

## Colorado in the Spotlight: Story Ideas

### New Energy Economy and Energy Development

#### **Governor's Residence Brings Renewable Energy Home**

Thanks to Governor Bill Ritter and First Lady Jeannie Ritter, the 100-year-old Governor's Residence at the Boettcher Mansion has seen some modern renewable energy upgrades. Solar panels installed on the roof of the Carriage House in 2007 supply about 15% of the facility's energy needs, as well as reducing its carbon footprint. In 2008, a geothermal exchange system was added, which uses the earth's own underground temperature to better regulate the environment at the residence.

#### **National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL)**

As the nation reassesses its energy needs, the work of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) becomes even more critical. NREL serves as the nation's primary laboratory for renewable energy and energy efficiency research and development, and transfers this knowledge and innovation commercially to address the nation's energy and environmental goals. In 2007, NREL signed a "Collaboratory" agreement with Colorado's major research institutions, including the Colorado School of Mines, Colorado State University and the University of Colorado at Boulder, to help bring these innovations to the commercial market even faster.

#### **Colorado's Statewide Green Energy Requirement**

Thanks to a voter-initiated process started in 2004 and a law signed by Gov. Ritter in 2007, 20% of Colorado's electricity must come from renewable sources, including wind and solar, by 2020. Even Coors Field, home of Major League Baseball's Colorado Rockies, does its part – the centerfield scoreboard is powered by solar panels, the only solar-powered MLB scoreboard in the nation.

#### **Energy Security**

Thanks to its abundant renewable and traditional energy sources, Colorado is a major contributor to the nation's energy security by being one of just 10 energy-exporting states. Colorado is blessed with some of the richest natural gas deposits in the entire country, as well as coal, coal-bed methane and oil. Colorado, is also home to abundant oil-shale reserves. On the renewable energy side, Colorado is the 6<sup>th</sup> sunniest state in the country and the 11<sup>th</sup> windiest. Several international renewable energy companies have opened their first U.S. facilities in Colorado, helping to build what Governor Ritter's calls the New Energy Economy. Denmark-based Vestas will be opening the world's largest wind-tower manufacturing plant in Colorado, and ConocoPhillips will be opening its global alternative-fuel research and development operation in Colorado – and bringing 7,000 new jobs to Colorado.

## **Homeland Security**

Colorado is a foundation for our national security and home to six major military installations: the Air Force Academy, Fort Carson, Peterson Air Force Base, Schriever Air Force Base, Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Base, and Buckley Air Force Base. More than 50,000 military personnel and their families live and work in Colorado, including the citizen-soldiers of the Colorado National Guard. The North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) is also headquartered in Colorado.

## **Economic Development**

### **Colorado: Top of the Charts for Business**

Colorado continues to receive national accolades for its pro-business climate, intellectual capital, and quality of life. Money Magazine/CNN Money recently declared Fort Collins, home to Colorado State University, as the second-best place to live in America, and Highlands Ranch (just outside Denver) made the list at No. 12. CNBC named Colorado one of the Top 5 States for Business in America, singling out the state's New Energy Economy as a catalyst for economic development. The Milken Institute ranked Colorado No. 3 in its 2008 State Technology and Science Index, citing Colorado's strong technology sector, highly educated workforce and high percentage of scientists and engineers. Colorado is in the top three nationally for percentage of the population with a college degree.

### **Bioscience**

In only a few short years, Colorado has grown as a showcase state for the bioscience industry. The state is home to over 470 bioscience companies involved in the development of biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, medical devices and bio-fuels. The number of Colorado companies has grown by more than 50 percent since 2001, including 150 new companies created since 2004.

In 2008, Governor Ritter and the state Legislature created a \$26.5 million Bioscience Research Grant Program to help transfer laboratory research to the commercial marketplace. Also in 2008, the University of Colorado received a \$76 million National Institutes of Health Grant – the largest grant of its kind in NIH history – to create a new Colorado Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute and speed laboratory discoveries to the practice of medicine.

### **Aerospace**

Colorado has one of the highest concentrations of aerospace workers in the country. More than 170,000 people work in space-related jobs in Colorado, seven of the nation's top aerospace contractors have significant operations here, and more than 300 space-related companies call Colorado home. Along with major Department of Defense and NASA research activities, Colorado is the U.S. center for military space. The state's four military commands – the primary customers for space-based research, development, acquisition and operations – ensure industry growth.

## Tourism

### *Loca-Vore Heaven*

Call it what you want: farm to table, agri-tourism or organic eating. When it comes to locally grown foods, from produce to livestock, Colorado is Foodie Heaven. The state ranks second in certified organic acreage in the U.S. Many restaurants across Colorado base their menus on locally grown food. Some chefs, like Ryan Hardy of Montagna in Aspen, own their own farms to ensure that the restaurant's produce is fresh. Other restaurants, like The Kitchen in Boulder, use locally grown ingredients and nearly everything in the restaurant, down to the straws, is biodegradable.

### *Voluntourism and Green Getaways*

Colorado is a leader in environmental initiatives and even the tourism industry provides opportunities for visitors to volunteer while on vacation. Programs such as Rock Resorts' "Give & Getaway" packages, The Broadmoor's "Green on the Green" package and the Colorado Fourteeners Initiative sustainable tourism programs let tourists give back while enjoying their visit and bonding with family and friends. There are also a number of green education opportunities across the state.

### *Colorado-H2O*

Colorado doesn't have beaches but it does offer a number of activities involving water. From boating and kite boarding in Colorado's lakes and reservoirs to fly fishing, whitewater rafting and kayaking in the state's myriad rivers and reservoirs, like the Blue Mesa Reservoir, home to the largest Kokanee Salmon hatchery in the U.S. Colorado is also the headwaters for four major rivers and the largest hot springs, located in Glenwood Springs.

### *A Festival for Everyone*

Colorado is home to some of the most exciting and well-respected festivals and cultural events in the country. From the National Western Stock Show and the Mesa Verde Country Indian Arts Festival to the Colorado Mountain Wine Fest and the Colorado Brewers Festival there is something for everyone to enjoy. Don't forget the Telluride Bluegrass Festival, the Vail Film Fest, the Aspen Music Festival and even the Palisade Peach Festival.

### *Colorado's Grape Expectations*

Colorado is home to 64 wineries over five distinct regions: the Front Range, Delta and Montrose Counties, Rocky Mountains, Grand Valley and the Four Corners. There are two federally designated American Viticulture Areas (AVAs) in the Grand Valley along the Colorado River between Palisade and Grand Junction and the West Elks along the North Fork of the Gunnison River. Together these regions produce approximately 90 percent of the wine grapes grown in Colorado. Colorado is also home to several "urban wineries" – set in the heart of some of the state's vibrant cities – and nine master sommeliers.

### *Arts Big and Small*

Colorado is home to internationally renowned museums such as the Denver Museum of Art and The Taylor Museum at The Fine Arts Center Colorado Springs. But the state is also home to small towns doing big things with culture and the arts. Towns like Creede and Loveland have devoted a considerable amount of resources and time to the arts. Exploring some of the state's small towns and cities will lead to the discovery of art galleries, art walks and museums dedicated to famous artists, mountaineering, and more.

## *Extreme Colorado*

It's easy to find unusual and extreme adventures in Colorado. From zip lining in Durango and mountain boarding in Snowmass to new adventure sports like sledging in Aspen and paddle surfing in Glenwood Springs, Colorado is one of the top adventure destinations. It doesn't stop with those sports; there's also Jeep Ice Races in Georgetown, ice climbing in Ouray, ATV rides along the Continental Divide, mountain biking in Fruita, Crested Butte and, well, just about anywhere in Colorado.

## *A Walk in the Park*

Colorado is home to nine national parks and monuments, and 41 state parks, where visitors can camp, raft, kayak, fish, go hiking, mountain climbing, horseback riding and more. National parks include iconic Rocky Mountain National Park and the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, home to the largest sand dunes in North America. Other parks include the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park and Mesa Verde National Park, a world heritage site and home to the largest existing cliff dwelling in North America.

## *Watching in the Wild*

Colorado offers numerous wildlife watching opportunities across the state. There are annual events in the such as the Snow Goose Festival in Lamar in the Southeast part of the state and greater prairie chicken mating festivals near Wary in the Northeast. Impromptu wildlife opportunities also exist across the state. At the Colorado National Monument, visitors can view a number of species of wildlife including mule deer and bobcats. Drivers on Colorado's Scenic and Historic Byways have been known to see hawks, eagles, big horn sheep and more. During the fall mating season in Estes Park, visitors watch as hundreds of elk descend upon the town, bugling for the attention of the females.

## **Sports**

### **USOC & Olympic Training Center**

Many of the athletes returning from Beijing owe part of their excellence to Colorado, since our state serves as the headquarters for the nation's Olympic activities. The U.S. Olympic Complex in Colorado Springs is the headquarters for the U.S. Olympic Committee administration and the Olympic Training Center. Twelve USOC member organizations are headquartered at the complex, and 12 other member organizations and two international sports federations are located nearby in Colorado Springs.

### **Colorado, a Year-Round Sports Destination**

Governor Ritter, a fly-fishing enthusiast, can attest to the importance of outdoor activities to Colorado's economy and ecology. Hunting, fishing, hiking, skiing, and other outdoor activities make Colorado a year-round recreation destination. From the World Cup ski races in Vail to the National Fly Fishing Championships held in Boulder last year, Colorado serves as the one of the best sports states in the nation and one of the top sports destinations in the world. This also accounts for the fact Colorado is one of the healthiest states in the nation.

## **Colorado History**

### **Pikes Peak, the Inspiration for *America the Beautiful***

One of America's most beloved songs owes its theme to Colorado. In 1893, Katherine Lee Bates, a Massachusetts author and teacher, was so inspired by the view from atop Pikes Peak that she composed the lyrics to *America the Beautiful*. Pikes Peak is the most visited mountain in North America and the second most visited mountain in the world behind Japan's Mount Fuji. At an altitude of 14,110 feet above sea level, it is one of 54 "Fourteeners" in Colorado.

### **100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Governor's Residence**

Just as 2008 marks the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Democratic Convention in Denver, it also marks the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Boettcher Mansion, the Governor's residence and Colorado's home. First Lady Jeannie Ritter has begun a new project to throw open the doors of the residence to Coloradans from all walks of life and to protect it for future generations.

### **Governor Ralph Carr and Civil Rights**

Truly a profile in courage and one of Governor Ritter's heroes, former Colorado Governor Ralph Carr stood up for the civil rights of Japanese-Americans - and all Americans - at a time when no other national politician would do so. It ultimately cost him his political career. Elected Governor in 1939 and considered a rising star in Republican political circles, he lost his Senate race in 1942 largely due to his public opposition to the shameful treatment of Japanese-Americans during WWII.

After President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, stripping Japanese Americans of many of the citizenship rights and ordering them into confinement camps, Carr said, "If we imprison American citizens without evidence or trial, what's to say six months from now we wouldn't follow them into that same prison?" Governor Carr welcomed displaced Japanese Americans to the camp at Amache near Granada and did what he could to protect their rights in Colorado. One of the internees was California Congressman Mike Honda.

### **Firsts for Women**

Colorado has always been ahead of the nation when it comes to empowering women in the political process. Women participated as delegates in the 1908 Convention, despite the fact they couldn't vote in the national elections.

In 1893, Colorado was the first state in which men went to the ballot box and granted women the right to vote. In 1894, Colorado elected three women to the state legislature, the first female state legislators in U.S. history. They were Clara Cressingham, R-Arapahoe County; Carrie Holly, R-Pueblo County; and Frances Klock, R-Arapahoe County.

Women outnumber men in the current Colorado House Democrat Caucus – out of the 40 Democrats in the Colorado House of Representatives, there are 21 women and 19 men.