

# Lottery game to benefit vets dies

By PATRICK MALONE | [pmalone@chieftain.com](mailto:pmalone@chieftain.com) | Posted: Tuesday, April 17, 2012 12:00 am

**DENVER** — A funny thing happened on the way to the Senate Finance Committee.

Sen. Kevin Grantham, R-Canon City, reversed his course Monday and cast the deciding vote to kill a bill that would have asked voters to approve a new lottery game to benefit struggling veterans.

Last week, Grantham had expressed concerns about Senate Concurrent Resolution 2, but nonetheless voted for it in the Senate State, Veterans and Military Affairs Committee, where it passed on a 3-2 vote.

“I made it abundantly clear in that committee meeting that there were a lot of problems with the concept of what they were doing,” Grantham said. “The bottom line is between last week and this week none of those concerns were directly addressed or answered, so I simply voted my conscience.”

The resolution was before the committee again Monday for what most expected to be a procedural vote to route it next to the finance committee. Instead, it met an unexpected end on a 3-2 vote.

The bill would have asked voters to authorize the new game to fund a grant program to help struggling veterans in Colorado to cope with employment challenges and the physical and psychological aftereffects of war.

Grantham said he had concerns that a new lottery game would cut into the pool of lottery proceeds that pay for open spaces and other projects, such as BEST funding for construction of schools in rural areas.

“It’s a 50-50 chance. Either it will or it won’t affect that,” he said. “I gave it the benefit of the doubt the other day, trying to get the question reasonably answered. The fact remains I have been trying to get those same answers for a couple of months. Given every opportunity, even the additional week, I still didn’t have satisfactory answers.”

Doubts haunted Grantham as well about whether the game would raise enough money to provide veterans much help.

“We’re not sure whether this would really benefit them in the way that was claimed,” he said.

Grantham also worried about the bill’s mechanism for getting funds to veterans.

“If your goal is to get \$2 million to hand over to the vets, you have to have \$7 (million) to \$10 million come out of the economy and into the lottery,” he said. “If we’re looking at really wanting to help the vets, let’s talk about real budget considerations, line-item changes to fund it there. I think we’re going backwards if we’re taking money out of the economy and putting it into the lottery and hoping for a gain on the background for vets without affecting other programs.”

Grantham found an unlikely ally at the other end of the political spectrum. Democratic Sen. Angela Giron of Pueblo said she doubts the proposal would have gained the necessary two-thirds majorities in both House and the Senate that it needed to reach the ballot.

She cited the same concerns as Grantham, plus another.

“It’s a federal issue. We’re stretched. We’re not even able to meet our own constitutional responsibilities that we’re committed to,” Giron said, pointing to the Denver District Court ruling last year that found the state’s school finance formula falls short of the state constitution’s promise.

Because a new game’s impact on lottery sales cannot be accurately predicted, fiscal analysis of the bill by nonpartisan state economists could not forecast with any certainty what the return would be on the state’s \$2 million investment to launch the game.

“All it would have amounted to be was symbolic,” Giron said. “We owe our veterans a lot more than symbolism.”

## Legislative backers pushing for Colorado scratch lottery to fund veterans' programs

By Lynn Bartels *The Denver Post* *The Denver Post*

Posted:

DenverPost.com

Colorado's veterans are pushing for creation of a scratch lottery ticket they hope will raise money for veterans, but the idea has generated criticism on several fronts.

The state constitution already dictates how lottery proceeds are distributed so voters would have to approve a measure to create a lottery for veterans, said Sen. Suzanne Williams, D-Aurora.

"We have a severe need for veterans and the four top areas are jobs, homelessness, mental health and suicide prevention," she said.

Ralph Bozella, president of United Veterans Committee of Colorado, said he doesn't play lottery but he would buy a scratch ticket to help veterans and he thinks others will too "knowing our money will fund a very worthy cause."

As the name implies, customers scratch the surface of a ticket to find symbols or numbers or such. A winning combination yields a prize.

Williams and three other lawmakers are expected to introduce their veterans bill next month, but need to line up two-thirds of their colleagues to put the issue on the November ballot.

Williams acknowledged that's a tough task, given the criticism of the proposal.

Lottery proceeds now go to open space, wildlife, trails, conservation and similar outdoor ventures, and there is a fear that approving the veterans' ticket will start a wave of siphoning off money for other special causes.

Local communities use lottery money such things as recreation equipment, land acquisition for parks and facility maintenance.

"We rely on it," said Routt County Commissioner Doug Monger.

Others agree there is a need to help veterans, but question whether the state should turn to gambling.

"It pains me that we have to sink to the point of selling a lottery ticket to support our veterans in the manner they should be supported," said Rep. Kathleen Conti, R-Littleton. "I believe it is a core function of our federal government."

Rep. Robert Ramirez, R-Westminster, said therein lies the problem.

"The federal government is not taking care of our veterans, and they're not taking care of our current servicemen," he said. "I just can't sit back and say, 'It's not my responsibility.' These are our veterans. They served our country."

In addition to Ramirez and Williams, Rep. Nancy Todd, D-Aurora, and Sen. Steve King, R-Grand Junction, are sponsoring the measure.

Under their bill, the Colorado lottery would oversee ticket sales and promotion, while the Department of Military Affairs would handle the distribution of funds.

Colorado last year sold \$345 million worth of scratch tickets, which range in price from \$1 to \$20, said Heather Black, spokeswoman for the Colorado Lottery.

The most popular game is 7-11-21, where a buyer scratches the surface of a ticket to reveal a series of numbers. If they add up to seven, 11 or 21, the buyer wins; the prize amount is revealed by scratching another part of the ticket.

Because the details of the veterans measure are still being worked out, supporters said it's too early to say how much the veterans ticket would cost, the amount of the highest payout or the design.

Lynn Bartels: 303-954-5327 or [lbartels@denverpost.com](mailto:lbartels@denverpost.com)

## Estes Park board OKs Larimer County manager Frank Lancaster hire

Frank Lancaster is headed to higher terrain.

The Estes Park Town Board on Wednesday unanimously approved a contract with Lancaster, the longtime Larimer County manager, to become its new town administrator. His first day on the job will be May 21.

The three-year contract calls for Lancaster to be paid \$135,000 a year plus benefits. He has one year to move to the 80517 ZIP code area and will be reimbursed for moving expenses for up to \$5,000, according to the contract.

Lancaster, who is a native Coloradan, told board members, "I have always loved this community: I look forward to doing a good job for Estes Park," according to a town news release.

The special meeting of the town board lasted less than 10 minutes. Although no one from the public spoke during the meeting, there is interest in who is taking over as town administrator, Lancaster said in an interview.

As he was leaving town for the commute

home, Lancaster said he stopped by a restaurant to pick up a soft drink. While he was there, a few residents recognized him and came over to chat about town issues.

"I expected to talk to people, but I thought it would take more than 30 minutes," he said with a laugh.

Lancaster, 54, has been county manager for 18 years. He started with the county in 1981 as a forester. In 1983, he was named director of the Natural Resources Department, which managed the county landfill, weed district, forestry and open space programs.

Leaving the county after 31 years seems somewhat "surreal," he said. But he's looking forward to new challenges, and his family is excited about moving to the Estes Valley.

Lancaster is expected to turn in his resignation to the county commissioners today, with his last day in the office being May 11.

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The commissioners are scheduled to meet today to discuss the process for selecting a new county manager.

County staff members will recommend the commissioners conduct a fullsearch for a new manager while considering internal candidates, Lancaster said.

There is no need to hire an interim manager, he said. Neil Gluckman, the longtime assistant county manager, can step into the role of running day-to-day operations without a hitch.

"We've always been like a tag team; we're interchangeable," he said. "He's up to speed on everything and can step right in."

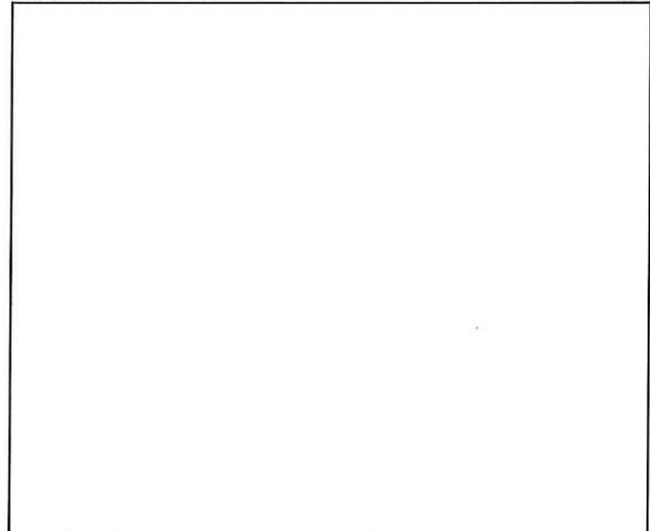
Gluckman has said he is not interested in the manager's job.



Frank Lancaster

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# Loveland requesting \$3.7M in state grants to buy land, develop open space

## Proposal to close 'missing link' in city's looped trail system part of application

By **Madeline Novey** Reporter-Herald Staff Writer  
Loveland Reporter-Herald

Posted:03/13/2012 07:29:45 PM MDT

Loveland is seeking \$3.7 million in state grants to buy land for designation as open space, to develop existing city property along the Big Thompson River and complete a "missing piece" in its looped trail system.

The city is among 17 municipalities, including Larimer County, that have applied for about \$90 million in grant dollars from the Great Outdoors Colorado Trust Fund. GOCO is a voter-created entity that funnels a portion of state lottery proceeds into Colorado's wildlife, parks, rivers, open space and trails.

Money for this grant cycle will flow from Great Outdoors Colorado's River Corridor Initiative, which provides financial backing for projects along Colorado's rivers.

"The vision is to get people closer to the rivers and the recreation that goes along with that," said Chris Leding, Great Outdoors Colorado communications director.

Loveland is in negotiations with a handful of landowners to purchase 302 acres of land along the Big Thompson River corridor west of Interstate 25, south of U.S. 34 and north of Colorado 402. Land would extend west near Namaqua Road where the U.S. 34 recreational underpass is located, said Brian Hayes, the city's natural areas manager.

While it's not absolutely certain that all landowners will sell their land, Hayes said all have signed a letter of expressing interest in the project submitted to GOCO as part of the grant process.

Also part of the plan Loveland submitted to GOCO is a proposal to develop 120 acres of open space located on the Agilent campus. Money would possibly go to construction of trails and a parking area; general restoration and wetland enhancement; all of which could mean more fishing, hiking and bicycling opportunities, Hayes said.

The grant application also includes a proposal to build 1.1 miles of trail, closing a gap in a southern portion of the city's 21-mile trail system. The proposed trail would join Wilson Avenue and north U.S. 287, said Janet Meisel-Burns, the city's senior park planner.

"This would connect the whole west side of the city down to the (Big Thompson River)," she said, indicating that this improvement is needed to protect bicyclists and pedestrians. "I'll be honest, I don't think there's a real safe way" to ride north on Namaqua Road to U.S. 34 (or vice versa).

Should the proposed improvement go through, the trail loop would require only one more connection between Taft Avenue and the north U.S. 287 underpass, Meisel-Burns said.

Larimer County staff members, in partnership with Fort Collins, Timnath and Greeley, are seeking funds to develop the Poudre River trail corridor. Plans include adding almost 15 acres of trail easement and 4.2 miles of new concrete trail to include underpasses that will connect Fort Collins and Timnath under I-25, according to a press release from Leding.

"It's an exciting opportunity to work with our partners up and down the river," said Kerri Rollins, Larimer County's open lands program manager.

GOCO will award grants in mid-June, Leding said. Grant recipients will have three years to complete proposed projects.

Even if GOCO money comes in partially or not at all, Hayes is confident plans will move forward.

"I think it's safe to say that Loveland is still interested in the properties, even if the grant does not get funded 100 percent," he said.

Madeline Novey can be reached at 669-5050, ext. 516, or [mnovey@reporter-herald.com](mailto:mnovey@reporter-herald.com).

## In brief: Forum April 12 for Health Board of Northern Larimer County hopefuls

The League of Women Voters of Larimer County will host a candidate forum for those seeking seats on the Health District of Northern Larimer County Board of Directors.

The forum will be from 7 to 8 p.m., April 12 at the Fort Collins City Council Chambers, 300 LaPorte Ave., and will be shown live on Channel 14.

The Health District of Northern Larimer County is supported through local property taxes. Services include prescription assistance, preventive dentistry, mental health and health planning.

Those attending the forum are asked to arrive by 6:45 p.m.

Candidates Bernard Birnbaum, Matt Fries, Debbie Johnson Healy, Jack Irving and Steven Thorson are running for two openings on the five-member board. Candidates are elected at-large to serve four-year terms.

The Health District Election is May 8. Polling places are the Health District Office, 120 Bristlecone Drive, and Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church, 4501 S. Lemay, both in Fort

Collins. Mail-in ballots are available for those who submit an application for permanent mail-in voter status. Applications may be requested from Judy Robison-Bullard, designated election official, at (970) 224-5209, or by email at [jrobison@healthdistrict.org](mailto:jrobison@healthdistrict.org).

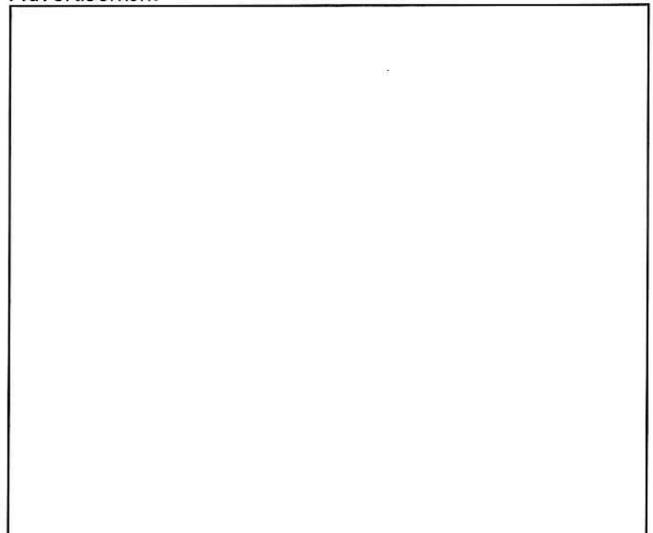
### Photographer named park's artist for 2012

Nature photographer David Clack has been selected the visual artist for the year by the Larimer County Natural Resources Department.

Clack, who owns the Illustrated Light Gallery in Old Town Fort Collins, will create a photograph inspired by Larimer County's parks or open spaces and donate it for public display in a county building.

Clack is the Larimer County Natural Resources Department's sixth visual artist. Previous years' artists and the pieces they created may be viewed at <http://larimer>.

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## 2012 Larimer County Natural Resources Department visual artist selected

From a press release  
Loveland Reporter-Herald

Posted:

The Larimer County Natural Resources Department visual artist for 2012 has been selected. Nature Photographer David Clack was selected and will create a photograph inspired by Larimer County's parks or open spaces.

David owns the Illustrated Light Gallery in Old Town Fort Collins and has exhibited in numerous locations throughout Colorado and the U.S.

In David's words, "I look forward to capturing the unique lighting and formations of the Larimer County parks and open spaces. It will be an interesting study through the course of the year." David will spend his term visiting Larimer County's parks and open spaces to search for inspiration for his photography, and will ultimately create a photograph that he will donate to Larimer County for public display in a county building.

This artwork will be unveiled at a celebration in late 2012 or early 2013. David is the Larimer County Natural Resources Department's sixth visual artist. Previous years' artists and the pieces they created can be viewed at <http://larimer.org/openlands/artist.htm>.

To learn more about the Natural Resources Department Visual Artist Program, visit [www.larimer.org/openlands/artist.htm](http://www.larimer.org/openlands/artist.htm)  
To learn more about Larimer County's parks and open spaces, visit [www.larimer.org/naturalresources](http://www.larimer.org/naturalresources)

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## Collaboration by Fort Collins, Timnath, Larimer County could enhance trail system

The beauty of Great Outdoors Colorado is not only that it has set aside thousands of acres of land for the public to enjoy, but that it compels diverse groups to come together for a unified cause.

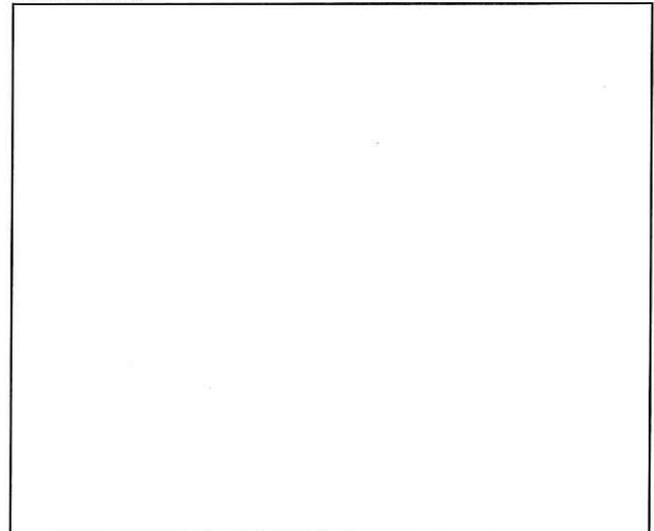
On Friday, a \$6.5 million proposal by the city of Fort Collins, town of Timnath and Larimer County will be sent to Great Outdoors Colorado to enhance and extend the popular Poudre River Trail. Specifically, the entities hope to construct a trail connection either over or under Interstate 25 from the Arapahoe Bend Natural Area to Timnath and extend the trail from River Bluffs Open Space in Windsor north to Timnath. Funding also would be used to secure easements for gaps along the trail.

The Poudre River Trail is one of the most popular regional trails in the area. The entities have worked together for more than 40 years to build the trail. When complete, it will stretch 45 miles from Greeley to west of Fort Collins. Currently, about 38 miles of the trail have been secured. The trail also offers a connection for bicyclists, runners, walkers and other

recreationists between Greeley, Timnath, Windsor and Fort Collins.

According to the 2007 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan Local Government Survey, community trails are the highest-ranked need along Colorado's Front Range. In its journey, the Poudre River Trail has been a part of more than 15 regional transportation, open space and comprehensive plans, Kerri Rollins, Larimer County open lands manager, told the Coloradoan last fall. Northern Colorado has a strong track record in developing such partnerships to complete outdoors projects and reflecting buy-in among stakeholders. This most recent coalition is applauded for recognizing that by working together, the Poudre River Trail could be nearly complete in about three years if GOCO approval is secured.

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**ABOUT GREAT OUTDOORS COLORADO**

Great Outdoors Colorado distributes money from 50 percent of the state's Lottery proceeds for outdoors projects that preserve, protect and enhance Colorado's wildlife, parks, rivers, trails and open spaces. The commission gives preference to proposals that stem from partnerships that leverage the money most effectively.

Voters approved the GOCO Amendment to the Colorado Constitution in 1992. Since it began awarding grants in 1994, GOCO has awarded nearly \$690 million for more than 3,000 projects throughout the state.

Residents can show support for proposed extensions to the Poudre River Trail by signing an online petition at [www.larimer.org](http://www.larimer.org).

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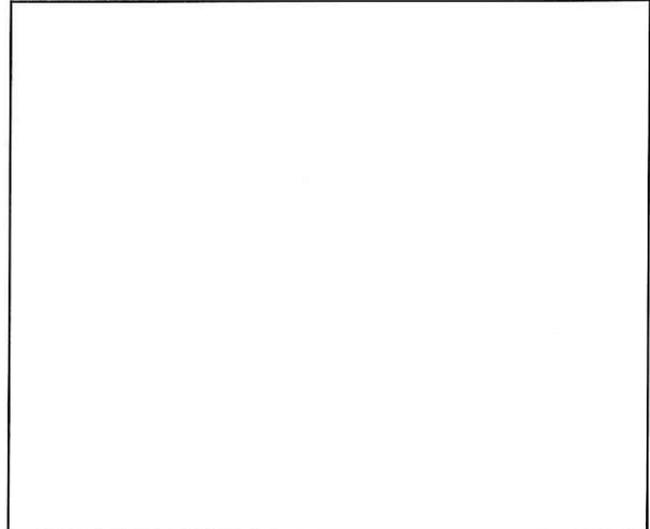
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