred 62,000 acres and burned hundreds of homes. — AFP

## WILDFIRES WREAK HAVOC ACROSS NORTHERN CALIFORNIA, ONE DEAD

### FAST-MOVING INFERNOS DESTROYS 100,000 ACRES

**CALISTOGA:** Winds whipped new life Monday into northern California wildfires that have killed a woman, hospitalized firefighters, and reduced hundreds of homes to smoldering ruins. "It breaks my heart to look out and see what you folks are going through," Lake County Sheriff Brian Martin told hundreds of evacuees given refuge on fair grounds in the wine country town of Calistoga.

#### "It is a terrible tragedy"

State disaster officials said two fast-moving infernos—dubbed the Valley and Butte fires—had destroyed more than 100,000 acres (more than 50,000 hectares), forcing thousands to flee.

Officials said the victim, who was not identified, died in the Cobb area of Lake County that has been especially hard hit. The woman had a disability and emergency workers slammed with calls for help did not get to her home before it was engulfed in flames.

This marks the first civilian fatality in the wildfires that have devastated the western United States in recent months.

#### Fire 'still spreading'

While the Valley fire is located about

100 miles (160 kilometers) west of the state capital Sacramento, the Butte fire is about 100 miles to the east. Cool, moist weather that moved into the area on Monday, bringing with it chances for rain, brought welcome relief for crews who had been working on rough terrain in searing, dry heat days earlier.

However, the weather change also brought with it winds that powered swift moving walls of flames. "The fire is definitely more active today than it was yesterday," Incident Commander Barry Biermann told AFP. "The fire is still spreading in different directions." The hamlet of Middletown in Lake County was reduced to rubble by the flames that left an apocalyptic scene. An AFP reporter who visited the town saw smoldering homes, melted vehicles and downed power lines.

"There is metal dripping off the cars because of the heat," he said. About a mile outside of the town lay a dead horse by the side of the road. Many residents in the region said the air was so thick with smoke, it was difficult to breathe. "It's hazy with smoke and smells like ashes," one resident, Rosendo Vallejo, tweeted.

#### Watching for looters

Worries have started to spread that looters may be taking advantage of the fact that people left valuables behind while racing to safety. "We stopped some people coming out of the burn area with property taken," Sheriff Martin said.

"There are people out there who will take advantage of disasters like this." Evacuees were told it could be a while before they were allowed to go home, even if only to check on livestock or pets and pick up much-needed prescription medicines.

#### 'Battle with nature'

Citing the widespread destruction, Governor Jerry Brown on Sunday declared a state of emergency for Lake and Napa counties—wine-producing regions north of San Francisco. "We're really in a battle with nature, and nature is more powerful than we are," Brown told reporters on Monday.

The recent fires have been fueled by tinder-dry conditions across the western United States, which has been starved for rain for the past several years. The prolonged dry spell has been

exacerbated by record high temperatures, which many environmentalists blame on global warming.

Daniel Berlant, spokesman for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire), said the Valley fire has so far consumed 61,000 acres (24,685 hectares), and was only five percent contained, with 1,200 firefighters mobilized to tackle it. The 4,400 firefighters combating the Butte fire have had more success.

That blaze has consumed some 70,000 acres. Together, the twin blazes have destroyed an area nine times the size of Manhattan. Four firefighters who were hospitalized with burns were expected to "walk out of the hospital," Biermann said.

More than 11,000 firefighters are battling a dozen large fires across California. Firefighters from across the country, as well as Australia and New Zealand, have lent a helping hand. National Guard troops have also been called in.

Three fires are scorching the earth in the neighboring state of Oregon and 10 are ablaze further north in Washington state. — AFP



**ALBUQUERQUE:** In this July 16, 2011, file photo, New Mexico Secretary of State Dianna Duran, right, talks during an interim legislative committee hearing in Albuquerque, N.M. Duran is due in district court, yesterday, to be arraigned on 64 counts of embezzlement, fraud, money laundering and other charges. The charges involve a total of \$13,000 in campaign donations. — AP

## 7 DEAD IN FRENCH ALPS AVALANCHE

**GRENOBLE:** Seven people were killed yesterday when an avalanche swept them away in the French Alps, a local official told AFP, the deadliest snowslide to hit the popular mountain range this year. The avalanche struck around midday at the Snow Dome in the Alps' Massif des Ecrins, an easy-to-access 4,015-metre (13,170-foot) high mountain that is hugely popular with climbers.

Rescuers, backed by three helicopters and sniffer dogs, were dispatched to the scene but local official Pierre Besnard said search operations had now ended and the bodies of the climbers were being transported down. Besnard said seven people had died, and one had been injured, adding that at least five of the victims were foreign, without detailing what their nationalities were.

"We have to tell consular authorities," he told reporters. Climbers and skiers are sporadically

caught in avalanches in the popular Alps, particularly during the winter season, but this is the deadliest accident so far this year.

In January, six skiers were carried away by an avalanche in the Queyras mountain range of the Alps. Just over two months later, two Austrians and an Italian died in the Massif des Ecrins. Christian Flagella, a member of the police force in the Hautes-Alpes region where the mountain is located, said the avalanche was likely triggered when a layer of snow separated and hurtled down the hill. "The conditions are winter-like at the moment," he said. Rescuer Nicolas Colombani added a lot of snow had fallen over the weekend, particularly at a high altitude.

The avalanche struck on a section of the mountain that is popular with amateur climbers as it does not require advanced technical skills. — AFP



**DOMES DES ECRINS:** A file picture taken on July 5, 2003 shows young people climbing the Dome des Ecrins mountain (4015 m) with a mountain guide, in the French Alps. Seven people were killed yesterday when an avalanche swept them away in the French Alps, a local official told AFP, the deadliest snowslide to hit the popular mountain range this year. — AFP

## AUSTRALIA'S NEW PREMIER A SILVER-TONGUED MILLIONAIRE

**SYDNEY:** Australia's new prime minister Malcolm Turnbull, whose glittering career ranged from the law to investment banking and tech start-ups before entering public life, has a compelling way with words but a reputation for arrogance. A formidable opponent in the courtroom and the boardroom, the 60-year-old multi-millionaire will need all his charm to unite his conservative Liberal Party which at times has recoiled from his socially liberal views.

Some in the party ranks were quick to condemn Turnbull for his ousting of outgoing premier Tony Abbott, who just two years ago swept to a convincing electoral victory.

"This is the act of an egotist, a selfish individual who has consistently proved himself not to be a team player but one who pursues self-interest," said former state premier Jeff Kennett.

But others feel that Turnbull, who entered politics in 2004, is the best person to replace Abbott if they are to win elections expected next year, with polls suggesting they are on track to lose.

Turnbull's cut-through turn-of-phrase, which he can turn to economic matters, his love of digital media or his sadness at the passing of a pet dog, is acknowledged as one of his greatest strengths. "He's a person of great intelligence," said former Liberal prime minister

John Howard, adding that he had the "capacity to explain economic concepts very clearly and very lucidly".

Turnbull has led the right-leaning Liberal Party in opposition before, for just over a year from September 2008. But he was dumped for refusing to abandon a carbon emissions trading scheme designed to combat climate change, a policy many in his party rejected.

#### Heart on his sleeve

In recent months his views have also seemed at odds with those of the party backing gay marriage which is not legal in Australia, insistence that the threat of Islamic State group not be overstated, and a long-held wish that Australia become a republic.

"He's energetic, determined, passionate and no-one can ever suggest that Malcolm doesn't wear his heart on his sleeve," said Foreign Minister Julie Bishop, a key Turnbull supporter. "You know exactly where you stand with Malcolm."

One of the richest politicians in federal parliament, Turnbull is distantly related through his late mother, academic and writer Coral Lansbury, to actress and television star Angela Lansbury.

Together with his wife Lucy, a former mayor of Sydney and philanthropist, the



**CANBERRA:** Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, left, holds his grandson Jack Turnbull Brown as his family gathers for a photograph at Government House in Canberra, yesterday. Turnbull was sworn in as Australia's 29th prime minister after a surprise ballot of his conservative Liberal Party colleagues voted 54-44 on Monday night to replace Prime Minister Tony Abbott only two years after he was elected. — AP

Turnbulls make an impressive power couple who live in a luxurious home in Sydney's waterfront Point Piper.

His reputation for being arrogant runs ahead of him and his staggering wealth has led to accusation of being out-of-touch with ordinary Australians, a

characterisation the Labor opposition has jumped on. "In fairness to him, it's hard to be in touch with the needs of working people when you are a multi-millionaire that lives in a pink mansion on Sydney Harbour," quipped Labor politician Jason Clare. — AFP