

Voice of the Rocky Mountain Empire

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★★

2 MILLION UKRAINIANS

Citizens forcibly sent to Russia

By Lori Hinnant, Cara Anna, Vasilisa Stepanenko and Sarah El Deeb
The Associated Press

NARVA, ESTONIA» For weeks Natalya Zadoyanova had lost contact with her younger brother Dmitriy, who was trapped in the besieged Ukrainian port city of Mariupol.

Russian forces had bombed the orphanage where he worked, and he was huddling with dozens of others in the freezing basement of a building without doors and windows. When she next heard from him, he was in tears.

"I'm alive," he told her. "I'm in Russia."

Zadoyanov was facing the next chapter of devastation for the people of Mariupol and other occupied cities: Forcible transfers to Russia, the nation that killed their neighbors and shelled their hometowns almost into oblivion.

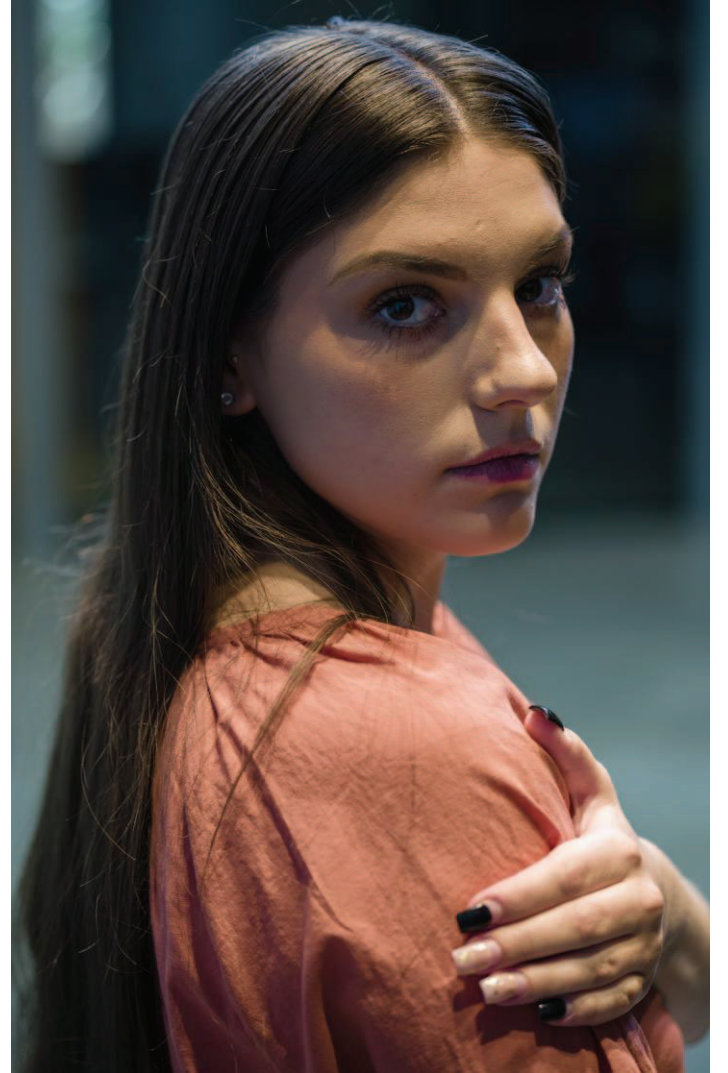
Nearly 2 million Ukrainians refugees have been sent to Russia, according to Ukrainian and Russian officials.

Ukraine portrays these transfers as forced journeys to enemy soil, which is considered a war crime. Russia calls them humanitarian evacuations.

UKRAINE » 8A

LOWER DOWNTOWN SHOOTING

Police defend actions that hurt six in crowd



Yekalo Weldehiwet, 26, left, and Bailey Alexander, 24, were bystanders shot by Denver police officers on Sunday. Weldehiwet still has a bullet lodged in his right arm. It will be surgically removed next Thursday. Alexander has her hand over one of her wounds. Both were photographed at the law firm of Rathod Mohamedbhai on Wednesday. Photos by Jintak Han, The Denver Post

Two wounded bystanders try "to get some answers"

By Elise Schmelzer
The Denver Post

The shrapnel from a Denver police officer's bullet that is lodged in Bailey Alexander's arm still burns three days later.

The police bullet that struck Yekalo Weldehiwet remains lodged in the back of his biceps — it inflicts a sharp pain when he moves. It shattered his humerus bone and will require surgery to set the bones correctly and remove the bullet.

Weldehiwet and Alexander were leaving the Larimer Beer Hall early Sunday morning after a night out with friends when Denver police shot them while firing at a man the officers said had a gun. They were two of six bystanders wounded by Denver police gunfire when officers fired at the man in the crowded bar district on Larimer Street.

"I'm trying to get some answers about why they would shoot into a crowd like that," Weldehiwet said.

Weldehiwet and Alexander on Wednesday became the first bystander

victims to speak publicly about the shooting. They spoke to reporters shortly after Denver police held a news conference during which police acknowledged the incident could've been handled better.

"Both of our clients have bullet holes in their bodies, through their bodies," said attorney Siddhartha Rathod, whose firm Rathod Mohamedbhai is representing Weldehiwet and Alexander. "That's not an acceptable outcome. The public will not tolerate being collateral damage."

Weldehiwet, a 26-year-old who works in data analytics, was running from the sounds of gunfire when it felt like a baseball hit him in the back of the arm at 100 mph, he said. He assumed somebody hit him, but as he moved away his arm started to go numb. It wasn't until Weldehiwet noticed the blood running down his arm that he realized he had been shot.

He walked to the nearest police officer and later got into an ambulance with two other shooting victims.

VICTIMS » 6A

By Shelly Bradbury and Elise Schmelzer
The Denver Post

Denver police on Wednesday defended the actions of three officers who wounded six bystanders — one more than originally reported — while shooting a suspect in Lower Downtown early Sunday — but also acknowledged the incident could've been handled differently.

Cmdr. Matt Clark shared still images from the officers' body-worn cameras that showed 21-year-old Jordan Waddy facing officers and pulling out a gun before three officers fired seven rounds at about 1:35 a.m. Sunday at Larimer and 20th streets. Clark, however, did not show body camera footage of the encounter or surveillance video.

The officers shot Waddy but also wounded six bystanders in the busy district, which was especially crowded as bars closed and patrons moved into the streets. Clark on Wednesday refused to say how many of the wounded bystanders were shot, saying he could not determine whether they were hit by direct gunfire or injured by flying debris.

But he said a man and two women received "serious injuries": one man was wounded in his arm, one woman in her leg and another in her shoulder.

POLICE » 6A

CARL BOURGEOIS

Investor in historic Five Points dies at 71

By Noelle Phillips
The Denver Post

In the 1980s, when most of Denver seemed ready to give up on the historically Black Five Points neighborhood, Carl Bourgeois did not.

He looked at the blight along the 2400 block of Washington Street and saw past the weeds, broken windows and crumbling brick.

"My dad just saw a gem," his daughter, Nicole Stewart, said. "He saw a treasure that nobody wanted."

Bourgeois bought what is known as the "Triangle Building" on the corner of Washington and

BOURGEOIS » 7A

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TINA PETERS, RON HANKS

Demand for hand recount denied

By Saja Hindi
The Denver Post

Two former Colorado GOP candidates who subscribe to election denial claims cannot get a hand recount of votes in their races in the 2022 primary election, the state's Elections Division director told them this week.

Indicted Mesa County Clerk and Recorder Tina Peters was running for the GOP nomination for secretary of state, and state House Rep. Ron Hanks was seeking the Republican nomination for U.S. Senate. Both lost their races by large enough margins that they wouldn't automatically trigger recounts — the margin of victory would have had to be within half of a percent.

Peters lost by 88,579 votes statewide, a difference of 14.2% of opponent Pam Anderson's votes. Hanks lost by 56,563 votes, a differ-

ence of 8.92% of opponent Joe O'Dea's votes.

Candidates have the opportunity to request recounts of their elections despite vote margins, but they would have to pay for the costs that counties would incur to conduct the tabulations.

Hanks and Peters requested recounts in letters notarized July 12 and 13 and sent to the Colorado secretary of state's office. The office cited the cost for recounts in each race as \$236,279.37, and the law requires candidates to pay for costs within a day of receiving the estimate.

Neither candidate submitted payment by the deadline. In letters dated July 15, Peters and Hanks then requested the cost of hand recounts for their races, making identical claims about security vulnerabilities and problems with the Dominion Voting Systems used — a common target for elec-

tion conspiracy theorists.

However, election rules say the recounts must be conducted in the same manner as the original election, Elections Division Director Judd Choate wrote to Peters and Hanks on Tuesday. The only way a different type of recount would be allowed is if there were certain discrepancies that did not occur in this election.

Additionally, Choate refuted the security claims and said the candidates' reference to "rigorous post-election tabulation audits of the human-readable portions of physical ballots and paper records" have been conducted by counties, and it confirmed the outcome of the races without any discrepancies reported by any county.

If either candidate still wants to go through with a recount using the same systems as allowed by law, they have until July 26 to submit new notarized requests and

payment for the associated costs, Choate wrote.

Neither Peters nor Hanks or their campaigns responded to requests for comment Wednesday afternoon.

On Wednesday, the Colorado County Clerks Association said in a statement that Peters sent an email to county clerks saying she was planning to request a hand recount of votes from "selected counties" but that she did not specify which counties, "nor did she explain her authority to request this illegal form of recount."

The association said it had not heard of clerks receiving a similar request from Hanks.

"Clearly, Peters' request is part of a larger effort to create chaos, disrupt and cause doubt in our elections," Executive Director Matt Crane said. "Voters already sent a resounding message to these people by ensuring that elec-

tion deniers on the ballot across the state were rejected. This seems like just another stunt to try and seem legitimate."

Crane said Peters should stop trying to deceive Colorado citizens "with her election lies and lack of knowledge," and instead let the "true election professionals" continue to run safe and secure elections.

The Colorado secretary of state's office said in a statement that "unequivocally, these allegations are false" of the claims made in Peters' and Hanks' letters.

"The Republican Senate and Secretary of State Primary race were each audited, and the results were confirmed as accurate by bipartisan election judges," according to the statement.

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POLICE

◀ FROM 1A

Two of those victims, a man and a woman, who were shot by police have come forward to publicly discuss their wounds.

Three other people suffered more minor wounds: a woman was grazed on her leg, a man grazed on his foot and another man suffered a "burn-type" injury to his chest.

Waddy was shot in the abdomen area, Clark said, although Clark did not know how many times he was shot.

Police initially believed five bystanders had been hurt but said a sixth victim has come forward.

Clark said two of the officers believed they had a clear shot without people behind the suspect when they fired.

A third officer could see a crowd of people standing behind the suspect, Clark said, and because of that fired only a single round.

"Looking back, six bystanders got injured, and I think you have to conclude something could have been done differently," Clark said.

"But in the moment, they were doing what they could to stop violence and ensure safety downtown."

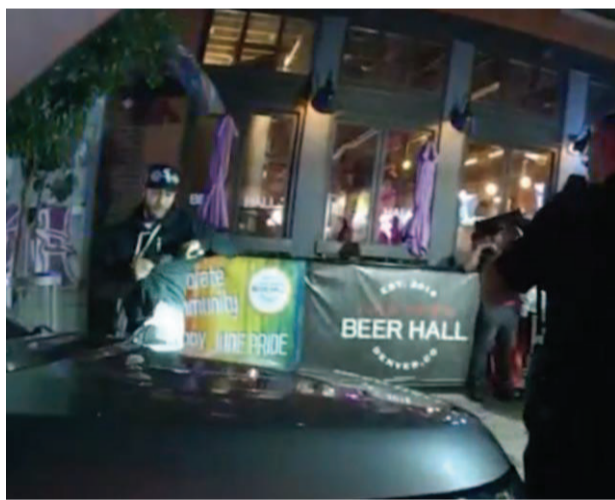
The incident began when officers regularly tasked with patrolling the area as bars close each night witnessed a fight between Waddy and another man outside the Larimer Beer Hall in the 2000 block of Larimer Street.

Waddy struck the man, and officers believed he was concealing a gun in his clothing, according to Clark.

The officers followed Waddy and confronted him in the middle of the street — which was closed to traffic and empty of pedestrians. Waddy did not listen when officers told him to stop and instead walked away from officers and



Denver Police Chief Paul Pazen answers questions at a news conference Wednesday. Jintak Han, The Denver Post



Denver police released this video still from body-worn camera footage from around 1:35 a.m. Sunday at Larimer and 20th streets in Lower Downtown, but they did not release footage of the shooting or surveillance video because of the ongoing investigation. Provided by Denver Police Department

back to the sidewalk, closer to the crowds.

The officers briefly lost sight of him behind a vehicle. When they saw him again, Waddy pulled the gun from his clothing within two seconds, prompting the officers to fire, Clark

said.

Waddy fumbled with the gun as he pulled it out and appeared to grab it on the top, with his hand over the slide, Clark said.

He did not hold the gun in a "pistol grip" and instead held it by the slide on

the top of the gun, Clark said.

It's not clear if he could have fired it the way he grabbed it, Clark said. He said the officers believed the muzzle of the gun was pointed at them as Waddy pulled it out.

The officers believed they were in mortal danger and fired, Clark said. Two of the officers shot at Waddy while they stood in front of him and they faced a wall of the Larimer Beer Hall, still images from body cameras show. A third officer shot at Waddy from the side, despite a group of people standing behind Waddy.

The entire incident — from officers telling Waddy to stop to officers firing their guns — lasted less than five seconds, Clark said.

Waddy and the six bystanders are expected to survive.

Witnesses told The Denver Post they did not hear any warning from police before the shots were fired;

Clark on Wednesday said officers did not have time to shout a warning or clear the area before firing.

He said officers are trained to look out for bystanders.

"The training is specific to be aware of your target and beyond, and the officers are accountable for the rounds they fired," he said.

"That's a huge part of the training."

Clark also acknowledged that the officers could have chosen not to confront and detain Waddy but suggested they did not expect him to pull the gun out.

"What we see and what the officers thought was, they are regularly down there," he said. "They deal with physical conflicts frequently. They break up fights. They help intoxicated people. They prevent crimes, and they regularly take firearms off people without any issue whatsoever."

More people were wounded by police during

Sunday's shooting than in any other police shooting in Colorado since at least 2010, when the state started collecting data on police shootings.

All three officers are on leave while the investigation into the shooting is ongoing.

Although Denver police showed still images from the officers' body-worn cameras Wednesday, they have refused to release the footage.

On Wednesday, Clark cited the ongoing investigation of the police shooting and the criminal investigation against Waddy as reasons why they weren't releasing the footage, although he said investigators had completed interviews of the officers and victims.

Clark said the footage will be released once the investigation into the shooting is complete.

Siddhartha Rathod, an attorney representing two of the bystanders shot by police, demanded Denver police release the full footage of the incident instead of cherry-picking which images to share, as they did during Wednesday's news conference.

He said he did not understand how releasing some images of the incident wouldn't interfere with an investigation but releasing the full video would.

"If Denver can release some of the information, they can release all of it," Rathod said.

Waddy was on parole at the time of the shooting for felony aggravated assault convictions, but officers did not know that at the time of the shooting.

Police arrested Waddy at the Larimer Street scene on suspicion of menacing and possession of a weapon by a prior offender. Denver prosecutors have not yet filed formal charges against him.

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The wounds of Bailey Alexander.

VICTIMS

◀ FROM 1A

Alexander, a 24-year-old surgical assistant, was trying to decide whether she wanted a gyro from a food truck to wrap up a night of bar hopping with her boyfriend and best friend when the gunfire exploded.

They fled — Alexander and her boyfriend in one direction and her best friend in the other. As she ran, Alexander felt a warm and sticky substance running down her arm. It took her a moment to realize she had been shot, she said. The bullet had traveled through her back and out her arm.

They ran into the alley behind the beer hall, where two strang-

ers helped Alexander apply pressure to her two wounds and her boyfriend made a tourniquet out of his shirt.

The pain didn't set in until Alexander was alone in the ambulance, she said. She shook uncontrollably as the ambulance approached the hospital. She felt like she couldn't breathe.

Police officers interviewed Weldehiwet and Alexander in the hospital, but they told neither Weldehiwet nor Alexander that police had shot them. They said they didn't realize who had shot them until they read news reports the next day.

"It's just very shocking and pretty infuriating to learn that the people who were there to calm the situation down and keep everybody safe were the ones who did the very opposite of

that," Alexander said. "To learn that the suspect didn't shoot once is pretty alarming."

Police said they recovered a handgun after officers shot 21-year-old Jordan Waddy, a parolee who has been arrested on suspicion of felony menacing and possession of a weapon by a previous offender.

Neither Weldehiwet nor Alexander has been able to work since.

Neither has been able to sleep much. Both likely will live with shrapnel in their body.

Alexander wants to go back to the area to see the scene again.

But will she return to bar-hopping in LoDo? She's not sure.

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The wounds of Yekalo Weldehiwet. Photos courtesy of Rathod Mohamedbhai law firm