



Kathleen Duff
On family

Make room for hope in family life

For all the people who say that there is too much bad news these days, there are also a few who seek even more negativity.

After more than 14 years of writing this column about families, it never ceases to amaze me that at least once a year somebody — always anonymously — writes to me to say there isn't enough of a focus in these weekly writings on the "bad" aspects of parenthood, childhood or families.

"Why don't you write about meth or alcohol abuse?" one woman complained years ago. Another wanted a column about how teenagers have become "rotten."

Somehow, those few believe that because I don't always write about the lowest lows of parenthood that our family doesn't have its share of difficulties.

The simple answer is yes, just like any parents, we have major challenges. After all, my husband and I have three diverse children who all want to go their own way, if not get their own way.

I don't know about you, but our family life is full of flaws and errors in judgment. Clashes and major life mistakes and hurt feelings are part of our world as much as anybody's. Some people save for college for their kids; sometimes, I wonder if we should save for the therapists' bill. Families are dysfunctional by nature, after all.

But the truth is that I still hope for hopefulness in my children despite all the conflicts and criticism so easily launched in the world. Seems like more people are trying so hard to tear others down instead of working to lift themselves up. That alone is a difficult burden to bear for a rising generation that will see its share of bitterness, despair and pain.

When kids are in the house, you have to acknowledge some axioms, such as bad things can happen to good people and that life is not always fair. But it's also important to recognize for all the bad in the world that most people are doing their best to be good and do good. And it does matter.

I work in a newsroom; I know the news pages, Web sites and the broadcasts have seen their share of moms and dads abdicating or abusing their parental responsibilities resulting in the most tragic of circumstances.

But look harder and you will discover more moms and dads working hard to make sure their children are safe, healthy and educated. They do so quietly, honestly, decently. While we parents take different routes to raising children, the destination is shared.

Sure, there are people who are motivated by power, money and avarice. Yet, the human secret is that most people are motivated by love, generosity and compassion. My continued hope for my children is not only that the latter will outweigh the former, but that they will learn to recognize the difference.

Families' closets are full of life challenges, but there has to be room left for hopefulness.

> The United Nations Children's Fund can be found at www.unicef.org.

Kathleen Duff is the Coloradoan Community Conversations editor. She can be reached at 224-7733, by fax at 224-7899 or send e-mail to KathleenDuff@coloradoan.com.

Volunteer a volunteer

Do you know someone who makes a difference as a volunteer in the community? E-mail nominations to Lifestyle Editor Sara B. Hansen at SaraB.Hansen@coloradoan.com, and the Coloradoan might profile that person.

COLORADO'S LUXURY HOTELS



The Ritz-Carlton, Bachelor Gulch is located 18 miles west of Vail on Beaver Creek Mountain.

Ken Stern/For the Coloradoan

Hotels lure travelers with top chefs, exotic spas and other amenities

BY RON STERN
For the Coloradoan

Colorado's hotels and resorts are redefining luxury with signature culinary offerings from top chefs, exotic spas and even big screen televisions. Here are a few that are setting new trends, wooing travelers, families and, in several cases, even their pets.

The Broadmoor, Colorado Springs

A Colorado institution since 1918, the Broadmoor Hotel in Colorado Springs epitomizes taste and luxury. During the years, this "Grand Dame" has won various accolades, but the most notable is that the Broadmoor is the longest running consecutive winner of AAA's Five Diamond and the Mobil Travel Guide's Five-Star awards.

The Broadmoor resembles a sprawling university campus, with several buildings and guest towers built around Cheyenne Lake. A water complex and swimming pool are adjacent to the main building. The compound's lawns, flowers and meandering walkways are meticulously manicured.

With 14 restaurants, 23 specialty shops, seven tennis courts, 54 holes of championship golf and a movie theater, there's no reason to leave the property. For total indulgence, the Spa at the Broadmoor, now at 43,000 square feet, offers an entire menu of services.

After amassing a fortune from gold and copper mining, Philadelphia entrepreneur Spencer Pen-



The JW Suite at the JW Marriott, Denver at Cherry Creek.

Ron Stern/For the Coloradoan

rose purchased what was previously the Broadmoor Casino and Hotel. He named it into one of the world's most beautiful resorts, then and now.

Inspired by the Italian Renaissance, Penrose used artisans from Italy and Europe to create a carved marble fountain, Della Robbia-style floor tiles, hand-painted trim and ornate chandeliers in the main lobby.

Penrose's style and architectural flair were only matched by his marketing prowess. He predicted the onslaught of prospectors to Pike's Peak, a small gold-filled mountain nearby, and built

a road leading to its summit. Until then the area was only accessible by foot or the Gog Railway. He was also responsible for the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, a huge draw for Colorado Springs and the Broadmoor.

Each room comes with high-thread count bed linens, plush, contemporary furniture, flat-screen televisions, signature toiletries and five-bottle bath-rooms. Friendly and attentive staff, impeccable service as well as views of Cheyenne Lake and Mountain just add to the Broadmoor experience. Dining options range from

casual to fine and the hotel has an extensive wine cellar.

Be sure to stroll by Beetle Alley in the hotel lobby where most of the empty bottles came from the prohibition era and were consumed by Spencer and guests.

One, however, is signed by President George W. Bush, on his 40th birthday — the last time he reportedly had a libation.

The Brown Palace Hotel and Spa, Denver

Many Coloradans have either heard of or visited this historic

luxury hotel in downtown Denver. Called the Brown, it has been open since 1892. This gem is still attracting travelers looking for an upscale but affordable stay.

Originally, Henry Cordes Brown, a carpenter-turned-real-estate-developer, purchased several acres and later donated a portion for the State Capitol Building. He also used this particular triangular lot on the corners of Broadway, Tremont and 17th street to graze his cow.

Brown spared no expense on the Brown's construction, whose style was influenced by the Italian Renaissance. He adorned the exterior with Colorado red granite and Arizona Sandstone and then commissioned an artist to create 26 carved stone native animal medallions, still visible between the seventh floor's outside windows.

The interior is equally detailed with an eight-floor atrium lobby, cast iron railings and elaborate grillwork panels. If you look closely, you will notice two of the panels were installed upside down on the fourth and fifth floors for reasons still unknown.

The rooms are decorated with a Victorian or Art Deco motif and are comfy and tastefully covered with new carpeting, re-upholstered chairs and artwork depicting Colorado's natural beauty. The olive, gold and burgundy theme is serene and soothing, allowing guests to feel immersed in a tranquil experience.

Other amenities include 24-hour room service, twice-daily

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The JW Suite at the JW Marriott, Denver at Cherry Creek.

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